

CIVIL DISTRICT COURT AND FIRST AND SECOND CITY COURT EMERGENCY ORDER IN RESPONSE TO PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS (COVID-19)

This Order is being issued in response to the COVID-19 virus (coronavirus) outbreak in Louisiana. On March 11, 2020, the Governor of the State of Louisiana declared a State of Emergency. On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a National Emergency. The World Health Organization has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) has described the outbreak in the United States as a ‘rapidly evolving situation’ and is providing continuous guidance regarding appropriate public and private response to COVID-19. The CDC guidance includes multiple types of mitigation strategies including but not limited to social distancing as well as other strategies aimed at reducing or avoiding exposure to infected individuals which, the Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans and the First and Second City Courts of New Orleans carefully considered.

To combat the spread of the disease, given the severity of risk posed to the public, court staff, and other court agencies, and considering the CDC’s advisements to take precautions by limiting exposure to the virus, and the recommendation of the Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court, the Civil District Court the First and Second Court adopt the following emergency court procedures, effective March 13, 2020 through April 13, 2020:

- 1) All jury trials are suspended for the duration of this order, with further orders to follow;
- 2) Jurors who are scheduled to register for jury service on April 2, 2020 for service in May are not to appear in person; rather, they should register on-line. A letter will follow with specific instructions;
- 3) All contradictory matters shall be decided on the briefs. Oral argument is suspended except for good cause;
- 4) First and Second City Court have suspended all evictions hearings for the duration of this order;

- 5) The Court will be restricting settings to emergency and time-sensitive matters when possible;
- 6) The Court will stagger docket schedules to reduce the number of people in a space at the same time;
- 7) The Court will allow employees who can work from home to do so when possible;
- 8) The Court will be expanding the use of audio/or video conferencing in meetings, discovery conferences, and scheduling conferences;

- 9) The Court will be adding additional screening for entry into the courthouse and entry to the courthouse shall be denied to those who have traveled to China, Italy, 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, that those denied entry are ordered to contact the appropriate division for further instructions; and, 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 conditions should refrain from entering the Courthouse and that those persons are ordered to contact the appropriate division for further instruction. If the conditions indicate that the Court needs to adjust the above policy, notice will be posted on the Court's website (www.oreanscdc.com), the Louisiana Supreme Court's website (www.lasc.org), and in the media.

Signed this 15th day of March, 2020 at New Orleans, Louisiana.

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Chris Bruno

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CHIEF JUDGE CHRISTOPHER J. BRUNO
CIVIL DISTRICT COURT

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Veronica E. Henry

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CHIEF JUDGE VERONICA HENRY
FIRST CITY COURT