

STATE OF KANSAS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



**REP. RON RYCKMAN**  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**January 4, 2021**

## **House implements additional safety protocols for 2021 legislative session**

House Speaker Ron Ryckman (R-Olathe) today announced additional safety protocols being implemented to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the Capitol when the Legislature convenes for the 2021 session.

“While we can’t entirely prevent infection until the vaccine is more widely available, we’re going to do what we can to keep Capitol employees, legislators and their families safe,” said Ryckman. “That’s the goal behind these additional safety measures.”

The Statehouse already operates with a mask guideline, hand-sanitizing stations and temperature checks, protocols that were put in place by the state earlier this year.

The House’s added protocols address committee meetings, the House chamber, House floor voting, and protection of public access to legislative activity. The changes are based on guidance that legislative leadership had requested last month from the University of Kansas Health System. New protocols being implemented include:

- Installing technology for Webex streaming in all 13 committee rooms
- Transitioning House committees to be paperless with online access to documents
- Social distancing of legislators on the House floor by utilizing House galleries to space members at least 6 feet apart
- Providing the option for stakeholders and members of the public to testify before committees remotely
- Implementing an electronic voting system for floor votes so that House members can securely vote from the House gallery and floor while maintaining appropriate distancing
- Making ongoing COVID-19 testing available for legislators and staff, and
- Providing masks for all House members

“If there’s a silver lining in all this for the Legislature, it’s that we were able to jumpstart many of things we’ve wanted to do to increase online access to the process,” said Ryckman. “Hopefully these added protocols will allow the legislative process to operate safely while still remaining accessible and transparent to the Kansans we’re here to serve.”

*See attached handout for a full listing of new House safety protocols.*

## Existing Statehouse Protocols



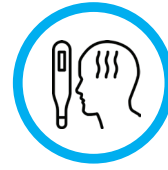
### MASKS

Statehouse guidelines regarding masks already in place



### HANDWASHING

Hand sanitizing stations maintained throughout Statehouse



### TEMP CHECKS

Temperature check machines already in place at Statehouse entry

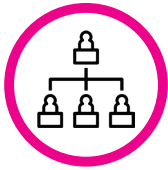


### LIMITED ACCESS

Building access limited to legislative business, otherwise by remote access

# HOUSE SESSION COVID SAFETY PROTOCOLS

## Added Committee Safety Protocols



### COMMITTEE SPACING

Committee members spaced 6ft apart with option to attend meetings virtually



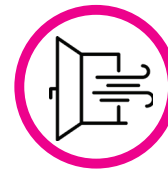
### REMOTE TESTIMONY

Option for stakeholders and members of the public to testify before committees remotely



### PAPERLESS COMMITTEES

Transition to paperless committees with all documents available to legislators & public online



### INCREASED VENTILATION

Committee room doors to remain open for increased ventilation



### WEBEX STREAMING

Webex technology and streaming in all committee rooms via the legislative website



### ADDED CLEANING

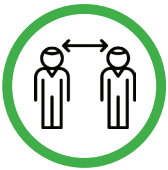
Increased cleaning & sanitizing between committee meetings

## Added House Floor Safety Protocols



### MASKS

Masks will be provided to House members and strongly encouraged per Statehouse policy



### DISTANCING

Members will be seated 6ft apart and spaced throughout the House chamber and galleries



### LIVESTREAMING

All House floor action will continue to be streamed daily on Youtube for public access



### E-VOTING

Electronic voting system on state-issued laptops for House members to cast floor votes



### CLEANING

Increased cleaning & sanitizing of the House chambers throughout the day



### COVID TESTING

Ongoing option for legislators and staff to be tested for COVID-19