

THIRTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISH OF VERNON

FILED

MAR 17 2020

Walter Ford
CLERK OF COURT
VERNON PARISH, LA

ORDER

This General Order is being issued in response to the recent outbreak of the 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 his executive order, concerning public gatherings, as well as guidance from the Louisiana Supreme Court, the Thirtieth Judicial District Court, in and for the Parish of Vernon, 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 ORDERED, effective March 17, 2020, that all parties are strongly encouraged to submit filings remotely: via e-filing, mail, fax or a drop box in the security area at the 30th Judicial District Court courthouse.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the 30th JDC courthouse will Partially Close in that no one may pass the security area except, Court and Clerk of Court personnel without permission of the Judges or the Clerk of Court.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Court has this date issued an Emergency E-filing Order, and that the Court shall temporarily accept fax filing 337-238-9902 and e-filing at jskidmore@vernonclerk.com.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that in-person filings shall be deposited into a drop box at the front entrance of the courthouse under the supervision of security. These filings will be considered received on the day they are deposited into the drop box.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, effective beginning Tuesday, March 17, 2020, 8:00 a.m. through Friday, April 17, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.:

All jury trials, both civil, criminal and grand jury are hereby continued, to be re-set by Order;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, effective beginning Tuesday, March 17, 2020, 8:00 a.m. through Wednesday, April 1, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.:

1. All criminal trials, hearings, and court appearances are hereby continued, to be re-set by Order, except for initial appearances (72 hour hearings), Gwen's law hearings, arraignments, bond hearings and stipulated matters; and
2. The delays in all criminal cases created by this Order shall constitute 'just cause', pursuant to La. Code of Criminal Procedure art. 701.
3. Drug Court matters are hereby continued, to be re-set by Order;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, effective beginning Tuesday, March 17, 2020, 8:00 a.m. through Friday, April 3, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.:

- 1 All Civil trials, hearings, and court appearances are hereby continued, to be re-set by Order, except for hearings related to the following: child in need of care proceedings, juvenile proceedings where children have been removed from their home, civil protective orders, emergency child custody matters pursuant to La. Code of Civil Procedure art. 3945, emergency interdictions, and matters of public health related to this crisis;
- 2 All Non-support matters are hereby continued, to be re-set by Order;

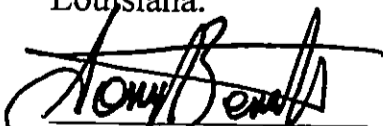
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the attached Appendix 'A' be posted where it is easily visible at all public entrances to the Courthouse. Anyone attempting to enter the Courthouse in violation of the protocols contained therein will be denied entry by a Court Security Officer and may be subject to punishment for contempt of court;


IT IS FURTHER ORDERED This Order does not affect the Court's ability to consider civil or criminal matters that can be resolved without hearing.


IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a notice of the foregoing shall be posted on the Clerk's website, the entrance of the courthouse and Louisiana Supreme Court.

THUS DONE AND SIGNED on the 17th day of March, 2020 in Leesville,

Louisiana.


TONY A. BENNETT
DISTRICT JUDGE
DIVISION A


C. ANTHONY EAVES
DISTRICT JUDGE
DIVISION B


SCOTT WESTERCHIL
DISTRICT JUDGE
DIVISION C

Appendix A

By Order of the Court, the following persons
SHALL NOT ENTER THE COURTHOUSE:

- Persons who have been in any of the following countries within the last 14 days:

CHINA, SOUTH KOREA, JAPAN, ITALY, IRAN
(This list may be updated as further guidance is received.)

- Persons who reside or have had close contact with someone who has been in one of the countries listed above within the last 14 days
- Persons who have been asked to self-quarantine by any doctor, hospital or health agency;
- Persons who have been diagnosed with, or have had contact with, anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Persons exhibiting symptoms unusual to you that are among the CDC-identified symptoms (these have been identified as fever, cough, or shortness of breath)

Anyone attempting to enter in violation of these protocols will be denied entry by a Court Security Officer and may be subject to contempt of court.

If you have a scheduled hearing, appointment or you are otherwise required to appear at this courthouse, and you are unable to appear because of the restrictions listed above, contact the following:

- If you are represented by an attorney, or have been subpoenaed by an attorney, please contact the attorney;
- If you are an attorney or a pro se party, and you are scheduled to appear in court on a civil proceeding, please contact the chambers of that judge directly. If you are an attorney or a pro se party, and you are scheduled to appear in court for a criminal proceeding, please contact the District Attorneys office;
- If you are scheduled to meet with a Probation Department Officer, please contact the appropriate officer;
- If you are a juror, please contact Jury Administration
- For the Clerk of Court, Tax Assessor, Police Jury or Civil Sheriff matters, please contact those agencies.

For any matters not listed here, please call your agency whom you are here to see.

These restrictions will remain in place temporarily until it is determined to be safe to remove them. People who think they have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider immediately.