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2020 MAR 17 12:20

Jerry L. Buckler
CLERK OF COURTS
SCIOTO COUNTY, OHIO



IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS,
DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION, SCIOTO COUNTY,
PORTSMOUTH, OHIO

IN RE:

: Case No. 20 CIH071

OPERATIONS OF THE SCIOTO COUNTY
DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT
WHILE UNDER EXIGENT
CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY
COVID-19

:
:
: JUDGE JERRY L. BUCKLER
:
:
: ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

Now comes Judge Jerry L. Buckler, resident Judge of the Scioto County Domestic Relations Court, who makes the following Findings of Fact:

1. On March 9, 2020, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine issued an Executive Order 2020-01(D) "declaring a State of Emergency" in response to the growing COVID-19 public health crisis.
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.

4. On March 13, 2020, President Donald J. Trump officially declared that the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States constituted a national emergency.

5. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is directing that Americans must practice "social distancing," which is defined as "remaining out of places where people meet or gather, and maintaining a distance of six feet from others."

Based upon these Findings of Fact, the Scioto County Domestic Relations Court will develop a continuum of flexible responses in case the public health crisis escalates or increases in size and scope. The continuum of responses is intended to protect public health, to maintain essential court functions, and to continue to protect the rights of all individuals subject to the authority of the Court.

Therefore, it is hereby **ORDERED**:

1. Effective Wednesday, March 18, 2020, the Local Rules of the Domestic Relations Court may be temporarily modified to allow flexibility, within Constitutional limits, in response to the public health emergency.

2. The policies of the Domestic Relations Court may be temporarily adjusted to maintain essential court operations and functions.

3. The Scioto County Employee Handbook and Human Resource provisions, as they relate to court employees, may be temporarily adjusted to maintain essential court operations and functions.

4. This public health emergency shall be considered to be a finding of "just

cause" for continuances deemed necessary by the Court on a case-by-case basis.

5. The Domestic Relations Court 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.

6. Judicial staff, employees, attorneys and deputies assigned to the Courthouse who exhibit signs of illness consistent with COVID-19, or are aware that they have come in contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19, shall notify their employing or reporting authority by telephone or email and shall not come into the courthouse or report for work unless specifically instructed to do so by the employing or reporting authority.

7. All hearings, other than Domestic Violence Civil Protection Order Petitions (DVCPO) pursuant to R.C. § 3113.31, other emergency motions, and probable cause hearings, shall be and hereby are suspended for thirty (30) days until further Order of the Court, commencing March 18, 2020.

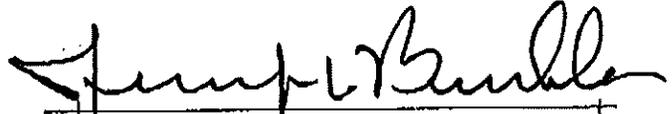
8. All pending or currently scheduled non-domestic violence hearings shall be rescheduled by notice of the Court.

9. The Scioto County Domestic Relations Court will remain open. The public may continue to utilize the court services provided they follow all applicable public health guidelines as well as specific court guidelines.

10. This suspension will be for a duration of thirty (30) days, unless the Court determines an extension is deemed necessary due to emergency status.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

ENTER:



JERRY L. BUCKLER - JUDGE
Court of Common Pleas
Domestic Relations Division

cc: Scioto County Bar Association
Scioto County Court of Common Pleas, General Division
Scioto County Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile/Probate Divisions
Scioto County Clerk of Courts
Scioto County Prosecutor
Scioto County Commissioners
Scioto County Health Department
The Portsmouth Daily Times
The Scioto Voice
Ohio Judicial Conference