

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
GENERAL DIVISION
FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO**

20MS _____

**THIRD GENERAL ORDER IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19
(CORONAVIRUS) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**

The General Division Judges of the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas make 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 emergency.
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 11, 2020 the first “community transfer” positive case of COVID-19 in the state of Ohio was confirmed.

Based upon these Findings of Fact, the General Division of the Court of Common Pleas developed protocol in response to this public health emergency. These protocols are is intended to protect public health, maintain essential court functions, and continue to protect the rights of all individuals subject to the authority of the Court.

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. The General Division Local Rules of Court may be temporarily modified to allow Court flexibility, within Constitutional limits, in response to the public health emergency.

2. The General Division policies may be temporarily adjusted to maintain essential court operations and functions.
3. The General Division authorizes the use of audiovisual devices and technologies for all actions and proceedings.
4. The General Division has determined the public health emergency is a good cause for continuances.
5. The Judges have agreed to continue civil and criminal matters, scheduled between March 16, 2020, and May 29, 2020, for a jury trial or hearing, to a future date.
6. Beginning Monday, March 16, 2020, through May 29, 2020, citizens summoned for petit jury duty are not required to report for jury service.
7. Beginning Monday, March 16, 2020, through May 29, 2020, hours of operation for the General Division will be 8:00am – 3:00pm.
8. The General Division will have the lawful authority, within constitutional limits, to do or direct to be done all things necessary to ensure the orderly and efficient administration of justice and public safety for the duration of the declared state of emergency.
9. Sheriff's sales currently scheduled are hereby canceled, and the Franklin County Sheriff is ordered to return those orders of sale without execution. All other orders of sale that have been issued or are subsequently filed are hereby stayed until May 29, 2020, or until further order of the court. All current and future writs for possession are hereby stayed until May 29, 2020, or until further order of the court.
10. All civil Duty Magistrate hearings (garnishment, replevin, forcible entry and detainer, civil forfeiture hearings, excess funds and judgment-debtor examinations, etc.) scheduled from

March 23, 2020 – May 29, 2020 will be continued. *Ex parte* civil protection order hearings are excluded and will be held.

11. Beginning May 4, 2020 through May 29, 2020, certain in-custody criminal pleas, sentencings, and revocation hearings may be held utilizing the following schedule:

Mondays: Courtrooms 4a, 5a, 6a, and 7a

Tuesdays: Courtrooms 4b, 5b, 6b, and 7b

Wednesdays: Courtrooms 3e, 4e, 5e, 6e, and 7e

Thursdays: Courtrooms 4f, 5f, 6f, and 7f

Requirements for Scheduled Proceedings

- a. Attorneys must contact the assigned judge to confirm arrangements for each specific case or matter prior to appearing on the specified day of the week.
- b. The scheduled proceeding must be agreed to by all counsel and the assigned judge.
- c. All proceedings shall adhere to the 10-person maximum occupancy and social distancing directives. Adherence to the 10-person maximum may require exclusion of family members of the defendant and victims of crime. Therefore, family members and crime victims may participate via teleconference or submit statements in writing through the participating attorneys in court, and their statements will be considered.

12. All requests for an order of garnishment, filed or submitted on or after March 16, 2020, are stayed until May 29, 2020, or until further order of the court. The Clerk of Courts is ordered to reject all order of garnishment requests filed on or after March 16, 2020 through May 29, 2020. Further, in cases where a debtor hearing has been stayed, the order of garnishment for that case shall also be stayed.

