

# GEORGE E. RISNER

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE HARRIS COUNTY PRECINCT 2, PLACE 2  
101 South Richey Street, Suite B, Pasadena, TX 77506 (713) 274-6100

## PROTOCOL IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 August 16, 2021

Justice Court Precinct 2 Place 2 will continue to provide services to the citizens of Precinct 2 and Harris County using recommended and appropriate precautions and preventative measures to mitigate the risk of spreading infection from the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Every person appearing in Court or at the Court's offices is required to alert the Court in advance if the person has, or knows of another participant who (i) has COVID-19 or a fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea; or (ii) has recently been in close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19 or is exhibiting these symptoms.

When in the Court's lobby, offices, and courtroom, all persons should be prepared to wear face masks and to maintain recommended distancing. All persons may be required to answer certain health related questions and submit to temperature screening.

**Court Hours.** Court personnel are available during the Court's hours, 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

**Filings and Payments.** All pleadings, motions, or other papers requiring a fee to be paid may be filed: (i) by using [EFILETEXAS.gov](https://efile.texas.gov), (ii) by mailing to the Court, or (iii) by delivering in-person to the Court.

Any pleadings, motions, or other papers that do not require a fee, may be filed by fax, 713-437-4342 (Civil), 713-437-4344 (Criminal), by mail, by email to [MYJP22@jp.hctx.net](mailto:MYJP22@jp.hctx.net), or by in-person delivery to the Court.

Payments in criminal cases may be made through the Justice Court Precinct 2 Place 2 Website (Online Services) at: [www.jp.hctx.net/2-2](http://www.jp.hctx.net/2-2), or in-person, at the Court.

**Case Records.** Criminal and civil case records may be viewed and accessed through the Justice Courts' Odyssey Portal, at: <https://odysseyportal.harriscountytexas.gov/OdysseyPortalJP>.

- Dockets are being scheduled to comply with courtroom occupancy and social distancing requirements.
- All proceedings will be conducted following minimum standard health protocols.
- Face coverings, appropriate distancing, and recommended hygiene will be required.
- All documents to be offered as evidence should be filed at least 3 business days prior to the scheduled hearing and served on all other parties as provided in Rule 501.4. If documents are brought to Court on the date of the hearing, copies must be available for the Court and each party.

The Court may allow or require a participant to participate remotely, and if so, will furnish a date and instructions for the proceeding.

The Court may allow or require anyone involved in a proceeding to participate remotely without that participant's consent. For problems participating remotely contact the court at [myjp22@jp.hctx.net](mailto:myjp22@jp.hctx.net) or by telephone, at 713-274-6100.

**Jury Service and Jury Trials.** Citizens are being summoned for jury service. Jury service and jury trials will follow recommended best practices, including health and distance standards, for safely conducting court proceedings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Evictions. Texas Eviction Diversion Program:** In an action for eviction from residential property based on the nonpayment of rent, a sworn petition or further pleading containing "a description of the facts and grounds for eviction" must state whether or not the plaintiff has reviewed the information about the Texas Eviction Diversion Program available at [www.txcourts.gov/eviction-diversion/](http://www.txcourts.gov/eviction-diversion/). The Texas Eviction Diversion Program has been extended to October 1, 2021.

At the eviction trial, the Judge will ask if the plaintiff has a pending application for rental assistance, and after discussing the Texas Eviction Diversion Program with both the plaintiff and defendant, the Judge will ask whether the parties are interested in participating in the Program. If the plaintiff has a pending application for rental assistance or both parties express an interest in participating in the Texas Eviction Diversion Program, the eviction proceeding will be abated for 60 days, the proceeding will be made confidential, and the Judge will inform the parties of reinstatement and dismissal procedures.

Find out more about the Texas Eviction Diversion Program at [www.txcourts.gov/eviction-diversion](http://www.txcourts.gov/eviction-diversion) and at <https://texaslawhelp.org/article/texas-eviction-diversion-program>.

**Evictions. CDC Eviction Moratorium:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has issued a new order temporarily halting evictions in counties with heightened levels of community transmission of COVID-19. The Order, "Temporary Halt in Residential Evictions to Prevent the Further Spread of COVID-19" is in effect through October 3, 2021, and provides that a landlord, owner of a residential property, or other person with a legal right to pursue eviction or possessory action, shall not evict any covered person from any residential property in any county while COVID-19 transmission is substantial or high and the county has provided a level of public-health protections below the requirements listed in the Order. To qualify for the protection, a tenant, lessee, or resident of a residential property must provide a completed and signed copy of a declaration with the elements listed in the definition of "covered person" to their landlord, owner of the residential property, or other person who has a right to have them evicted or removed from where they live. A standardized declaration form is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/declaration-form.pdf>. A declaration already submitted to the landlord remains valid and a tenant does not need to submit a new declaration.

**Criminal Penalties:** The CDC Eviction Moratorium Order provides that a landlord, owner of a residential property, or other person with a legal right to pursue eviction or possessory action who is violating the Order may be subject to a fine of no more than \$100,000 or one year in jail, or both, if the violation does not result in a death, or a fine of no more than \$250,000 or one year in jail, or both, if the violation results in a death. An organization violating the Order may be subject to a fine of no more than \$200,000 per event if the violation does not result in a death, or \$500,000 per event if the violation results in a death.

The United State Department of Justice may initiate criminal proceedings seeking the imposition of criminal penalties.

For further information about the CDC's temporary halt in residential evictions please go to the website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [Signed-CDC-Eviction-Order.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/declaration-form.pdf). Visit [www.consumerfinance.gov/renthelp](http://www.consumerfinance.gov/renthelp) to access the Rental Assistance Finder that connects renters and landlords with state and local assistance programs.