

COURT ORDER RE: OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY COVID-19 AND RELATED CORONAVIRUS.

This General Order is being issued in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Denver County. **The Court has the authority to modify this order at any time and without notice.**

WHEREFORE: Denver County Court is committed to serving the citizens of Denver by doing our best to ensure public safety and access to justice. In that vein, while our Court and probation departments certainly provide important and essential services, public health of all our citizens is paramount.

WHEREFORE: The Court finds that the current circumstances are exigent and extraordinary such that good cause exists for the Court to enter the following order and take the following actions.

WHEREFORE: Given the significant number of identified and projected cases of COVID-19 in Denver and the severity of risk posed to the public, and given the public health recommendations from federal, state and local public health authorities,

It is hereby ORDERED that, effective Monday, March 16, 2020:

Except as outlined below, Denver County Court will be substantially reducing court operations and will suspend all in-person proceedings from March 16, 2020, through Tuesday March 31, 2020, subject to the exceptions below.

Exceptions to the suspension of in-person court proceedings include but are not limited to:

- Proceedings necessary to protect constitutional rights of criminal defendants, including bond related matters and plea agreements for incarcerated individuals;
- Proceedings related to advisement of incarcerated individuals entitled to a Preliminary Hearing;
- Proceedings related to in-custody Criminal and General Sessions matters;
- Proceedings related to relief from abuse, including but not limited to orders of protection;
- Proceedings related to petitions for temporary injunctive relief;
- Proceedings necessary to resolve speedy trial related issues will be handled on a case by case basis by the assigned Judge

All jury trials are suspended through March 31, 2020;

Outreach Court is suspended through March 31, 2020;

All requests for warrants will be submitted electronically;

The County Court Self-Help Center will be available by phone or email [HERE](#).

Wherever possible, hearings should be conducted by phone or video conference during this period;

1. All defendants in the criminal, traffic, and general sessions divisions are reminded to ensure their contact and mailing information is up to date with the Court.
 - a. That information can be submitted online at a link that will be available on the Court's website [HERE](#) or by contacting the court by phone [HERE](#).
 - b. In traffic cases, defendants are encouraged to resolve tickets either through the court's website [HERE](#), or through the court's plea by email option [HERE](#).
 - c. In parking cases, defendants are encouraged to resolve tickets either through the court's website [HERE](#), or by calling the Parking Magistrate to reschedule matters or make arrangements for emergency hearings or boot removal by telephone at 720-913-5300 or online [HERE](#).
 - d. Civil filings will still be accepted on the Court's filing system [HERE](#).
 - e. A skeleton crew will be working at the Court to answer phones, and to process filings made by mail or electronically.
 - f. All criminal, general sessions defendants, and traffic defendants set for final hearing or trial may file motions to continue with a waiver of speedy trial rights.
2. All civil matters scheduled for an in-Court appearance are hereby CONTINUED for 30 days from their original date unless the 30th day falls on a weekend or holiday, in which case it will be continued until the next business day. Where both parties agree the case is an emergency, the Court may, in its discretion, hold a telephone or other electronic hearing.
3. All traffic matters are hereby CONTINUED for a period of 45 days. Notice will be sent to defendants via mail. For traffic matters that carry the possibility of jail, failure to appear on the new date will result in a bench issued arrest warrant.
4. In all non-custodial criminal and general sessions cases where either a guilty plea or no plea has yet entered, all such cases are CONTINUED for a period of 30 days from the existing date, or, if the 30th day falls on a weekend or holiday, to the following business day.
 - a. Notices re-setting such dates will be mailed to defendants, their counsel, and to the prosecutor.
 - b. Failure of defendants to appear for the newly scheduled date will result in a bench issued arrest warrant.
5. For criminal and general sessions cases in which a not-guilty plea has entered, defendants or their counsel may update defendant's contact information and file a motion to continue along with a written waiver of speedy trial. Such motions will be granted.
 - a. All jury trials scheduled through March 31, 2020 are VACATED. Notice of new dates will be mailed to defendants, their counsel, and to the prosecutor.
 - b. Where motions to continue are not filed, the Court will determine how to proceed on a case-by-case basis and will notify the parties by mail, email, or telephone.
 - c. The Court will entertain joint requests for remote or telephone conferences.
6. No orders for an eviction will be entered during the 30-day period.
7. In-custody matters will continue to be held in courtrooms 2100 and 2300.
8. Emergency protection order filings will be accepted electronically by email [HERE](#). Such filings may also be made in person by leaving in a secured box located outside Courtroom 159 in the City and County Building. The Court will rule on the papers.
9. Hearings on permanent orders of protection will either be held by telephone or video conferencing or will be continued by the Court.
10. All defendants who are on probation are hereby permitted a 30-day reprieve from meeting with probation officers in person. However, such defendants are ORDERED to remain in contact with their probation officers remotely be it by email, phone, video or as otherwise directed by the officer.

11. The Court is revisiting bonds for all of those who are in custody or where warrants have issued but have not yet been executed.
12. The Court has the authority to modify this order at any time and without notice.

Dated this 16th day of March of 2020.

BY THE COURT:

 /s/ Theresa A. Spahn
Theresa A. Spahn
Presiding Denver County Court Judge