



**CHIEF JUDGE ORDER 2020-03  
STATE OF COLORADO  
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

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**COVID-19 ORDER FOR LIMITED COURT  
OPERATIONS THROUGH MAY 1, 2020**

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This Order is being issued to provide further guidance to parties and attorneys during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. In response to this pandemic, the court issued an order that began to limit court operations. See CJO 2020-02 Covid-19 Order for Matters Set Through May 1, 2020. The purpose of that Order was to limit large gatherings and in-person proceedings and contacts.

Later the same day, Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Coats declared that the courts “can no longer continue normal operations and must . . . operate on an emergency basis” through April 3, 2020. See Order Regarding COVID-19 and Operation of Colorado State Courts (“SCT Order”). The Chief Justice suspended all jury calls (except those facing imminent speedy trial deadlines), and identified ten classes of matters or operations that could not be suspended. With the exception of these essential matters or operations, the Chief Judge of each district must continue to determine how to operate the district through the pandemic. In doing so, the Chief Judge must “make every effort to facilitate work from remote locations and to minimize or eliminate in-person proceedings and contact.” SCT Order.

Pursuant to such directives and to balance the need for continued court operations and the safety of staff and citizens, the court issues this Order to further clarify the limited court operations through May 1, 2020. THIS ORDER APPLIES ONLY TO OPERATIONS THROUGH MAY 1, 2020.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

- Jefferson County Combined Courts will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm., Monday to Friday, except legal holidays. However, the Chief Judge, Court Executive, Chief Probation Officer, Clerk of Court, and/or Court Security are authorized to deny entrance to or removal from the courthouse of any person showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19. The courts shall work directly and cooperatively with the local Sheriff’s Office to enforce this order.
- Gilpin County Combined Courts will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 pm., Monday to Friday, except legal holidays. However, the Chief Judge, Court Executive, Chief Probation Officer, Clerk of Court, and/or Court Security are authorized to deny entrance to or removal from the

courthouse of any person showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19. The courts shall work directly and cooperatively with the local Sheriff's Office to enforce this order.

- Court staffing will be reduced as coordinated by the Court Executive and Chief Probation Officer with the approval of the Chief Judge.
- Public may enter the Clerk's Offices from 9:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m. to conduct business. The public shall utilize U.S. mail, online options, or phone inquiries, whenever permissible, rather than travel to court. FILING OF NON-EMERGENCY MATTERS IS STRONGLY DISCOURAGED UNTIL AFTER MAY 1, 2020.
- No weddings will be performed.
- As used in this Order, the phrase "vacate and continue" means that the scheduled date for the matter is vacated and will be rescheduled for a date after May 1, 2020. Although court staff may attempt to reschedule the matter, the parties are ultimately responsible for doing so by contacting court staff.
- Should parties and attorneys have any questions, they should contact court staff by telephone, rather than travel to court. Additional contact information is found on the court's website.
- Parties shall avoid bringing additional persons to the courthouse.

#### **DISTRICT COURT CASES (JEFFERSON AND GILPIN)**

- Criminal and civil jury trials are vacated and continued unless: (1) there are speedy trial constraints; or (2) the judicial officer finds exigent circumstances in consultation with the Chief Judge.
- On criminal docket days (each Monday), judicial officers will continue to see in-custody defendants and reschedule out-of-custody defendants. When in-custody defendants appear, judicial officers will reschedule such matters after May 1, 2020.
- Other trials, hearings, conferences, or matters not referenced above, are vacated and continued unless the judicial officer reschedules such matters for a telephonic appearance when appropriate. For example, judicial officers will not be holding motions hearings, permanent orders hearings, or bench trials.

#### **PROBATE COURT CASES**

- All probate matters are vacated and continued with the following exceptions: (1) emergency and/or temporary petitions for protective proceedings (conservatorships and/or guardianships); (2) all mental health hearings will be conducted telephonically or rescheduled; and (3) matters requiring immediate action shall be appropriately designated for the judicial officer, who will then determine the need for a hearing in consultation with the Chief Judge.

