

IN DISTRICT COURT OF RILEY COUNTY, KANSAS
Administrative Order No. 2020-01

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DISTRICT COURT
RILEY CO. KS.

ORDER REGARDING COURT OPERATIONS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

This Order is being issued in response to the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Although for many this disease appears to cause only flu-like symptoms, for others it can pose a serious risk. In February of this year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued Interim Guidance recommending that all employers consider how best to decrease the spread of COVID-19. On March 11, 2020 The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. On March 12, 2020, Kansas Governor Laura Kelly declared a state of emergency to address this developing threat.

Given the significant number of identified and projected cases of COVID-19 across Kansas and the severity of risk posed to the public, it is hereby ORDERED that, subject to further modification, effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020:

1. The Riley County District Courthouse will remain open. Staff in the Clerk's Office will remain open for filings and contact by telephone.
2. The Riley County District Court will implement a phased response in order to reduce the risk of exposure based on our evaluation of developing data and public health recommendations about the current pandemic.

The Court has a reduced ability to obtain an adequate spectrum of jurors. COVID-19 dictates consideration of the health and welfare of our citizen jurors. The availability of counsel and Court staff is also impacted. All criminal and civil jury trials presently scheduled prior to April 20, 2020 will be removed from their current trial setting in consideration of all involved, but particularly the elderly and susceptible that may be included in the jury pool.

3. All activities scheduled for the period March 17, 2020 through April 3, 2020 in the following types of DOCKET proceedings will be CONTINUED:
 - a) Limited Action Dockets;
 - b) Small Claims Dockets;
 - c) Traffic Dockets;
 - d) First Appearance dockets will be continued 4 weeks during this period, except that defendants in the custody of the Riley County Jail will still appear by video as scheduled; and
 - e) Monday Criminal Dockets.
4. Except those dockets identified in paragraph 3, the Court will continue to hear all other matters at the Courthouse as determined by the Presiding Judge for the particular case.

The Presiding Judge may reschedule individually set cases in an attempt to assist in recognition of the current health risks. Attorneys and unrepresented parties should contact the Court to confirm whether a hearing remains scheduled or is being rescheduled.

5. No new weddings will be scheduled prior to April 3, 2020. This date may be extended. For previously scheduled weddings only necessary parties and witnesses should attend. The presiding judge may move weddings to the courtyard or elsewhere.
6. Electronic filings may still be made in the normal manner.
7. All telephone or video conferences remain as scheduled.
8. This Order does not affect the Court's consideration of any matters that can be resolved without oral argument or court appearance.
9. The Court Services office will remain open and available for contact by telephone. Anyone directed to report on probation or for interviews with Court Services officers should report by telephone and not report to the Courthouse in person.
10. In normal times the Court encourages the public's interest in the judicial system. The public has a qualified right of access to court proceedings. The Court takes seriously its responsibility to administer the law with due regard for the balance of the rights of litigants, the public, and the Court's ability to protect the integrity and safety of the proceedings. Until at least April 3, 2020 courthouse security may turn away any person that does not have business at the courthouse. All person may be subject to inquiry about recent health, recent travel and other risk factors.

Visit the Court's website at <http://www.rileycountyks.gov/190/District-Court> for up to the date information on individual dockets and updates on the scheduling of proceedings.

The Court will take a phased response based on our evaluation of developing data and public health recommendations about the current pandemic.

BY ORDER OF THE COURT this 16th day of March 2020.


Chief Judge Grant D. Bannister