

IN THE GALLIPOLIS MUNICIPAL COURT, GALLIA COUNTY, OHIO

FILED

DEC 28 2020

GALLIPOLIS
MUNICIPAL COURT

IN RE: Order for Continuing Court Operations
in connection with the
COVID-19 (coronavirus) public health emergency

Now comes the Court and finds that circumstances dictate updating protocols, supplementing and partially superseding the Order filed August 3, 2020 in regard to the current public health situation. The Court finds that the Ohio Supreme Court and the Ohio Judicial Conference have consistently provided local trial courts with recommendations regarding best practices, that some recommendations have evolved as circumstances have changed, and that any Orders crafted by the Court have been in conformity with those recommendations. The Court's protocols also change as circumstances change.¹

Therefore, with the intent to protect the health of the public, members of the bar and employees; to maintain essential functions; to provide the public with access to justice; and to ensure the rights of all individuals subject to the authority of the Court, the Court hereby

ORDERS:

1. The Court will continue to prohibit any person who has symptoms associated with COVID-19 (persistent dry cough, fever, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell) from entering the Justice

¹ Although the number of confirmed active COVID-19 cases in Gallia County still constitutes less than 2% of the population of the county, the cumulative number of cases now exceeds 5% of the population and Gallia County is listed by the Ohio Department of Health as showing an increasing trend of at least 5 consecutive days in overall cases by onset date over the last 3 weeks. See coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/covid-19/public-health-advisory-system.

Center. Protocols at the security checkpoint for screening of visitors will continue as already established.

2. The Court will continue to observe social distancing guidelines in the lobby and the courtroom. No more than six (6) people should remain in the lobby at any one time. No more than ten (10) people should remain in the courtroom at any one time unless necessary for the administration of a hearing/trial. In the event that ten (10) or more people are in the courtroom, additional access to the courtroom will be limited to the actual participants in a case and no spectators will be permitted. Protocols for the use of facial coverings will continue as already established.
3. The public is encouraged to continue on a permanent basis to use the options available by telephone, FAX, mail, and online to transact business with the Court.
4. Attorneys are reminded that, effective January 1, 2018, Local Rule 14.1 requires that all civil filings be transmitted to the Court via the Court's web portal.
5. **Civil pre-trials** will continue on a permanent basis to be conducted by telephone conference. The plaintiff is responsible for initiating the conference call and connecting every other party and the Court to the call.
6. **Criminal and traffic pre-trials**, where scheduling is the only issue, shall be conducted by the parties submitting a written pre-trial report/scheduling entry signed by the defendant and counsel.
7. **Civil motion hearings and trials** may, at the option of any attorney or party, be conducted by telephone or video conferencing.
8. **Criminal and traffic motion hearings and trials** generally require the personal appearance of attorneys and the parties, although the Court will continue to be very

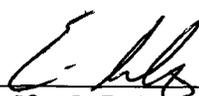
lenient in accommodating written requests for continuances and requests to appear by telephone or video conferencing, in particular for persons who are ill or who are at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19, as identified in the April 30, 2020 Ohio Department of Health Director's Stay Safe Ohio Order, including:

- People who are age 65 or older;
- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma;
- People who have serious heart conditions;
- People who are immune compromised;
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher);
- People with diabetes;
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis; and
- People with liver disease.

9. Attorneys who request to appear, and/or to instruct their clients to appear, by telephone or video conferencing are responsible for providing the Court with original documents (including exhibits and signed plea forms) necessary for the administration of the hearing/trial.
10. A separate Order detailing enhanced protocols for the safe administration of a jury trial will be distributed for any case that is not resolved at the time of the jury pre-trial.
11. The Court may, at any time, adjust these general provisions in the event that any significant change occurs locally in the public health situation.

Effective Date: December 28, 2020

All of the above So Ordered.



Eric Mulford, Judge