#### **JUVENILE COURT CASES**

- Juvenile matters are being reviewed by the judicial officer, who has the discretion to vacate and continue if good cause is found and a continuance serves the child's best interest. The court anticipates that most matters will be continued and vacated by the judicial officer. Emergency matters requiring immediate action shall be appropriately designated for the judicial officer, who will then determine the need for a hearing in consultation with the Chief Judge.

#### **JEFFERSON COUNTY COURT CRIMINAL CASES**

- Criminal trials are vacated and continued unless: (1) there are speedy trial constraints; or (2) the judicial officer finds exigent circumstances in consultation with the Chief Judge.

- On criminal docket days, judicial officers will continue to see in-custody defendants and reschedule out-of-custody defendants. For out-of-custody defendants, the court will offer the option of extending the court appearance through a written acknowledgement and waiver of speedy trial without the need to appear before May 1, 2020.
- Day duty 10 a.m. advisements will continue as follows: (1) in-custody defendants will be advised via video conference; and (2) out-of-custody defendants set for return of filing of charges or return on a felony summons will be given a PH/DH date. Attorneys may accept the charges and the new date by electronic acknowledgement to the duty division staff without appearance.
- Day Duty 1:15 p.m. traffic/misdemeanor arraignments for appearances on summons will continue as follows: (1) defendants may appear as scheduled; or (2) defendants may appear exactly eight weeks from the date and time scheduled for arraignment. If that date is a court holiday, the defendants shall appear the following business day.

#### **JEFFERSON COUNTY COURT CIVIL CASES**

- Civil matters (including returns) are vacated and continued. This includes all civil cases, including without limitation trials, replevins, collections, FEDs, possessions, and contempt citations.
- Petitions for name changes are vacated and continued
- Small claims matters (including returns) are vacated and continued.
- Temporary and permanent protection order hearings will be heard as scheduled or rescheduled by the judicial officer.

#### **GILPIN COUNTY COURT CRIMINAL CASES**

- Criminal trials are vacated and continued unless: (1) there are speedy trial constraints; or (2) the judicial officer finds exigent circumstances in consultation with the Chief Judge.
- On criminal docket days, judicial officers will continue to see in-custody defendants. Appearances by out-of-custody defendants have been vacated and continued.

#### **GILPIN COUNTY COURT CIVIL CASES**

- All civil matters (including returns) are vacated and continued. This includes all civil cases, including without limitation trials, replevins, collections, FEDs, possessions, and contempt citations.
- Petitions for name changes are vacated and continued
- Small claims matters (including returns) are vacated and continued.
- Temporary and permanent protection order hearings will be heard as scheduled or rescheduled by the judicial officer.

#### **MAGISTRATE CASES**

- Magistrates will continue to hear the following matters: (1) temporary protective custody; (2) juvenile detentions; (3) temporary civil protection orders; (4) motions to restrict parenting time; and (5) emergency issues limited to access to minor children or critical family support.
- Juvenile delinquency trials and proceedings are vacated and continued unless: (1) there are speedy trial constraints; or (2) the judicial officer finds exigent circumstances in consultation with the Chief Judge.
- Dependency and neglect cases with statutory deadlines will be heard as paper reviews unless the judicial officer finds exigent circumstances in consultation with the Chief Judge. A separate, joint plan with the County Attorney's Office is anticipated to be issued by March 23, 2020.

- Unless otherwise noted, all other matters before magistrates are vacated and continued (including dependency and neglect, domestic, child support, and all juvenile matters).

#### **PROBLEM SOLVING COURTS**

- All dockets are vacated and continued. Probation and coordinators will continue to monitor participants. However, in-custody defendants accepted to a problem solving court will appear in court shortly after acceptance.
- Courts will continue to order screens for problem solving courts.
- FIT court docket is vacated and continued.

#### **TRUANCY COURT**

- All truancy matters are vacated for the remainder of the academic year.

#### **PROBATION**

- Probation clients will be supervised in a modified manner as directed by the Chief Probation Officer.
- Probation staffing will be reduced as directed by the Chief Probation Officer.
- Probation officers will no longer appear in court unless required for probation revocation hearings for in-custody defendants or otherwise ordered by the judicial officer.

To the extent there is a conflict between other Chief Judge Orders, this order governs through May 1, 2020.

March 18, 2020



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Jeffrey R. Pilkington, Chief Judge  
First Judicial District