

**Cedar Rapids Courthouse**  
**Social Distancing Jury Trial Plan**  
**May 4, 2020**

This is a draft plan for jury trial operations when we start back up with jury trials in order to address concerns about the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**I. Pre-Jury Selection Procedures**

1. Judge letter to prospective jurors encouraging jury duty and describing protective steps that will be taken included in jury mailing. Clerk letter encouraging jurors to bring masks from home. Include in the packet the emergency contact form for jurors to complete at home and bring to the courthouse.
2. Clerk of Court to call in more prospective jurors than usual.
3. Court will plan on seating two alternate jurors (total of 8 for civil trial, 14 for criminal trial).
4. Court will use Courtroom One for jury trials, if possible.

**II. Jury Selection Procedures**

1. Prospective jurors are to report to main floor of courthouse just outside of Jury Assembly room, check in, and sent to appropriate waiting location.
  - 30 pre-seated prospective jurors report inside jury assembly room.
  - Remaining prospective jurors report to Courtroom Two, second floor.
2. Pre-trial conference to take place in Courtroom One.
3. When the Court is ready, prospective jurors brought into Courtroom One.
  - Seated in box, every other chair, in front of box, and in back of courtroom (gallery) on same side as jury box; Clerk's Office to pre-mark seat assignments in the courtroom. See Diagram 1 (CR Jury Selection).

Remaining jurors remain in Courtroom Two and watch proceedings via VTC from Courtroom 2 (spread out); Clerk's Office attendant with pre-selection seating chart to staff room to monitor VTC connection and facilitate alternates moving to Courtroom One as needed. Deputy clerk will manipulate camera so that it is focused on the judge while the judge conducts voir dire, and then on the attorney lectern during the attorney voir dire. Attorneys must conduct voir dire from the mobile lectern located in the well of the courtroom.

4. During jury selection, jurors will not be allowed to wear facemasks while seated for the selection process unless all parties agree.
5. Hardship excuses heard at sidebar with only judge and juror; attorneys listen in via headphones. All participants who come up to the sidebar microphone should wear a mask.
6. If the court excuses a juror, then Clerk's Office attendant in Courtroom Two will escort replacement into Courtroom One through jury room hallway while removed juror leaves courtroom through public door to hallway.
7. During break for exercise of peremptory strikes, the 30 prospective jurors to use Courtroom Two and both jury rooms after remainder prospective jurors are excused.

### **Jury Trial Procedures**

1. Jurors spread out every other seat (seats added to jury box). See Diagram 2 (CR Jury Trial Box)
2. Jurors encouraged, but not ordered, to wear facemasks.
3. During trial, to implement social distancing, jurors will be assigned to one of the two jury deliberation rooms for breaks. Half to each room.
4. Witnesses (including incarcerated witnesses) to wear facemasks until in witness chair.

5. Juror's notebooks will not be touched by anyone; cleaning staff to wipe down seats, etc. each night.
6. All attorney opening statements and closing arguments to be conducted from lectern located between counsel tables.

