

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

IN THE MATTER OF  
THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE COURT

MS 20-36

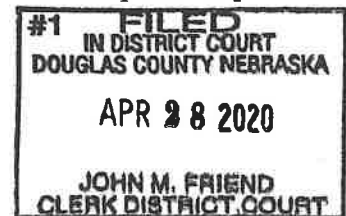
**SECOND AMENDED  
ORDER LIMITING IN-PERSON  
COURT ACCESS IN RESPONSE TO  
COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

In further consideration of the ongoing health crisis and restrictions created by COVID-19, along with the anticipated updated health directives of Governor Ricketts and the Douglas County Health Department, and pursuant to the joint letter to the chief of the Nebraska Supreme Court and Chief Heavican's reply letter (attached to this order), the following second amended order is effective immediately:

The courtrooms of the District Court for Douglas County are hereby closed to all in-person hearings until May 18, 2020 or on further order of the court in consultation with the medical director of the Douglas County Health Department. Court hearings shall proceed by video and/or telephone conferencing, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 24-303(2) (Reissue 2016) which states:

All nonevidentiary hearings, and any evidentiary hearings approved by the district court and by stipulation of all parties that have filed an appearance, may be heard by the court telephonically or by videoconferencing or similar equipment at any location within the judicial district as ordered by the court and in a manner that ensures the preservation of an accurate record....

The District Court shall remain open and accessible by video and teleconference. No non-essential proceedings should be held in-person. Emergency cases involving an individual's personal liberty, safety, and family relations, including protection order hearings shall be held by video and/or telephone conferencing. If a party does not have access to a computer or phone or




does not stipulate to proceed via video/teleconference, and it is deemed an emergency case, the hearing may be held in person by notifying the Douglas County Sheriff 24 hours prior to the hearing. The court shall provide the sheriff with the names of the parties to be escorted, courtroom number and time of the hearing. Otherwise, the hearing shall be reset to the first available date after May 18, 2020. If emergency in-person hearings are held, the court and all parties shall be instructed to follow strict Directed Health Measure orders which include social distancing, limited gathering size of 10 people and disinfecting after each hearing.

All transports of prisoners from Douglas County Corrections to the Douglas County Courthouse are suspended until May 18, 2020 or on further order of the court.

**IT IS SO ORDERED**

DATED this 28<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2020.

BY THE COURT:



Shelly R. Stratman  
Presiding Judge  
Douglas County District Court

**Corey R. Steel**  
State Court Administrator



**Deborah A. Minardi**  
State Probation Administrator

April 28, 2020

Matthew M. Kuhse  
Omaha City Prosecutor  
Hall of Justice, Suite 200  
1701 Farnam Street  
Omaha, NE 68183

Dear Mr. Kuhse:

We received Douglas County's request to extend the previously expressed plan to limit access to the courts in the Douglas-County Civic Center and the Hall of Justice until May 18, 2020. Your request is approved; please continue to follow the plan as outlined in your previous letter. Any modifications, changes, or extension will need to be submitted for approval.

The Judicial Branch appreciates the support of the Douglas County Commissioners to keep court business accessible to the public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Corey R. Steel". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light grey rectangular background.

Corey R. Steel  
State Court Administrator