

24th Judicial District Court

Parish of Jefferson

State of Louisiana

ORDER

Acting in accordance with Louisiana Constitution Article V, Section 1; pursuant to LSA R.S. 1:55; due to the COVID-19 emergency as detailed in Governor John Bel Edwards's Declaration of Public Health Emergency (Executive Department Proclamation No. JBE 2020-25 and JBE 2020-27) and Jefferson Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng's Declaration of State of Emergency (Proclamation No. 01 CLS 2020; Jefferson Parish CB 3434 Page 979), and in accordance with the inherent powers of this court, the Chief Judge, acting on behalf of the Judges of the 24th Judicial District Court,

HEREBY ORDERS THAT:

Due to the unprecedented pandemic as referenced in the above-captioned emergency declarations, and in accordance with the 24th Judicial District Court's Continuity of Operations Plan, the 24th Judicial District Court adopts the following emergency plan, **which shall be effective from March 15, 2020 until April 13, 2020:**

That all civil jury trials are suspended for the duration of this order, and that attorneys and litigants with such scheduled trials are ordered to contact the appropriate division of court for rescheduling;

That all criminal jury trials are suspended for the duration of this order except in cases where La. C. Cr. P. Art. 701 speedy-trial motions have been filed in pre-trial detained individuals' cases to avoid violation of any constitutional rights;¹

In all other matters, that any party or defendant with notice to appear from March 15, 2020 through April 13, 2020 and desiring a continuance is ordered contact the appropriate division for further instructions and those granted a continuance must appear on or before May 15, 2020 for service;

That the 24th Judicial District Court will follow guidance from the Louisiana Supreme Court including:

Restricting court settings to emergency and time-sensitive settings when possible;

Staggering docket schedules to reduce the number of people in a space at the same time;

¹ Note: La. C. Cr. P. Art. 701 (E) defines "Just cause" as "any grounds beyond the control of the State or the Court."

Allowing employees to work from home to do so when possible;

Expanding use of audio and/or video conferencing in meeting, discovery conferences, scheduling conferences, bail settings, first appearance settings, and hearings on post-convictions whenever possible and pursuant to Appendix 15.3 of the Rules for District Courts;

That additional screening shall be required and that entry to the courthouse shall be denied to those have traveled to China, Italy, Iran, or South Korea within the last 14 days; reside or have had close contact with someone who has traveled in one of the above areas within the last 14 days; have been asked to self-quarantine by any hospital or health agency; or have been diagnosed with, or have had contact with, anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, and that those denied entry are ordered to contact the appropriate division for further instructions and must appear on or before May 15, 2020 for service;

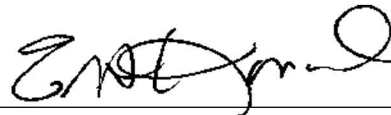
That attorneys, litigants, visitors, and members of the public who are at higher risk of serious illness due to the COVID-19 pandemic according to the Centers for Disease Control, including but not limited to factors such as age and serious health condition² should refrain from entering the courthouse and that those persons are ordered to contact the appropriate division for further instructions;

That employees at higher risk of serious illness due to the COVID-19 pandemic according to the Centers for Disease Control, including but not limited to factors such as age and serious health condition¹ be permitted to work remotely as possible;

If the conditions indicate that the Court needs to adjust the above policy, notice will be posted on the Court's website (www.24jdc.us), the Louisiana Supreme Court website (www.lasc.org), and in the news media.

Gretna, Louisiana this 13th day of March, 2020.

For the 24th Judicial District Court



Ellen Shirer Kovach
Chief Judge

² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html#who-is-higher-risk>