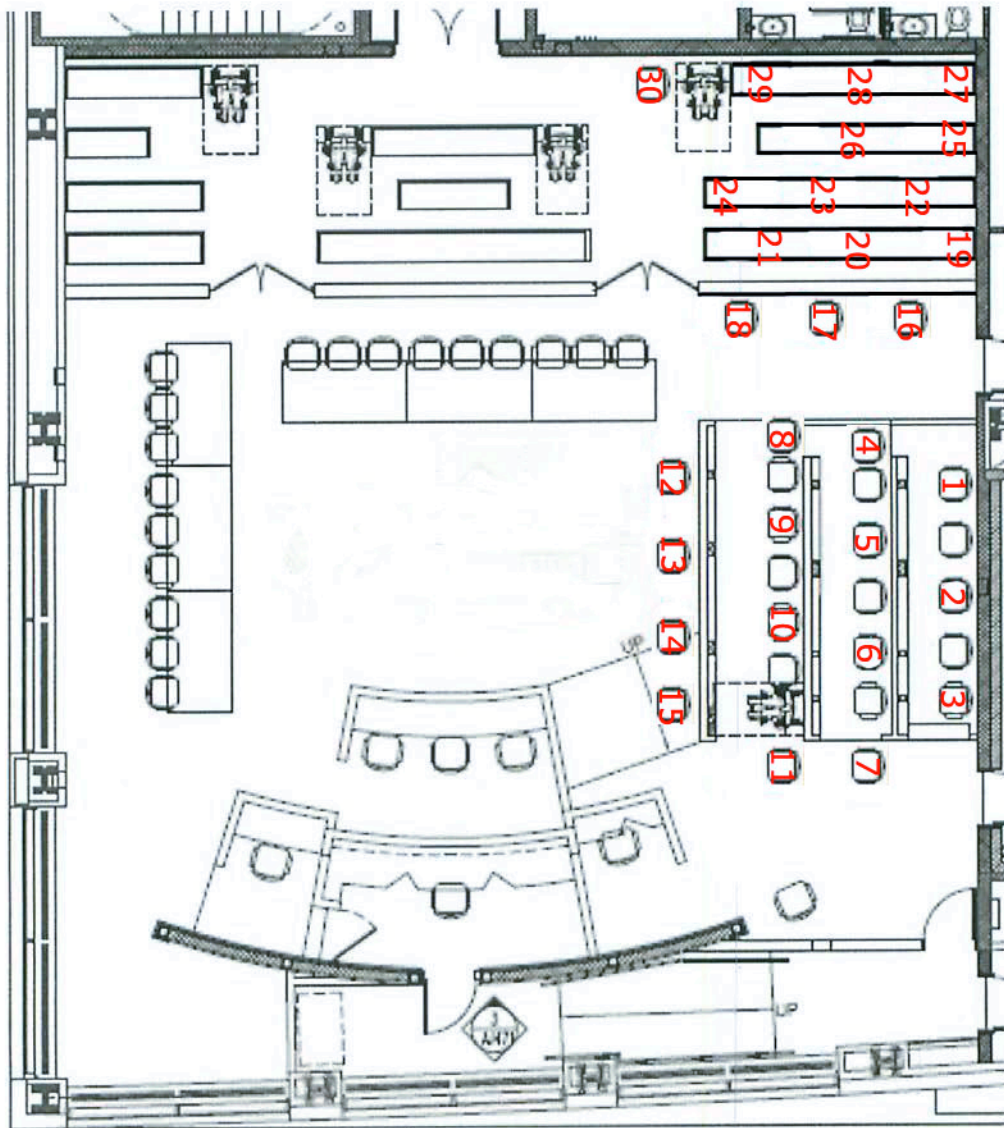
## **Jury Deliberations**

1. Jurors to deliberate in Courtroom 2, with access to jury rooms. See Diagram 3 (CR Jury Deliberations).

Inner door glass windows to be covered with opaque material.  
CSO located outside door to Courtroom Two.

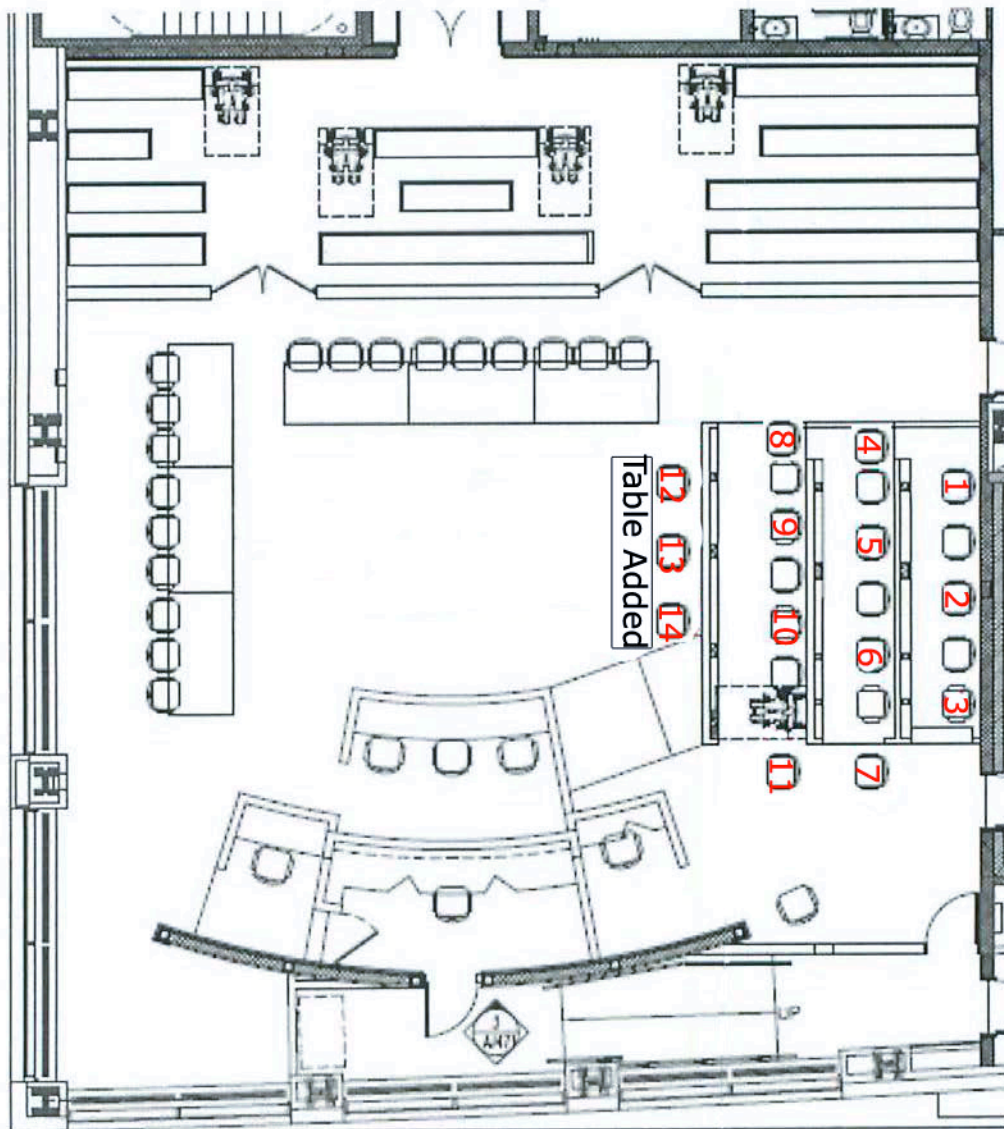
2. JERS to be set up in Courtroom Two; all other electronics shut down.
3. Codes and other books removed from Courtroom Two.
4. Jurors instructed that only the foreperson is to use the mouse to operate JERS, only the foreperson will write jury questions or/or complete the verdict forms.
6. Post-verdict, Clerk's Office to distribute court questionnaire to jurors.

