

FILED
WOOD COUNTY
PROBATE COURT

2020 APR -3 P 3: 33

JUDGE JUDGE
JESSNER

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF WOOD COUNTY, OHIO
PROBATE DIVISION**

**In re: Temporary Orders As To Marriage
Licenses Necessitated By the COVID-19
(Coronavirus) Public Health Emergency
and State of Emergency in the United States
and State of Ohio**

The Wood County Common Pleas Court, Probate Division, makes 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 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 12, 2020 the State of Ohio Director of Public Health issued a ban on "mass gatherings" and Ohio Governor Mike DeWine ordered the closure of schools in the State of Ohio to control the spread of the virus.

4. On March 13, 2020 President of the United States, Donald Trump, declared a National Emergency pursuant to the Stafford Act as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.
5. On March 22, 2020, The Ohio Department of Health issued a Director's Stay at Home Order which prohibits non-emergency, non-essential personal activity, business operations, and travel as defined in the order. On April 2, 2020 the order was extended to May 1, 2020 and provisions within the order were expanded.
6. On March 27, 2020, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed House Bill 197 which provided for various types of emergency COVID-19 related relief to Ohioans including the waiver of or modification to certain statutory and licensing procedures.
7. On March 27, 2020, the Supreme Court of Ohio issued an order tolling certain time requirements and certain rules of procedure for the continued and effective operation of the judicial system during an emergency period.
8. Various Federal, State and Local Health Agencies continue to urge limitations on public interactions in an effort to control the spread of the virus from person to person.
9. With regards to the issuance of marriage licenses in Wood County, temporary modification of the current rules, practices and procedures of the Wood County Probate Court are necessary in order to ensure the orderly and efficient functioning of the court, to ensure that all essential functions of the court are carried out, to ensure that the applicable laws are followed, and to ensure the health and safety of the general public, parties, court users, and staff. The court finds allowing

marriage licenses to be issued upon a showing of immediate need will continue to allow for marriage licenses to be issued; will further the current directives, laws, and administrative orders in place arising from the COVID-19 pandemic governing, in part, public contact, non-essential travel, and public services; and will recognize the existing ability for marriages to occur during an extended period of time during which approved licenses are valid.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND ORDERED the following orders relative to the issuance of marriage licenses are effective immediately:

1. Consistent with the Department of Health's prohibition of non-essential travel, at least one party to the marriage must have a legal residence in Wood County, Ohio. Consistent with the Department of Health's prohibition of non-essential travel and references to out of state travel, no licenses shall be issued where both applicants are out of state residents.
2. The Wood County Probate will issue marriage licenses in the event of a showing of an immediate need and otherwise consistent with law. Information and documentation regarding the immediate need to be married (i.e. proof of military deployment) shall be made in writing by regular mail or email to the court at probatecourt@co.wood.oh.us. Requests will be reviewed for immediate need by the Probate Judge or Magistrate. In all instances, the Ohio Department of Health's order prohibiting non-essential travel will be considered during the immediate need review process.

3. If the Probate Judge or Magistrate determines an immediate need for a license exists, an appointment shall be scheduled for the parties to appear. Every effort will be made to enforce social distancing with staff and other members of the public during the appointment.
4. Documentation of identification, residency, proof of divorce (where applicable), date of ceremony, and the name and contact number of the officiant must be provided by drop off, regular mail, or electronically prior to the scheduled appointment for a license.
5. In instances where a marriage license has already been obtained, but a wedding is not able to be completed within the required 60-day period because of the pandemic, the same applicants may reapply without charge for a period of one year from the date their original license was issued. The same immediate need requirements are applicable if this order remains in effect at the time of re-applying.
6. Unless modified herein, all other statutory, jurisdictional, and venue related laws applicable to marriage licenses remain in effect.
7. This order shall remain in full force and effect until such time as it is modified or rescinded.



DAVID WOESSNER, PROBATE JUDGE