

Due to concerns related the spread of COVID-19, the GDC is implementing social distancing for offenders and has suspended visitation by family and friends of offenders and all volunteers through at least April 10, 2020. The GDC is aware that members of the Bar may need to communicate with offenders relating to pending legal matters. The GDC strongly urges counsel to communicate with clients via the inmate telephone system or mail, if possible. Counsel also may want to consider communicating non-privileged information via email.

For those situations that require an in-person visit, the GDC will be allowing non-contact visitation for attorneys and legal staff members. Non-contact visitation involves a meeting between the attorney (or staff member) and the offender through a partition. All members of the Bar are reminded to secure permission from the Warden before bringing any item into a facility. Please try to limit the items that you bring into a facility, though you should plan to bring copies of documents for your client(s) to keep, if possible, to prevent the passing of items back and forth. Notwithstanding the foregoing, documents requiring signatures may be exchanged as needed.

Please do not plan to visit a facility if you are ill and be sure to follow all directives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) relating to preventing the spread of COVID-19. All attorneys and legal staff members who attempt to enter a facility will be subject to a health screening that includes answering questions related to symptoms of COVID-19 and temperature scans with a temporal thermometer.

The GDC will not be able to accommodate any depositions that have been authorized pursuant to FRCP Rule 30 or O.C.G.A. §9-11-30(a) at this time. Any currently scheduled or anticipated depositions should be scheduled for a date after April 10, 2020.

Please contact the GDC's Office of Legal Services at 478-992-5240 as soon as possible if you or a member of your staff who has visited a GDC facility within the past thirty (30) days is diagnosed with COVID-19 so that steps can be taken to assess the health of your client(s), our staff, and anyone else with whom you had direct or indirect contact.

The GDC continues to partner with Governor Kemp's staff, the Department of Public Health, and the CDC in its response to COVID-19. This situation remains fluid, and additional instructions may be given at the time counsel schedules an appointment for an attorney visit. Additional information about the GDC's response to COVID-19 can be found on our website, www.gdc.ga.gov.