

TAYLOR COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT

ORDER REGARDING TEMPORARY EMERGENCY MEASURES

The Taylor County Circuit Court hereby issues the following order to provide procedures to address court proceedings and essential functions of the court system in light of the coronavirus pandemic.

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic of COVID-19 due to widespread human infection worldwide. On March 13, 2020, Governor Tony Evers declared a public health emergency in Wisconsin;

WHEREAS, this Court is monitoring the situation and is committed to public access to the court system and service provided by its essential functions and operations, while at the same time seeking to mitigate the exposure of the COVID-19 to litigants, judges, court staff, court security, attorneys, jurors, other participants in court proceedings, and all other person using court facilities;

WHEREAS, the Taylor County Circuit Court remains open for public business and access at this time;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that all non-essential hearings will be suspended at this time. This order is temporary and emergent and effective immediately until May 15, 2020, or upon further order of the court. Essential matters will still be heard by the Court. Essential matters are defined as follows:

1. Bail hearings for criminal cases to be scheduled at a reasonable time after detention
2. Preliminary hearings in criminal matters which time requirements are applicable
3. Juvenile detention hearings and child welfare hearings including TPC hearings as required by statute
4. Chapter 51 commitment hearings within statutory time limits
5. Guardianship and protective placement hearings within statutory time limits
6. Criminal jury trials in which there's a request for a speedy trial demand or upon cause shown for timeliness.
7. Criminal competency to proceed matters
8. Treatment court review hearings
9. Restraining order hearings within the statutory time frames
10. Termination of parental rights hearings and adoption hearings within statutory time periods
11. Temporary custody hearings at discretion of the Family Court Commissioner
12. Any other type of hearing for which cause for timeliness has been shown such that the risk of exposure to the virus is overcome.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that hearings will be conducted by telephone, video conference and alternative means of communication in order to reduce face-to-face contact, as appropriate and as provided by law. Persons wishing to contact the court can call 715-748-1435. Social distancing practices and reasonable preventative measures shall be used if personal appearances are made. Furthermore, the court shall consider requests for adjournments and continuances in a liberal fashion within the requirements of the law in order to facilitate the purpose of reducing in-person contact.

Dated this 17th day of March, 2020.

BY THE COURT:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann N. Knox-Bauer", written over a horizontal line.

Ann N. Knox-Bauer
Taylor County Circuit Court Judge