

STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISH OF MOREHOUSE
BASTROP CITY COURT

In Re:

COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE
EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES
CREATED BY COVID-19
(CORONAVIRUS)

ORDER

This General Order is being issued in response to the recent outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Louisiana, and throughout the United States. In February of this year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") issued "Interim Guidance" recommending that all entities consider how best to decrease the spread of COVID-19, including the review of guidance from state and local health officials. In light of Governor Edwards' declaration of a public health emergency and President Donald Trump's declaration of a national emergency on March 13, 2020 and their executive orders concerning public gatherings, as well as guidance from the Louisiana Supreme Court, the Bastrop City Court, issues this order. Our purpose is to address this public health crisis in a way that protects the health and safety of the public and of everyone at our Court facilities, while at the same time, to the extent possible, maintains access to the Court.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. Except as otherwise provided herein, all civil and criminal trials, hearings, including but not limited to evictions, judgment debtor exams, and civil and criminal motions, and any court appearances set for any date between the date of this Order and March 31, 2020 are hereby continued to a date to be reset by local order.
2. Criminal initial appearances (72-hour hearings) for adults and arraignments for incarcerated individuals and bond hearings shall continue as scheduled. The delays in all criminal cases

created by this Order shall constitute "just cause" pursuant to La. Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 701.

3. This order does not affect courts' consideration of matters than can be resolved without in-person proceedings or by telephone.
4. The City Court office shall remain open during regular business hours.
5. Given the public health concerns and the necessity of taking action to slow the spread of the disease, the continuances occasioned by this Order serve the ends of justice and outweigh the best interest of the public and the defendant in a speedy trial. Therefore, the time periods of such continuance shall be excluded from speedy trial computations pursuant to law, including but not limited to those set forth in in the Louisiana Code of Criminal Procedure, and presumptively constitute just cause.

The Court may issue further Orders regarding this matter as necessary to address the circumstances arising from this pandemic and will post such Orders on the Louisiana Supreme Court's website, www.lasc.org and the Bastrop City Court Website.

Given under our hand and seal this 16th day of March A.D., 2020, Bastrop, Louisiana.



PHILLIP M. LESTER, JUDGE, BASTROP CITY COURT