

**MISSOURI CIRCUIT COURT
TWENTY-SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
(City of St. Louis)**

In re:

COVID-19

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) Division No. 1
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ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

WHEREAS, the existence and spread of the COVID-19, commonly known as the Coronavirus, has resulted in the declaration of a world-wide pandemic by the World Health Organization;

WHEREAS, the President of the United States has declared a national emergency, the Governor of the state of Missouri has executed an order declaring a state of emergency, the Mayor of the City of St. Louis has declared a public health emergency, all related to the Coronavirus;

WHEREAS, the 22nd Judicial Circuit Court has the imperative obligation to take reasonable and necessary steps to protect the health and safety of all employees of the 22nd Judicial Circuit, all judicial officers and all attorneys and parties who have court hearings or other business in this Judicial Circuit, while also balancing the rights of all these individuals by keeping the Courts open to the citizens of our community to ensure justice and access to judicial services;

WHEREAS, the Coronavirus may be spread through close contact between people when an infected person touches another person or sneezes or coughs in the presence of another person;

WHEREAS, the gathering of large numbers of people in close proximity to one another poses the risk of the spread of the Coronavirus;

WHEREAS, the Court has the obligation to take reasonable and necessary steps to protect the general public, litigants, lawyers and persons called for jury duty from exposure to the Coronavirus;

WHEREAS, the Presiding Judge has the general administrative authority over the 22nd Judicial Circuit, including the St. Louis City Municipal Court, pursuant to Article V, § 15 of the Missouri Constitution; § 478.240 RSMo. and Court Operating Rule 7, C.12.2.

THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

Effective Monday, March 16, 2020, and continuing through Friday, April 10, 2020, unless modified or extended by a subsequent administrative order, **the Circuit Court of the City of St. Louis will remain open, with the following modifications to its operations:**

ALL JURY TRIALS are hereby cancelled during this time period:

The Jury Supervisor is ordered to suspend the impaneling of jurors during this time period. Criminal jury trial cases are ordered to be continued to a date determined by the judge of the division in which the case is assigned. Civil jury trial cases are continued and ordered returned to Division 1 and shall be restored to an appropriate roll-over docket. Jury trials shall resume on Monday, April 13, 2020, unless the period of suspension of jury trial is extended by subsequent administrative order.

If you are a juror who has been summonsed for jury duty during this cancellation period:

Do not report for jury duty. Please contact the Jury Supervisor's Office at 314-622-4457, Tuesday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to reschedule your jury service.

If you are an attorney of record on a case scheduled for jury trial during this cancellation period:

Immediately contact your client to advise them of this Administrative Order. Please contact the Division Clerk of the assigned judge for rescheduling of cases.

If you are a party, represented by an attorney in a case scheduled for jury trial during this cancellation period:

Please contact your attorney immediately.

IN ALL CRIMINAL CASES where the defendant is confined in the Justice Center or Medium Security Institution in the City of St. Louis or at any other prison:

Defendants shall not be personally transported to or brought into court for any hearing, unless the judge assigned to the case specifically orders otherwise.

All hearings regarding any such defendants shall be conducted via videoconferencing, including initial appearance and arraignment hearings.

Judicial officers have the discretion to allow attorneys to appear by telephone if appropriate and cancel/continue hearings as appropriate and consistent with this Administrative Order.

Victims have the statutory right to participate in hearings – that right is not changed by this Administrative Order.

Probation officers shall not appear in person for probation proceedings unless specifically ordered by the assigned judge.

Judges shall have the discretion to exclude any individuals from their courtrooms, as to be in compliance with the recommendations of the Center of Disease Control.

Judges are encouraged to identify alternative methods for victims to participate in any hearings.

SEPARATE FROM THE ABOVE MATTERS, individual hearings on specific criminal, domestic and probate cases will proceed as currently scheduled unless the specific Judge assigned to that case takes action pursuant to this Administrative Order. Judicial officers are strongly encouraged to conduct any such hearings via videoconferencing if possible or consider alternative means to conduct said hearings. Additionally, judicial officers are strongly encouraged to continue such hearings consistent with this Administrative Order and guidelines from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention.

BULK DOCKETS or large volume dockets including but not limited to, cases pending before an Associate Circuit Court Judges, landlord/tenant cases, small claims cases, traffic and municipal cases, may be postponed and rescheduled, by specific order of the assigned judge. Each judge has the discretion to conduct said dockets via telephone or videoconferencing in lieu of a continuance.

