

Overview of COVID-19 Infection Control Measures at Court

(General Secretariat December 4, 2020)

Points of Measures

- A policy for implementing infection control measures efficiently depending on the level of risk in consideration of the particularities of court proceedings and courtrooms has been developed based on knowledge gained from experts in public health and other relevant fields (and has been disseminated to all courts across the country so that each court can consider what measures it should take in line with the circumstances of the local area).
- With a view to preventing the spread of infection while maintaining the functions of the judicial branch appropriately, infection control measures will be implemented efficiently as a whole, by tightening or relaxing control depending on the level of risk in the context of the changing infection status in each local area.

Tightening Control

- Ensuring that all people in court wear a facemask, which is an extremely important measure to prevent droplet infection, the major transmission path
- As the precondition for implementing various infection control measures, ensuring that people (e.g., court officials and litigants) who feel unwell are not allowed to come to court (especially while they are suspected of being in the early infection stage with a high degree of infectability)
- Strengthening control measures in the situations where infection risk increases (e.g., removing a facemask to have a meal)

Implementing measures appropriately, including relaxation of control

- Taking measures regarding the seats for the audience in the courtroom, including sanitization
- The control measures will be reviewed in a timely manner in accordance with the changes in the social situation and accumulation of new expert knowledge.

Basic Measures and Specific Initiatives

1. Ensuring that all people in court to wear a facemask

- Requiring all court officials to wear a facemask
- Asking court visitors to wear a facemask (by an instruction on the website, on a poster, in written communication, etc.)



2. Ensuring that there is no person feeling unwell in court

- Ensuring the complete understanding among court officials that they must refrain from coming to work at court when feeling unwell
- Asking court visitors to refrain from visiting court when feeling unwell (by an instruction on the website, in written communication, etc.)



3. Avoiding the three Cs

- Avoiding crowding in the seats for the audience in the courtroom (with one vacant seat between every two seats)
- Taking care in using rooms for court proceedings (e.g., courtrooms, rooms for preparatory proceedings, rooms for conciliation proceedings) (choosing as large a room as possible; securing a distance of about one meter between persons; airing the room once every hour; installing partitions if necessary)
- Taking care in conducting court proceedings (using a telephone or web conferencing system depending on the case, adjusting the number of people appearing at court)



4. Washing hands and sanitizing objects

- Urging court officials and court visitors to wash or sanitize their hands (by an instruction on a poster, etc.)
- Making hand sanitizers available in the court building
- Sanitizing parts and objects used by many and unspecified persons to remove droplets



5. Taking measures targeting the situations where infection risk increases

- Taking measures targeting the situations where people usually do not wear a facemask, such as while having lunch (e.g., refrain from talking while eating, wear a facemask when talking, avoid having a seat facing each other or next to each other)
- Calling for attention not to dine in a large group of people after work

