

**CRIMINAL DISTRICT COURT FOR THE PARISH OF ORLEANS**  
**STATE OF LOUISIANA**

**ORDER**

Acting in accordance with La. Const. Art. V, Sec. 1 and the inherent power of this Court and considering the emergency created by COVID-19,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED THAT:

The Criminal District Court for the Parish of Orleans orders the Department of Corrections to cease and desist the transportation of all inmates effective Monday, March 16, 2020 until further notice.

All emergency matters may be presented to the below named judges and contact information is as follows:

Deputy Chief Judge Robin D. Pittman: 504 913 6581, [rpittman@criminalcourt.org](mailto:rpittman@criminalcourt.org)  
Former Chief Judge Keva Landrum: 504 234 1669, [klandrum@criminalcourt.org](mailto:klandrum@criminalcourt.org)

Every effort will be made to post this and any further Orders on the Court's website ([www.criminalcourt.org](http://www.criminalcourt.org)) and the websites of the Louisiana Supreme Court ([www.lasc.org](http://www.lasc.org)), the Louisiana State Bar Association ([www.lsba.org](http://www.lsba.org)) and the New Orleans Bar Association ([www.noba.org](http://www.noba.org))

Signed at New Orleans, Louisiana this 14<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.

  
ROBIN D. PITTMAN  
DEPUTY CHIEF JUDGE

PLEASE SERVE VIA EMAIL:

1. Appendix 1.7 of Criminal District Court's COOP - Disaster Declaration and Communication Procedures (attached)
2. Secretary of State James M. LeBlanc  
c/o Stephanie Lamartinere ([slamarti@corrections.state.la.us](mailto:slamarti@corrections.state.la.us))



# Criminal District Court

PARISH OF ORLEANS

OFFICE OF THE  
JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATOR

**ROBERT J. KAZIK**  
JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATOR

**SHANNON C. SIMS**  
DEPUTY JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATOR

2700 TULANE AVENUE, SUITE 200  
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70119  
TEL: (504) 658-9100  
FAX: (504) 658-9113

March 13, 2020

Honorable Bernette J. Johnson  
Chief Justice  
Louisiana Supreme Court  
400 Royal Street  
New Orleans LA 70130

RE: COVID-19

Dear Chief Justice Johnson:

The Orleans Parish Criminal District Court En Banc issues the following statement:

Pursuant to the attached Louisiana State Governor John Bel Edwards' Executive Department Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020 Public Health Emergency – COVID-19, the City of New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell's Mayoral Proclamation of a State of Emergency Due to COVID-19 and the Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Bernette J. Johnson's letter dated March 12, 2020 to all Chief Judges:

1. Jurors who are serving in the month of March 2020 have been dismissed;
2. Sections of Court will schedule dockets to reduce the number of people in a space at a time; and
3. To the extent possible, the Court will utilize audio and/or video conferencing for certain court proceedings.

The Court will continue its efforts to protect the public's safety in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Please continue to check the Court's website for further updates.

With best regards,

Robin D. Pittman  
Deputy Chief Judge

## Attachments

cc: Honorable Judges Criminal District Court  
Magistrate Commissioners  
Commissioner Teneshia Stevens, City of New Orleans  
Honorable Arthur Morrell, Clerk of Court  
Derwyn Bunton, Orleans Parish Public Defenders Office  
Honorable Marlin Gusman, Sheriff  
Honorable Leon Cannizzaro  
Robert Kazik, Judicial Administrator



# Supreme Court

STATE OF LOUISIANA  
New Orleans

CHIEF JUSTICE  
BERNETTE J. JOHNSON  
JUSTICES  
WILLIAM J. CRAIN  
SCOTT J. CRICHTON  
JAMES T. GENOVESE  
MARCUS R. CLARK  
JEFFERSON D. HUGHES III  
JOHN L. WEIMER

Seventh District  
First District  
Second District  
Third District  
Fourth District  
Fifth District  
Sixth District

JOHN TARLTON OLIVIER  
CLERK OF COURT  
400 ROYAL STREET  
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70130  
TELEPHONE (504) 310-2300  
HOME PAGE <http://www.lasc.org>

March 12, 2020

Dear Chief Judges:

Both the Center for Disease Control and the Louisiana Department of Health have advised people to take precautions in light of the COVID-19 virus (coronavirus) outbreak, and Governor John Bel Edwards has declared a public health emergency. In light of these developments, I wanted to assure you that we are monitoring the situation closely and we offer the following advice and recommendations.