Judges are encouraged to continue trials and hearings, consistent with directives from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, as well as any Orders by the Governor of the State of Missouri, the Mayor of the City of St. Louis, and the Chief Justice of the Missouri Supreme Court.

Each judge and his/her division clerk shall be responsible for notifying all parties and attorney of record if the cases are being continued. If a cases is continued, each judge and his/her division clerk is responsible for re-scheduling new hearing dates.

FULL ORDER OF PROTECTION hearings that are presently scheduled for the March 16, 2020 through April 13, 2020 will be continued for two weeks from the date of the currently scheduled hearing, pursuant to Section 455.040.1 R.S.Mo., for good cause as demonstrated in this Administrative Order. All Ex Parte Orders of Protection currently in existence will be extended by operation of this Administrative Order until the new hearing date. The assigned judge may reschedule any such hearing for good cause.

TREATMENT COURT: The Treatment Court Administrator is authorized to suspend programs in the Treatment Court consistent with this Administrative Order, including:

Temporarily limiting regular Friday morning screenings and Wednesday morning admissions dockets, for the next four weeks.

Cases already on our admissions docket shall be moved to Wednesday, April 8, 2020.

All defendant previously ordered to enter a Treatment Court program on the admissions docket of March 18, 2020, shall follow that order and formally accept the individual at that time.

Any defendant previously determined eligible for a Treatment Court program, may be ordered to enter Treatment Court prior to April 8, 2020, and those defendants will be accommodated immediately on an individual basis.

JUVENILE COURT: The Court Administrator is authorized to review programs and operations of Juvenile Court consistent with this Administrative Order.

Staff shall adhere to the protocols listed in the Court Administrator's email to the Juvenile Division staff dated March 14, 2020.

The Custody and Safe Exchange program will continue but may have reduced hours.

Regarding hearings scheduled in the Juvenile Division of the 22nd Circuit Court, all detention hearings will proceed as scheduled. Hearings for juveniles held in judicial custody within the St. Louis Detention Center shall be held as scheduled and may be held by video. All other delinquency cases may be continued for good cause at the discretion of the judicial officer. All protective custody hearings will proceed as scheduled. Other hearings in child abuse and neglect cases may be continued for good cause as long as they will not be out of time as required by the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act.

STAFF ATTENDANCE: Employees who exhibit symptoms of influenza or other respiratory infections (coughing, shortness of breath) or have a fever (of 100.4 degrees or higher) should not return to work until they have stopped taking fever reducing medicines and have been fever free for 48 hours. They should continue to monitor their temperature and call their physician if they believe it is appropriate. The employee shall notify his/her supervisor of the condition using the normal call off procedures for his/her unit. Dr. Echols has confirmed that our City provided health benefits will pay for a staff to be tested. However, this must be ordered by your medical provider and arranged through that referral. More information on testing will be provided as the City scales up other efforts.

ALL FRIDAY AFTERNOON WEDDING are cancelled until further notice.

REASONABLE RESTRICTIONS ON VISITORS to the Carnahan Court House, Civil Courts Building and the Juvenile Court is necessary to protect the judges, employees, litigants, and attorneys, who will still be accessing these courthouses. Therefore, effective immediately, the following persons shall not enter any of these courthouses:

Persons who are not a named party, attorney of record, or under compelled attendance by subpoena, in cases scheduled for hearing or trial, not otherwise required to be rescheduled under this Administrative Order.

Persons who have travelled to any foreign country within the last 14 days;

Persons who reside or have had close contact with someone who has travelled to any foreign country within the last 14 days;

Persons who have been asked to self-quarantine by any doctor, hospital or health agency;

Persons who have been diagnosed with, or have had contact with, anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19;

Persons with unexplained fever, cough or shortness of breath.

Anyone attempting to enter in violation of these protocols will be denied entry by the Sheriff of the city of St. Louis or his assigned deputies.

People who think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider immediately.

THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS MUNICIPAL COURT is subject to this Administrative Order and is encouraged to take appropriate action consistent with this Administrative Order and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

The presiding Judge of the 22nd Judicial Circuit shall take further actions concerning court operations as warranted to address the current public health emergency.

This Administrative Order shall be posted on the 22nd Judicial Circuit website: <http://www.stlcircuitcourt.com/>. Please continue to check this website for further information.

SO ORDERED:



Rex M. Burlison
Presiding Judge

Dated: March 16, 2020