
ORDER REGARDING EMERGENCY TEMPORARY MEASURES

The Walworth County Circuit Court issues the attached procedures and directions for the Courts during the next several weeks. **These Guidelines are emergency and Temporary Measures ONLY effective from March 17, 2020, until as indicated in this Order or upon further Order of the Court.** The Walworth County Judicial Center remains open.

The World Health Organization declared a global pandemic of COVID-19 due to widespread human infection worldwide, and Governor Evers has declared a public health emergency. We are monitoring this situation and are committed to open access to our courts and service to the public, and to protect the health and safety of the litigants, judges, court staff and security, attorneys, jurors, other participants in court proceedings, and all other persons in the court facilities.

These guidelines are in place to ensure the continuous performance of the court's essential functions and operations and yet seek to mitigate the exposure and further spread of the virus. The guidelines incorporate use of teleconferencing to minimize contact, when appropriate; follow social distancing practices; and temporarily suspend some non-essential court functions. **Any hearing that can be done by phone will proceed as scheduled, including but not limited to, scheduling conferences, status conferences, motion hearings. All others will be rescheduled by the Court.** For specific information on a particular case, please call the branch to which the case is assigned. These guidelines and Orders are adopted by the Judiciary of Walworth County after meeting and consultation, with a full understanding of the Court's duty to the public in all matters.

Giving proper weight to the health of the parties, other litigants, attending members of the public, and courthouse personnel, as well as the community as a whole, the Court finds that the current health crisis presents good cause to reschedule hearings beyond the statutory time periods.

Dated at Walworth, Wisconsin, this 17th day of March, 2020.

BY THE COURT:



Honorable Phillip A. Koss, Branch I



Honorable Daniel S. Johnson, Branch II



Honorable Kristine E. Drettwan, Branch III



Honorable David M. Reddy, Branch IV

**TEMPORARY AND EMERGENCY GUIDELINES
FOR PROCEEDINGS FOR JUVENILE COURT CASES**

1. All Summons return dates will be adjourned until after June 1, 2020.
2. TPC in CHIPs and Delinquency cases, and Capias and Warrant returns will continue to be heard.
3. Specific requests on cases should be directed to the assigned Juvenile Court Judge.

**TEMPORARY AND EMERGENCY GUIDELINES
FOR PROCEEDINGS FOR CIVIL, PROBATE & SMALL CLAIMS CASES**

Large Claim Civil and Probate

1. All matters requiring in-person appearances including jury trials, court trials, or other contested or potentially contested hearings where evidence will be taken by other than telephonic means or foreclosure motions are suspended until after April 17, 2020, or until further Order of the Court. Any such matters currently set for a date on or prior to April 17, 2020, will be rescheduled by the Clerk for either a status/scheduling conference or an alternative hearing date, at the discretion of the Judge assigned to such matter.
2. Between now and April 17, 2020, or until further Order of the Court, any non-evidentiary hearing that can be done by phone will proceed as scheduled, including but not limited to scheduling conferences, status conferences, pretrial conferences, motion hearings, oral decisions, and name change proceedings. However, any matter may be rescheduled at the discretion of the Judge assigned to such matter if the Judge believes that an in-person appearance should be required.
3. No attorney or party may appear in person for hearings between now and April 17, 2020, or until further Order of the Court, unless it is an emergency matter, with the express advance approval of the Judge assigned to such matter; it is expected that this will be limited to such things as Judicial Review of Domestic Abuse or Harassment Restraining Orders or Requests for Stay of Writs of Restitution/Assistance.

Small Claims

1. All small claims appearances are suspended until after April 17, 2020, or until further Order of the Court. Any such matters currently set for a date on or prior to April 17, 2020, will be rescheduled by the Clerk and provided notice.
2. No attorney or party may appear in person for hearings between now and April 17, 2020, or until further Order of the Court, unless it is an emergency matter, with the express advance approval of the Judge or Court Commissioner assigned to such matter; it is expected that this will be limited to such things as Requests for Stay of Writs of Restitution.

Weddings

All Courthouse weddings are canceled until after June 1, 2020, or until further Order of the Court. Any wedding party unable to make alternative wedding arrangements should contact the Walworth County Clerk's Office at 262-741-4241 for accommodations.

**TEMPORARY AND EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR
PROCEEDINGS FOR FAMILY CASES**

1. All contested matters requiring in-person appearances including court trials, contested custody and placement hearings, any hearing where evidence will be taken by other than telephonic means and all mediation matters are suspended until after April 17, 2020, or until further Order of the Court. Clerks in individual branches will schedule these proceedings as the Court's calendar permits. Contact the individual branch for direction if the parties wish to have evidentiary hearings by phone. It will be left to the discretion of the Judge or Court Commissioner to do so.
2. All petitions for Domestic Violence Injunctions, Child Abuse Injunctions, and Harassment Injunctions shall be heard as scheduled in person or by telephone at the discretion of the Court.
3. All Parent Education Classes are cancelled until further Order of the Court. Parties will be notified of the new date by the Court.

**TEMPORARY AND EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR
PROCEEDINGS FOR CRIMINAL CASES**

1. All matters requiring in-person appearances including jury trials, court trials, or other contested hearings where evidence will be taken by other than telephonic or video conferencing means are suspended until after April 17, 2020, or until further Order of the Court. Any such matters currently set for a date on or prior to April 17, 2020, will be rescheduled by the Clerk for either a status/scheduling conference or an alternative hearing date, at the discretion of the Judge assigned to such matter.
2. Between now and April 17, 2020, or until further Order of the Court, any non-evidentiary hearing that can be done by telephone or video conference will proceed as scheduled including all calendar calls. However, any matter may be rescheduled at the discretion of the Judge assigned to such matter if the Judge believes that an in-person appearance should be required.
3. All non-jury trial proceedings involving in-custody defendants, who are not being held on any basis other than the case-at-bar, will presumptively proceed as timely scheduled. However, each judge has the discretion to deviate from this guideline as deemed appropriate.
4. All preliminary hearings for out-of-custody defendants shall be adjourned until after April 17, 2020. All preliminary hearings for in-custody defendants shall proceed as scheduled.
5. All bail forfeiture hearings are canceled until further notice of the Court.
6. All matters scheduled on the 10:00 a.m. Criminal Call before Commissioner Dougville are canceled and will be rescheduled to a date after June 1, 2020.
7. For all re-scheduled hearings, the clerk will provide notice of the new hearing date to the parties.

TEMPORARY AND EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR FORFEITURES

1. All forfeiture matters, including traffic matters, are rescheduled until after June 1, 2020.