



Orleans Parish Juvenile Court
1100-B Milton Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70122

CHIEF JUDGE

CANDICE BATES ANDERSON

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JUDGES

ERNESTINE S. GRAY
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ORLEANS PARISH JUVENILE COURT
STATE OF LOUISIANA
ORDER OF CLOSURE

PURSUANT to the provisions of R.S. 1:55, Ranord J. Darensburg, Judicial Administrator of the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court has requested the closure of the Sections of Court of the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court for the dates of Thursday, April 2, 2020 through Monday, April 13, 2020 with extensions as updated information due to the emergency situation created by the COVID-19 virus. In the interest of public safety and to protect the constitutional rights of Juveniles, Orleans Parish Juvenile Court will conduct emergency proceedings in delinquency and dependency cases consistent with the May 23, 2020 order by the Louisiana Supreme Court. Orleans Parish Juvenile Court will be replacing in-person filings with filings by other means including US Mail, facimile at (504) 658-9556 and email with Clerk of Court at lmcotton@nola.gov. The Clerk of Court will accept bond payments by appointments made at the Juvenile Court website (<https://www.nola.gov/juvenile-court/>). As set forth in Section 5 of the Proclamation Number JBE 2020-30 by Governor John Bell Edwards, all legal deadlines shall be suspended until at least April 13, 2020 The Judicial Administrator renders it hazardous for the general public and staff of Orleans Parish Juvenile Court.

In accordance with the orders set forth by the Louisiana Supreme Court, courts are further instructed to follow all guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control, the President and the Governor, and to further limit access to courtroom and other spaces to the maximum number of people set forth in any future guideline or official proclamation that may be issued. All essential court functions should be conducted with the use of video and telephone conferencing whenever possible. Any court lacking the technological capabilities to implement this mandate shall notify the Judicial Administrator of the Louisiana Supreme Court so that accommodations can be made.

The Louisiana Supreme Court further provides that civil matters including but not limited to civil protective orders, child in need of care proceedings, emergency child custody matters, proceedings for children removed from their home by emergency court order, should be conducted via video and/or telephone conferencing proceedings.

WHEREAS Courts around the country have extended or issued orders of closure due to COVID-19ⁱ as guided by national news from the President, Health Department, and local government. Courts in areas hit the hardest such as Washington have closed through the end of April or into May.ⁱⁱ

WHEREAS As of March 31, 2020 the U.S. President, in response to the pandemic, has said this is a “matter of life or death” and urged the United States population to heed guidelines to continue social distancing and stay home. President Trump has stated that “We're going to go

through a very tough two weeks." New projections estimated that the United States could see 100,000-240,000 deaths from COVID-19 if current measures are maintained.ⁱⁱⁱ

WHEREAS As of March 31, 2020, 1,834 positive COVID-19 cases were reported in Orleans Parish.^{iv} The highly contagious nature of COVID-19, the long contagion period (14 days), the high rates of hospitalizations (20%)^v, and the death rate (especially among the population over age 40)^{vi} make the virus an extreme risk to the public and staff working and gathering at the court building.

WHEREAS The Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards on March 31st ordered an additional 1,000 hospital beds added to the already in-construction temporary hospital at the Morial Convention Center. Louisiana estimates that even though additional ventilators are being sent to the state, the state will be out of ventilators as of April 4th due to the rise in number of cases. "The governor this week has extended his statewide stay-at-home order from April 13 until April 30, 2020 and has previously indicated restrictions could be in place well into May."^{vii}

WHEREAS on March 19, 2020, the New Orleans Civil District Court issued an amended order, stating that the New Orleans Civil District Court, First and Second City Court, and the Clerk of Civil District Court will be closed until "resolution of the matter"

Acting in accordance with LA. Const. Art. V., Subsection I and the inherent power of this Court, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

The Sections of Court of Orleans Parish Juvenile Court, Parish of Orleans, State of Louisiana and the Orleans Parish Juvenile Clerk of Court's office shall be closed Thursday, April 2 through Monday, April 13, 2020 is received for court proceedings until the pandemic exposure and risk has reduced in Orleans Parish.

Orleans Parish Juvenile Court will abide by all orders of the Louisiana Supreme Court to hold essential hearings via phone and/or video conference as available, as set forth in the March 23, 2020 order of that court. Orleans Parish Juvenile Court will abide by further orders of the Louisiana Supreme Court pursuant to this emergency should they be made.

Court proceedings will resume Tuesday, April 14, 2020.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA this 1st day of April 2020.



Candice Bates Anderson, Chief Judge

ⁱ <https://www.paulhastings.com/about-us/advice-for-businesses-in-dealing-with-the-expanding-coronavirus-events/u.s.-court-closings-cancellations-and-restrictions-due-to-covid-19>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.courts.wa.gov/index.cfm?fa=home.courtClosures> and

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.nola.com/news/coronavirus/article_af800168-73a2-11ea-b667-8b3d1ec9f61c.html

^{iv} https://www.nola.com/news/coronavirus/article_7cb2af1c-6414-11ea-b729-93612370dd94.html

^v https://www.nola.com/news/coronavirus/article_e33c0cf0-7090-11ea-b3da-53f5ab31dd4b.html

^{vi} https://www.nola.com/news/coronavirus/article_7cb2af1c-6414-11ea-b729-93612370dd94.html

^{vii} https://www.nola.com/news/coronavirus/article_d6ae18bc-7382-11ea-82e4-7fba06b687bd.html