

**IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF DOUGLAS COUNTY, NEBRASKA**

MS- 20 33

IN THE MATTER OF THE  
ADMINISTRATION OF THE COURT

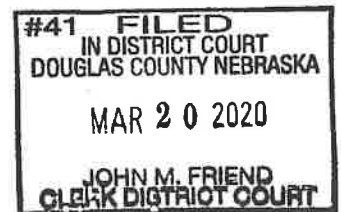
**ORDER IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19  
PANDEMIC**

The Judges of the District Court of the Fourth Judicial District are committed to providing Nebraskans with equal access to the courts and ensuring that all parties are treated in a fair and just manner. In response to the pandemic outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), and considering the World Health Organization (WHO), the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Governor of the State of Nebraska and the Douglas County Health Department's declarations and protocols for responding to the pandemic, the Court provides the following:

WHEREAS, there has been no Order issued from the Supreme Court of Nebraska which limits court or probation operations, declares a non-judicial day or closes any court in the State of Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, the Nebraska Supreme Court has ordered all courts and probation offices to devise and implement emergency preparedness plans to carry out mission essential functions of the court.

The Court hereby instructs, notifies, and orders as follows:



1. JURY TRIALS: All jury trials are continued through May 1, 2020 pursuant to District Court Administrative Order MS-20-32, filed March 19, 2020.
  - a. Civil jury trials will be continued to a future date, after consultation with counsel, by Order of the Court;
  - b. With regard to criminal jury trials, the defendants shall be asked to waive their constitutional right to a speedy trial. If the defendant waived his/her right the jury trial will be continued until further order of the court. If the right is not waived, the Court shall conduct a hearing, to be attended by essential persons only, for the purpose of determining if the jury trial should be continued for good cause, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §29-1207(4)(f) (Reissue 2016).
2. BENCH TRIALS: Trials to the bench shall be conducted on the record, in person or with no more than ten (10) essential persons in the courtroom at one time, or by video conference, in consideration of any stipulations between the parties with respect to the necessity of in-person testimony.
3. GUILTY PLEAS: Guilty pleas shall occur in person or by video conference and shall be on the record at a date and time to be determined by the court.
4. CRIMINAL SENTENCINGS: Shall occur in person or by video conference and shall be on the record at a date and time to be determined by the court.
5. TRANSPORTATION OF DEFENDANTS: Transportation of persons from Douglas County Corrections or Douglas County Youth Center is suspended pursuant to District Court Administrative Order MS-20-28, filed March 16, 2020.
6. PROTECTION ORDER HEARINGS: Protection order hearings shall occur in person, attended only by essential persons, or by video conference, on the record, at times and dates set by the court.
7. DRUG COURT: Follow specific emergency protocol implemented by the Drug Court.
8. YOUNG ADULT COURT: Follow specific emergency protocol implemented by the Young Adult Court.
9. VETERANS COURT: Effective March 19, 2020 the Douglas County Veterans Court will not be accepting new applications until further notice. During staffing and court hearings only designated personnel will be permitted in person. All other personnel may appear by

teleconference or audiovisual equipment. During court hearings, Veteran Court participants may be asked to appear by teleconference or audiovisual equipment.

10. PROBATION: Follow specific emergency protocol implemented by the Probation Division.
11. HEARINGS: All hearings, both civil and criminal, not specifically addressed in this order which can be done by teleconference or video conference, may be conducted in that manner at the direction of the court.
12. STIPULATED MATTERS: Any matters, including requests to continue hearings and trials, that are not contested and can be done by stipulation and order are to be done in this manner.
13. E-FILING: Attorneys who are not utilizing e-filing services are encouraged to do so to reduce in person contact for court filing.
14. TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO CONFERENCE PLATFORMS: Please contact the individual Judge for specific teleconference or video conference instructions.
15. COURTROOM RESTRICTIONS: Attendance at any in person court proceeding is restricted to attorneys, clients, and essential persons. All other attendance is upon approval by the court.
16. ATTORNEY SELF REPORTING/CLIENT REPORTING: All attorneys shall continue to notify the Court and opposing counsel if any attorney, client or witness comes within any risk category, outlined in the Administrative Order of the Chief Justice of the Nebraska Supreme Court on March 12, 2020, and shall fully comply with all provisions of said Order.
17. MODIFICATION: This Order may be modified at any time, as deemed necessary by the Presiding Judge of this district.

DATED this 20th day of March, 2020.

BY THE COURT:



Shelly R. Stratman  
Presiding Judge, Fourth District Court