

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS

Administrative Order No. 20-02

ORDER REGARDING COURT OPERATIONS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

This Order is being issued in response to the recent outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Johnson County Kansas. As of the date of this Order, there are four confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Johnson County and one confirmed death in Kansas. Although for many this disease appears to cause only flu-like symptoms, for others it can pose a serious risk.

In February of this year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") issued "Interim Guidance" recommending that all employers consider how best to decrease the spread of COVID-19¹. On March 11, 2020, The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic². On March 12, 2020, Kansas Governor Laura Kelly declared a state of emergency to address this developing threat.

Given the significant number of identified and projected cases of COVID-19 and the severity of risk posed to the public, and given the recommendations from local public health authorities, it is hereby ORDERED that, effective Friday, March 13, 2020:

1. The Kansas 10th Judicial District courthouse remains open. Staff in the Clerk's Office will remain open for filings, including contact by telephone.
2. The Help Center is open via telephone and e-mail. In-person consultations are not available until further notice.
3. Electronic filings may still be made through the JIMS system. The public is encouraged to continue utilizing available court resources.
4. All jury trials (civil and criminal) scheduled through May 1, 2020, are CONTINUED pending further Order of the Court.
5. All non-jury court proceedings scheduled for an in-court appearance through May 1, 2020 may be CONTINUED by the presiding judge. Case-by-case exceptions for continuances provided herein may be ordered for non-jury matters at the discretion of the Court after consultation with counsel.
6. All non-essential Chapter 61 Limited Actions hearings scheduled through May 1, 2020 shall be CONTINUED pending further Order of the Court. Plaintiff's attorneys are required to obtain a new hearing date and properly notify defendant(s). Further information on all Chapter 61 cases is available at http://courts.jocogov.org/dc_limitation.aspx.
7. In criminal cases, the Court has a reduced ability to obtain an adequate spectrum of jurors. COVID-19 dictates consideration of the health and welfare of our citizen jurors. The availability of counsel and Court staff is also impacted. Therefore, the time period of

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html>.

² <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>.

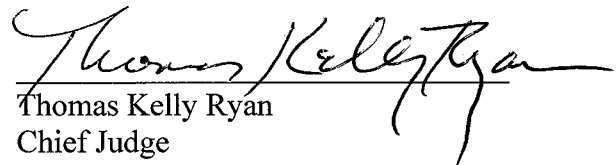
the continuances implemented by this Order is tolled. The Court specifically finds that this public health concern demands that the Court take all precautions to protect the health of the public and judicial branch employees alike.

8. The Court will continue to hear matters at the courthouse as determined by the individual judge. This Order does not affect the Court's consideration of any matters that can be resolved without oral argument or court appearance.

Visit www.courts.jocogov.org for up-to-date information on individual dockets. We will post all notices for each department online. All attorneys registered to practice in the 10th Judicial District will receive specific details through listserv notifications.

The Court will take a phased response based on our evaluation of developing data and public health recommendations about the current pandemic.

BY ORDER OF THE COURT this 13th day of March 2020.


Thomas Kelly Ryan
Chief Judge