

**IN THE MATTER OF WITHDRAWAL
OF OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR
JACKSON COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT****ORDER**

WHEREAS, on March 22, 2020, and as amended on April 15, 2020, the Wisconsin Supreme Court suspended, until further order of the court, most in-person proceedings, subject to exceptions for certain matters, if remote technology is not practicable or adequate to protect the constitutional rights of the citizens of Wisconsin.

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ordered each circuit court to submit an operational plan to the chief judge of the applicable judicial administrative district. The operational plan was to include the requirements set forth in the order, and reduce to the greatest extent possible the risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19, and promote the health and safety of all those present in the courtrooms and other court-related confined spaces. Supreme Court Orders, *In Re the Matter of the Extension of Orders and Interim rule concerning Continuation of Jury Trials, Suspension of Statutory Deadlines for Non-Criminal Jury Trials, and Remote Hearings during the COVID-19 Pandemic (05/22/20)* and *In Re the matter of the Final Report of the Wisconsin Courts COVID-19 Task Force (05/22/20)*.

WHEREAS, on October 19, 2020, the Jackson County Circuit Court submitted an amended operational plan to resume in-person court proceedings pursuant to the Wisconsin Supreme Court's May 22, 2020, order which was approved by the chief judge October 20, 2020.

WHEREAS, on November 16, 2020, the Jackson County Circuit Court issued an order to withdraw the October 20, 2020, approved operational plan due to a critically high rate of transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

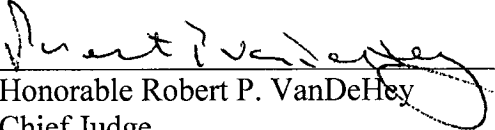
IT IS ORDERED the October 20, 2020, operational plan for the Jackson County Circuit Court is hereby withdrawn.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED the Jackson County Circuit Court shall again be subject to the Wisconsin Supreme Court's orders *In Re the Matter of Remote Hearings During the COVID-19 Pandemic (04/15/20)*, and *In Re the Matter of Jury Trials During the COVID-19 Pandemic (03/22/20)*, and interim rule 20-02 *In the Matter of an Interim Rule Re Suspension of Deadlines for Non-Criminal Jury Trials Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic*.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED Jackson County Circuit Court shall submit a written operational plan subject to chief judge review and approval prior to resuming in-person court proceedings and jury trials.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED the provisions of this order shall be subject to modification or termination by future orders.

Dated this 17th day of November, 2020.


Honorable Robert P. VanDeHey
Chief Judge
Seventh Judicial Administrative District

ORDER TO WITHDRAW OPERATIONAL PLAN

Based on the factual data provided in Governor Evers' Executive Orders #90 and #94 Relating to Declaring a Public Health Emergency, and based on the currently existing conditions in Jackson County, Wisconsin, as relates to the COVID-19 pandemic, this court hereby rescinds and withdraws in entirety its Operational Plan dated September 14, 2020 and as amended on October 20, 2020.

At present, the Court is unable to safely conduct in-person court appearances due to the lack of installed technology that would enable live streaming between multiple court spaces to ensure proper social distancing and to protect the members of the public and court staff. Protective plexiglass barriers have not yet been installed because the overall increased demand in the market has created a backlog of orders and they remain unavailable at present. Numerous departments in the Jackson County Courthouse have experienced positive COVID-19 tests resulting in near shut down of offices due to quarantine. The schools are unable to remain open due to staffing shortages created by widespread quarantine and positive tests. Jackson County officials have in the past indicated that the Courthouse will not be closed to the public nor will access be limited or monitored for compliance with masking requirements. Jackson County is at a critically high rate of transmission. It is critical that personal contact be avoided if at all possible in order to prevent further transmission of the COVID-19 virus so that court related offices are adequately staffed with employees in an effort to continue to conduct essential and remote hearings.


The Jackson County Circuit Court is committed to providing open access to our courts and service to the public, and to protecting the health and safety of the litigants, victims, judges, court staff and security, attorneys, jurors and other participants in court proceedings, as well as all other persons in the court facilities. All non confidential hearings will continue to be conducted by remote means if

possible. Public access to said remote hearings shall be by zoom which is published on the www.wicourts.gov website under each case name.

This situation is being closely monitored. The Judge, in consultation with the public health department, will make every effort to reopen and reissue an Operational Plan when the present pandemic numbers cease to steadily rise and a significant downward trend can be identified by public health.

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 risk to our employees, attorneys, litigants, and jurors. The guidelines incorporate the use of videoconferencing and teleconferencing to minimize contact, when appropriate; and follow social distancing practices. For specific information on a particular case, please call the Judicial Assistant at (715) 284-0213 or the Clerk of Court's Office at (715) 284-0208.

Dated this 16th day of November, 2020.



Hon. Anna L. Becker
Jackson County Circuit Court