

Municipal and Traffic Court of New Orleans

State of Louisiana

ORDER

Acting in accordance with Louisiana Constitution Article V, Section 1; pursuant to La. R.S. 1:55; due to the COVID-19 emergency as detailed in Governor John Bel Edwards's Declaration of Public Health Emergency (Executive Department Proclamation No. JBE 2020-25 and JBE 2020-27) and Orleans Parish Mayor LaToya Cantrell's Declaration of State of Emergency, and in response to the multiple confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the State of Louisiana; and, further, in consideration of the hazardous and unsafe condition caused therefrom and recognizing the inherent power of this Court, the Administrative Judge, acting on behalf of the Judges of the Municipal and Traffic Court of New Orleans,

HEREBY ORDERS THAT:

Due to the unprecedented pandemic as referenced in the aforementioned emergency declarations, the Municipal and Traffic Court of New Orleans will close on March 16, 2020, and will:

1. Suspend the requirement to report to the Municipal and Traffic Court of New Orleans on any matter pending for 45 days or until further notice;
2. Reset all trials and hearings for 45 days or until further notice, with all defendants to receive new notices via U.S. Mail;
3. Continue to conduct first appearances for all inmates via video conferencing relative to probable cause determinations, bail settings, and other first appearance settings;
4. Continue Web and Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) capabilities, payments for which can be made by visiting our website at www.nola.gov/traffic-court/ or by calling 504-658-8500; and
5. Not issue any attachments or suspend driver's licenses for matters set during the next 45 days.

This Emergency Plan of the Municipal and Traffic Court of New Orleans is based on guidance from the Louisiana Supreme Court, including:

- Restricting court settings to emergency and time-sensitive settings;
- Staggering docket schedules to reduce the number of people in a space at the same time;
- Allowing employees to work from home when to do so is possible; and
- Expanding the use of audio and/or video conferencing in meetings, discovery conferences, scheduling conferences, bail settings, first appearance settings (where possible), hearings on post-convictions (to reduce unnecessary travel on detention centers and inmates).

If the conditions indicate that the Court needs to adjust the above policy, notice will be posted on the Court's website (<http://www.nola.gov/traffic-court/>), the Louisiana Supreme Court website (www.lasc.org), and in the news media.

New Orleans, Louisiana this 16th day of March, 2020

For the Municipal and Traffic Court of New Orleans


Sean P. Early
Administrative Judge