DIAGRAM 1 – CR JURY SELECTION



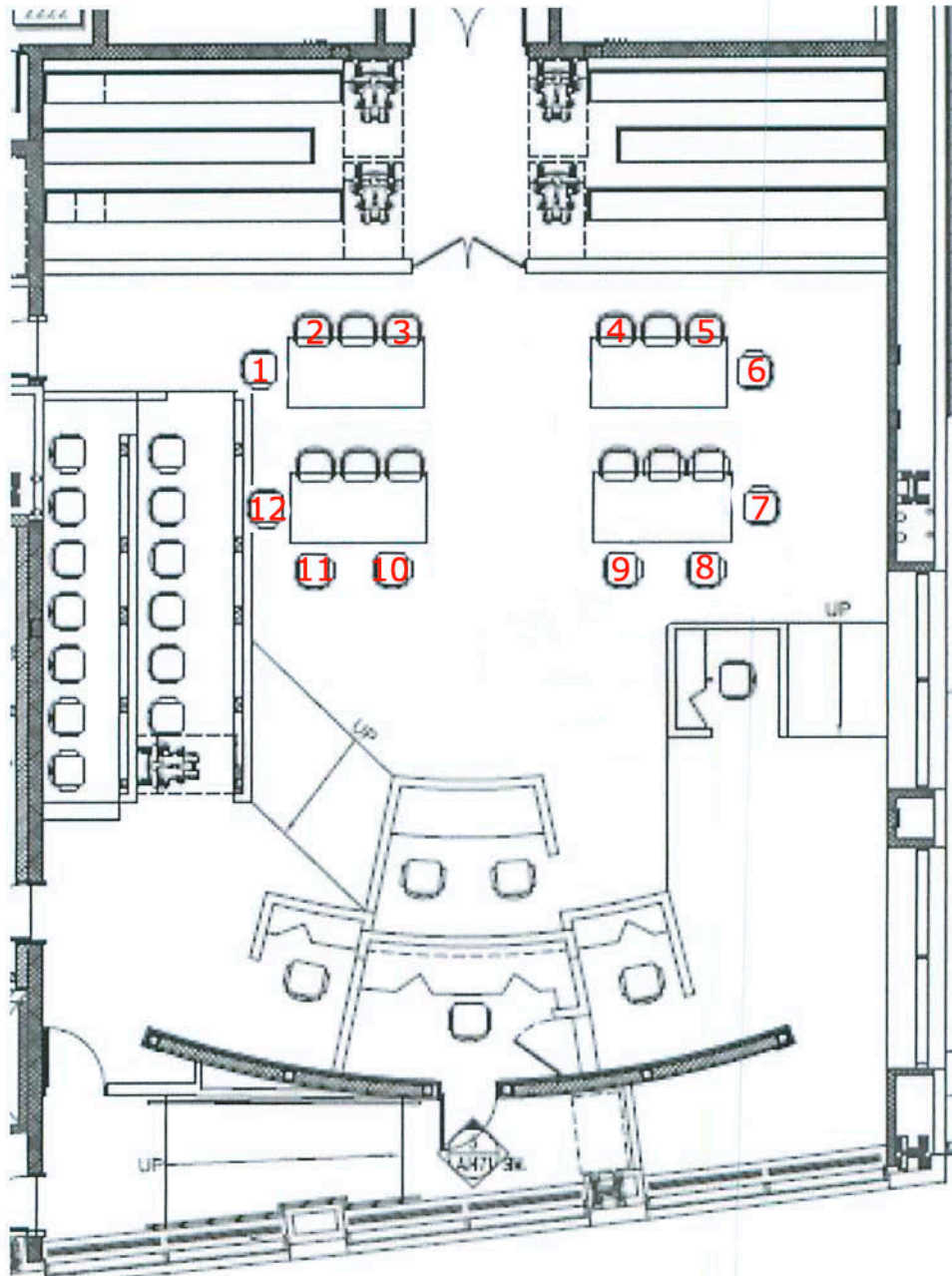
COURTROOM ONE – CEDAR RAPIDS

DIAGRAM 2 – CR JURY TRIAL



COURTROOM ONE – CEDAR RAPIDS

Diagram 3 – CR JURY DELIBERATION



COURTROOM TWO – CEDAR RAPIDS