First and foremost, we must handle this public health crisis in a way that protects the health and safety of everyone at our court facilities, while at the same time, to the extent possible, maintains access to the courts. In meeting these strategic goals, the courts are strongly encouraged to implement social distancing strategies to slow and possibly prevent exposure of the COVID-19 virus. As such, our courts are strongly encouraged to:

- Restrict court settings to emergency and time-sensitive settings;
- Stagger the scheduling of dockets to reduce the number of people in a space at the same time;
- Stagger essential court staff in attendance for court hearings to limit the pooling of people unnecessarily in a space at the same time;
- Encourage employees that can work remotely from home to do so; and

- Expand the use of audio and/or video conferencing in meeting, discovery conferences, scheduling conferences, bail settings, first appearance settings (where possible) hearings on post-convictions (to reduce unnecessary travel on detention centers and inmates).

Minimizing the number of people entering the courts is essential to slowing and preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus outbreak. While you are in the best position to know what is optimal for your court, we recommend that all civil and criminal hearings and jury trials be continued, if possible, except as determined by the courts in regards to cases where speedy-trial motions have been filed in pre-trial detained individuals' cases to avoid violation of any constitutional rights. You may also wish to consider reducing the size of your jury pools for the time being.

Attached is an initial communication that we forwarded to our employees. For your information, the Louisiana Supreme Court will remain open for filings and other court business, while allowing non-essential employees to work remotely. Oral arguments scheduled for next week will be rescheduled. My "State of the Judiciary" address and reception, previously set for Tuesday, March 17, 2020, will also be rescheduled. If you adopt any orders affecting your court, please email them to us at [rgunn@lasc.org](mailto:rgunn@lasc.org) so we may post them on the Supreme Court website.

We will be posting information and resources on the Supreme Court website at [www.lasc.org](http://www.lasc.org). In addition, attached are some sample court Orders and notices. Additional resources are below:

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) | CDC  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) | Department of Health | State of Louisiana  
<http://ldh.la.gov/coronavirus/>

Preparing for a Pandemic: An Emergency Response Benchbook and Operational Guidebook for State Court Judges and Administrators - Courthouse Facilities - National Center for State Courts  
<https://ncsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/facilities/id/194/>

Coronavirus Information | Office of Governor John Bel Edwards  
<https://gov.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/89>

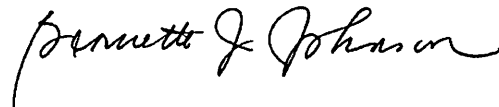
March 12, 2020

Gov. Edwards Declares Public Health Emergency in Response to COVID-19 |  
Office of Governor John Bel Edwards

<https://gov.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/detail/2400>

Our collective cooperation and implementation of these recommendations are essential in slowing and preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus outbreak. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bernette J. Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bernette" being more prominent.

Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson

Attachments

cc: Justices  
Judges  
Court Administrators



***The Criminal District Court Disaster Recovery Committee was composed of the following:***

## **DISASTER RECOVERY COMMITTEE**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Judge Karen Herman, Chief Judge  | <a href="mailto:kherman@criminalcourt.org">kherman@criminalcourt.org</a>         |
| Robin Pittman, Deputy Chief Judge  | <a href="mailto:rpittman@criminalcourt.org">rpittman@criminalcourt.org</a>       |
| Keva Landrum, Chairperson  | <a href="mailto:klandrum@criminalcourt.org">klandrum@criminalcourt.org</a>       |
| Rob Kazik, Criminal Court Judicial Administrator   | <a href="mailto:rkazik@criminalcourt.org">rkazik@criminalcourt.org</a>           |
| Shannon Sims, Criminal Court Deputy Judicial Administrator, Disaster Liaison               | <a href="mailto:ssims@criminalcourt.org">ssims@criminalcourt.org</a>             |
| Paige Cline, District Attorney's Office  | <a href="mailto:pcline@orleansda.com">pcline@orleansda.com</a>                   |
| Keith Johnson, Criminal Clerk's Office   | <a href="mailto:ktjohnson@nola.gov">ktjohnson@nola.gov</a>                       |
| Joseph Dier, Probation and Parole District Manager, Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections | <a href="mailto:jdier@corrections.state.la.us">jdier@corrections.state.la.us</a> |
| Seann Halligan, Criminal Court MIS   | <a href="mailto:shalligan@criminalcourt.org">shalligan@criminalcourt.org</a>     |
| Derwyn Bunton, Orleans Public Defender   | <a href="mailto:dbunton@opdla.org">dbunton@opdla.org</a>                         |
| Eddie Walters, CEO, Municipal and Traffic Court  | <a href="mailto:emwalters@nola.gov">emwalters@nola.gov</a>                       |
| Kevin Seuzeneau, Sergeant, NOPD  | <a href="mailto:kseuzeneau@nola.gov">kseuzeneau@nola.gov</a>                     |

## ***APPENDIX 1.7 Disaster Declaration and Communication Procedures***

The following steps will be taken in the event of a disruption of the normal operations of the Court are interrupted.

1. The Chief Judge or her/his designee shall Issue an Order declaring a State of Emergency or temporary closure of the Court and include within the Order an expected date for normal operations to resume. See Appendix 1.11 for sample closure orders.
2. This Order shall be mailed and e-mailed to all Judges of the Criminal District Court, District Attorney, Sheriff, Orleans Public Defenders and NOPD and Parochial Officials; posted on our web site and shall specifically be sent by mail and email to:

Chief Justice Bernette Johnson  
 Supreme Court of Louisiana  
 400 Royal Street  
 New Orleans, LA 70130  
 504-310-2350 tel  
 504-310-2359 fax

Email [bjohnson@lasc.org](mailto:bjohnson@lasc.org)

Louisiana Supreme Court  
 Sandra Vujnovich  
 400 Royal Street  
 New Orleans, LA 70130  
 504-310-2550 tel  
 504-310-2606 fax

Email [svujnovich@lasc.org](mailto:svujnovich@lasc.org)

Judge Terri F. Love  
 Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal  
 410 Royal Street  
 New Orleans, LA 70130  
 504-412-6072 tel  
 504-412-6071 fax  
 504-237-3290 cell

Email [TFL@fourthcir-app@state.la.us](mailto:TFL@fourthcir-app@state.la.us)

Judge Christopher Bruno  
 Civil District Court  
 421 Loyola Avenue  
 New Orleans, LA 70112  
 504-407-0250 tel  
 504-522-2660 fax

Email [cbruno@orleanscdc.com](mailto:cbruno@orleanscdc.com)

Chief Judge James McKay  
 Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal  
 410 Royal Street  
 New Orleans, LA 70130  
 504-412-6050 tel  
 504-412-6053 fax

Email [jfm@la4th.org](mailto:jfm@la4th.org)

Louisiana District Judges Association  
 President Judge Guy Bradberry  
 14<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court  
 P O Box 3210  
 Lake Charles, LA 70602  
 337-437-3363 tel  
 337-437-3390 fax

Email: [hoguybrad@aol.com](mailto:hoguybrad@aol.com)

Louisiana State Bar Association  
 601 St. Charles Avenue  
 New Orleans, LA 70130-3404  
 (800) 421-LSBA (5722) ext. 113  
 504-619-0113  
 (504) 566-1600  
 504-566-0930 - fax  
 Loretta Larsen, Executive Director  
 Darren Trittel, Web Master

Email [loretta@lsba.org](mailto:loretta@lsba.org)

Email [dtittel@lsba.org](mailto:dtittel@lsba.org)

The New Orleans Bar Association  
 Helena N. Henderson  
 Executive Director  
 New Orleans Bar Foundation  
 650 Poydras Street, Suite 1505  
 New Orleans, LA 70130  
 504-525-7453 tel  
 504-525-6549 fax

Email [hhenderson@neworleansbar.org](mailto:hhenderson@neworleansbar.org)

***All divisions, departments and parochial officials should inform the above key personnel of any staff and/or information changes.***