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SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON
FOR THE COUNTY OF THURSTON

IN THE MATTER OF THE RESPONSE BY
THURSTON COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY
IN WASHINGTON STATE

NO. 20-2-00001-34

**EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE
ORDER #1**

There is a public health emergency in Thurston County, Washington as outlined by the following events:

1. On February 29, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency due to the public health emergency posed by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
2. On March 4, 2020, Washington Supreme Court Justice Debra Stephens entered an Emergency Order (No. 25700-B-602) that states, in part, as follows:

WHEREAS, during this state of emergency, it may become necessary for courts in these counties to close, relocate, or otherwise significantly modify their regular operations; and WHEREAS, the presiding judges in these counties need sufficient authority to effectively administer their courts in response to this state of emergency, including authority to adopt, modify, and suspend court rules and orders as warranted to address the emergency conditions. NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the Court's authority to administer justice and to ensure the safety of court personnel, litigants, and the public, It IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. *The Presiding Judges of the Washington courts are authorized to adopt, modify, and suspend court rules and orders, and to take further actions*

1 10. To allow for social distancing: 1) jury selection will only be conducted in the jury
2 courtroom on the first floor; 2) during the jury trial the jury will utilize the two connected
3 deliberation rooms on the second floor and 3) deliberations of the jury will have to occur
4 in an unoccupied courtroom.

5 Based on information from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), above circumstances and in
6 consultation with Thurston County Public Health and Social Services, (TCPHSS), and considering
7 the constitutional and statutory rights of litigants and other individuals, Thurston County Superior
8 Court is taking the actions set forth in this Order.

9 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT EFFECTIVE MARCH 16, 2020,
10 UNTIL AT LEAST, MAY 15, 2020:

- 11 1. THE SUPERIOR COURT EXERCISES ITS AUTHORITY UNDER ORDER NO. 25700-
12 B-602 OF THE SUPREME COURT OF WASHINGTON TO SUSPEND ALL CIVIL
13 AND CRIMINAL RULES ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS, INCLUDING, BUT NOT
14 LIMITED TO, CRIMINAL RULES 3.3 (TIME FOR TRIAL) AND 3.4 (PRESENCE OF
15 THE DEFENDANT).
- 16 2. THE COURT SUSPENDS ALL CIVIL TRIALS, TO INCLUDE BOTH BENCH AND
17 JURY TRIALS. Dependency, Termination, Juvenile Offender, Family Law, Unlawful
18 Detainer and Involuntary Treatment Act trials are not subject to this suspension at this time
- 19 3. SUPERIOR COURT WILL ONLY CONDUCT ONE JURY TRIAL AT A TIME. Such
20 limitation is to ensure appropriate social distancing measures are provided as outlined by
21 the CDC and TCPHSS within courthouse facilities.
- 22 4. *Main Campus, Criminal Calendars:* Criminal Calendars will continue with possible
23 modifications at the discretion of the Court.
- 24 5. *Main Campus, Civil Calendars:* Superior Court will only hear emergent or time sensitive
25 matters on civil calendars. Non-emergent motions will be struck, unless otherwise
26 specified. Unless otherwise directed, emergent motions will be heard without oral
argument or heard telephonically. Currently scheduled dispositive motions, whether

1 emergent or not, may be struck or considered by the Court in its discretion. Administrative
2 law reviews will be rescheduled unless otherwise specified.

- 3 6. *Family Law Motions*: Litigants and attorneys are encouraged to limit motions when
4 possible and are encouraged to file only motions regarding emergent issues.
- 5 7. *Final Orders Calendar*: All in-person hearings on the agreed final orders calendar will be
6 suspended beginning March 20, 2020.
- 7 8. *FJC Trial Confirmation*: The FJC Trial Confirmation calendar will be conducted via
8 phone.
- 9 9. *Dependency Motions*: The Court will manage these calendars on a case-by-case basis.
10 Each Judge is managing their calendars.
- 11 10. *Guardianship and Probate Calendar and Vulnerable Adult Protection Order Calendar*:
12 Litigants and attorneys are encouraged to file only motions regarding emergent or time
13 sensitive issues. Telephone and video appearances are encouraged.
- 14 11. *Settlement Conferences*: All settlement conferences will be conducted by phone.
- 15 12. *Family Law Orientation*: In person classes have been canceled.
- 16 13. All other calendars including Family Recovery Court and ITA Calendars will remain as
17 currently scheduled.
- 18 14. Court Administration service windows may have reduced counter hours to address emails
19 and phone calls. Updates to hours will be posted to the website.

20 THIS ORDER, INCLUDING ITS EFFECTIVE PERIOD (March 16, 2020 through May 15, 2020)
21 IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS CONDITIONS WARRANT.

22 DATED: March 13th 2020.

23 

24 Erik D. Price, Presiding Judge
25 Thurston Co. Superior Court
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