

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
GENERAL DIVISION
FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO**

21MS _____

**NINTH GENERAL ORDER IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19
(CORONAVIRUS) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**

The General Division Judges of the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas make the following Findings of Fact:

1. On March 9, 2020 Ohio Governor Mike DeWine issued Executive Order 2020-01D “Declaring a State of Emergency” in response to the growing COVID-19 public health emergency.
2. On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 to be a global “pandemic” requiring “urgent and aggressive action” to control the spread of the virus.
3. On March 11, 2020 the first “community transfer” positive case of COVID-19 in the state of Ohio was confirmed.

Based upon these Findings of Fact, the General Division of the Court of Common Pleas developed protocol in response to this public health emergency. These protocols are intended to protect public health, maintain essential court functions, and continue to protect the rights of all individuals subject to the authority of the Court.

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. The General Division Local Rules of Court may be temporarily modified to allow Court flexibility, within Constitutional limits, in response to the public health emergency.
2. The General Division policies may be temporarily adjusted to maintain essential court operations and functions.
3. The General Division authorizes the use of audiovisual devices and technologies for all actions and proceedings.
4. The General Division has determined the public health emergency is a good cause for continuances.

5. The hours of operation for the General Division will be 8:00am – 3:00pm until further order of the Court.
6. The General Division will have the lawful authority, within constitutional limits, to do or direct to be done all things necessary to ensure the orderly and efficient administration of justice and public safety for the duration of the declared state of emergency.
7. The Court will continue to operate utilizing a rotating docket schedule through July 2, 2021. To limit the number of people entering the courthouse, in-person proceedings (civil and criminal) will be held in the respective courtrooms utilizing the following schedule:

Judicial Courtrooms A and E
Magistrate Courtrooms C
Alternating weeks beginning
November 2, 2020

Judicial Courtrooms B and F
Magistrate Courtrooms D
Alternating weeks beginning
November 9, 2020

Continuing through the week of
June 28, 2021

Continuing through the week of
June 21, 2021

No in-person proceedings shall be held during a non-scheduled week. However, other docket matters can be held via video/telephone conference.

All Duty Judge and Duty Magistrate schedules will remain as scheduled. Only duty matters will be heard during the respective duty week.

Civil Stalking Protection Order matters are not subject to the schedule set forth in this section.

8. With certain exceptions enumerated below, jury trials are suspended through April 4, 2021. This includes all civil matters, out-of-custody criminal cases, and, with exceptions, in-custody criminal cases. Jury trials for certain in-custody criminal cases, as determined by the assigned judge, and approved by the administrative judge, will be held during this time period. Jurors will be summonsed in reduced pools for these specific, identified in-custody criminal cases.
9. Pursuant to policy amendments by Housing and Urban Development, Veterans Affairs, Agriculture and Housing and other federal agencies, the single-family foreclosure moratorium for federally backed mortgages has been extended until March 31, 2021.
10. Based upon recommendations from the Supreme Court Responsible Restart Ohio, any individual entering the courthouse is required to wear a protective mask, covering the nose

and mouth unless a medically documented reason prevents the person from covering their face. N95 medical masks are not required; cloth masks that have been purchased or are homemade are acceptable. The protective covering shall be worn at all times while the individual is inside the courthouse, including courtrooms and the Adult Probation Department. Individuals are encouraged to bring their own facial covering; however, the Court will provide a mask if a person does not have access to their own facial covering. Persons refusing to wear a face covering, except in instances of a medically documented waiver, may be subject to removal from the courthouse or Probation Department.

11. All Court employees are required to wear masks. Masks are not required when working alone in an assigned work area.
12. All individuals in the courthouse and the Adult Probation Department shall adhere to the 6-foot social distancing protocols.
13. All time frames set forth above may be further extended for a greater period of time subject to further order of the Court if deemed necessary.
14. The Court will issue an Order when normal operations resume.
15. This Order supersedes any provision in Orders 20MS156, 20MS159, 20MS168, 20MS198, 20MS283, 20MS603, 20MS608, 21MS59 that are inconsistent with this Order.

HON. STEPHEN L. McINTOSH
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE



Date: 2/3/21