

CC: Judge Frank Janik
Judge Sherry Glass
Judge Lisa Swenski, Administrative Judge
Kirsch
Weitzel

LORAIN COUNTY
JUVENILE DIVISION
2022 JAN 31 PM 2:39
FILED
DOMESTIC RELATIONS

JOURNAL ENTRY
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
JUVENILE DIVISION
Lorain County, Ohio

Case No. 22JA63144

In Re:

ORDER DECLARING A JUDICIAL
EMERGENCY AND CONTINUITY
OF OPERATIONS OF THE COURT
DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Date: 1/31/22 Volume _____ Page _____

Due to the alarming surge in COVID-19 infections in the courthouse, county, and state, the Lorain County Domestic Relations Court is suspending in-person nonemergency/nonessential hearings for the month of February 2022. The purpose of this order is to protect the health and safety of the public and courthouse employees and to ensure that the Court can continue performing its essential functions. The Court will continue to monitor the situation and protocols, and the Court will make further orders as necessary. The Court will remain open, and all staff shall continue to report to work in accordance with the guidelines below.

- (1) Essential/Emergency hearings that may be conducted in person generally include, but are not limited to:
- a. Ex-Parte Petitions for Domestic Violence Civil Protections Orders and review hearings;
 - b. Ex-Parte Petitions for Juvenile Protection Orders and review hearings;
 - c. Ex-Parte Motions for Emergency Temporary Custody and review hearings;

- d. Adjudication and Dispositional Hearings in Abuse/Neglect/Dependency Cases;
 - e. Shelter care hearings for Abuse/Neglect/Dependency Cases;
 - f. Juvenile Detention Matters;
 - g. Judicial Bypass of Consent Hearings;
 - h. Any hearings for Juveniles in detention;
 - i. Any hearings for supervising Juveniles in detentions or Turning Point;
and
 - j. Any other specific hearing upon Judge, Magistrate, or Court approval,
so long as the hearing can be conducted in a safe manner.
- (2) The Court will evaluate all other types of “nonessential/nonemergency” hearings or meetings for participation through video or telephonic means. The assigned Judge will have the discretion to continue or proceed with any “nonessential/nonemergency” matter by teleconference, video conference, or other technological methods. The Court will be notifying those who have hearings scheduled during this time frame regarding the status and mode of those hearings;
- (3) The Court authorizes the use of audio-visual devices and technologies for all actions and proceedings;
- (4) The Juvenile Clerk’s office will remain open to accept filings and payments. The Juvenile Clerk’s office accepts fax filings at (440) 329-5271, email filings at juvenileclerk@lcfct.org, and payments online; visit the Court website at loraincounty.com/domesticrelations. The Domestic Relations Clerk’s office accepts fax filings at (440) 329-5506 and payments online; visit the Clerk of Court’s website at loraincounty.us/clerk/ ;

- (5) This emergency order may be considered a finding of "just cause" for continuances deemed necessary by assigned judges on a case-by-case basis;
- (6) The local rules of court for the Domestic and Juvenile Division may be temporarily adapted to allow court flexibility, within constitutional limits, in response to the public health emergency;
- (7) The Court's security policies may be temporarily amended or supplemented to protect public health while maintaining essential court functions;
- (8) The Court's Personnel Policies and Procedures Handbook and other usual and customary human resource provisions may be temporarily adjusted to maintain essential court operations and functions;
- (9) The Court will have the lawful authority, within constitutional limits, to do and direct to be done all things necessary to ensure the orderly and efficient administration of justice for the duration of the emergency order;
- (10) All individuals, including Court judicial officers and personnel, desiring to enter the courthouse and appear in the domestic relations court must wear a face covering and may be subject to available health screening or testing, and may be excluded from admission based upon the refusal to wear a face covering unless medically excused or upon the results of such screening or testing;
- (11) Any Court employee who exhibits signs of illness must notify their direct supervisor by telephone or e-mail and shall not come into the courthouse or report for duty. Any individual within the courthouse who exhibits signs of illness shall be directed to leave the building immediately and seek medical advice before being permitted to re-enter the building at a later date;
- (12) The Court shall attempt to minimize the social interaction of litigants, attorneys, witnesses, jurors, law enforcement personnel, and judicial personnel

by continuing non-essential proceedings or conducting proceedings, to the extent practicable, by remote video, telephonic or other available technological means;

- (13) When the emergency subsides, the Court will enter an order declaring an end to the emergency and a resumption of normal operations.
- (14) This Court order will be served upon the Lorain County Prosecutor's Office, the Lorain County Clerk of Courts, the Lorain County Common Pleas-General Division, the Lorain County Sheriff, the Lorain County Commissioners, and the Ohio Supreme Court, will be published on the website of this Court, and will be provided to the Lorain County Bar Association to be disseminated to the local bar.

It is so ordered.


Administrative Judge Lisa I. Swenski