
ORDER REGARDING EMERGENCY TEMPORARY MEASURES

The Jackson County Circuit Court is issuing the order herein described to provide procedures and directions for proceedings and essential functions in the Court during the next several weeks. These guidelines are Emergency and Temporary Measures ONLY effective from March 18, 2020 through May 15, 2020, or upon further Order of the Court. The Jackson County Courthouse remains open and any change in status will be noticed on the Jackson County website at www.co.jackson.wi.us and the Wisconsin Court system website, www.wicourts.gov.

The World Health Organization declared a global pandemic of COVID-19 due to widespread human infection worldwide. In order to slow the spread of the virus, the federal government has recommended limiting gatherings to groups of 10 or less people and to maintain a distance of not less than 6 feet from others. The information provided to date appears to indicate that it may take 4 days or longer after exposure to the virus before symptoms fully develop. We are monitoring this situation and are committed to open access to our courts and service to the public, and to protect 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.

These guidelines are in place to ensure the continuous performance of the court's essential functions and operations and yet seek to mitigate the risk that our employees, attorneys, litigants, and jurors will be exposed. The guidelines incorporate use of videoconferencing and

teleconferencing to minimize contact, when appropriate; follow social distancing practices; and temporarily suspend some non-essential court functions. For specific information on a particular case, please call the Judicial Assistant at the Judge's Office at (715) 284-0213 or the Clerk of Court's Office at (715) 284-0208.

The Jackson County Circuit Court HEREBY ORDERS:

1. Any hearing that can be conducted by telephonic or video means shall proceed as scheduled. In any cases involving victims of crimes who have indicated they wish to have notices and/or make a statement to the Court, the Victim Witness Coordinator shall contact the victim and arrange for them to participate telephonically. No person may appear in person for hearings during the duration of this Order. Any in-person hearings require the express specific approval of the assigned judicial officer.
2. There shall be no jury trials conducted on or before May 15, 2020, unless statutorily required. Parties will receive a notice for a telephonic Scheduling Conference from the Court directing them to call the Judicial Assistant to reschedule the matter on the Court Calendar. Parties in any statutorily required trial **SHALL** contact the Court for a telephonic status conference before April 1, 2020, if the matter has not been rescheduled already.
3. Preliminary Hearings, Pleas and Sentencing Hearings are encouraged to be conducted by telephonic or video means if the defendant consents. The Court will accept pleas on misdemeanors by authorization if the Defendant so desires; the defense attorney will be permitted to appear telephonically or by video. If the Defendant does not consent to the alternative means, the hearing may be delayed to a date beyond May 15, 2020 unless time

limits or other legal constraints demand otherwise. In that case, the court will determine on a case by case basis whether the hearing shall be conducted in person.

4. Criminal Intake on Mondays is temporarily suspended during this period through May 15, 2020. All matters will be rescheduled by written notice.
5. For any civil traffic, ordinance, or DNR citations the following rules shall apply:
 - a. For citations already issued and having a date assigned for intake prior to May 15, 2020: No party shall appear in person. All pleas or requests for adjournment must be made in writing by filing the same at the Clerk's office prior to the return date. Filings can be made electronically or by FAX at (715)2840270. If a party enters a written "not guilty" plea, the Clerk will set for a telephonic pretrial conference with the prosecutor. If a guilty or no contest plea is entered the court will enter judgment and find the defendant guilty. If a defendant entering a guilty plea demands a telephonic appearance it will be allowed if provisions can be arranged timely. If no plea is entered in writing, the court will proceed to enter a default judgment as is the normal practice for nonappearance.
 - b. For new citations issued on or after March 17, 2020, the return dates shall be delayed to a date beyond May 15, 2020.
6. For persons who are "in custody" there will be no changes and they will be handled as usual with the exception that the appearances will be conducted by video or telephonic means. If an individual is arrested by law enforcement and posts bond or otherwise is released from custody, the return date issued shall be after May 15, 2020.

7. Unless specifically authorized by the Court, all Orders to Produce for inmates housed in the Wisconsin State Prison System are canceled until after May 15, 2020, or until further order of this court. No new Orders to Produce will be issued until after May 15, 2020.
8. Mental Commitments, juvenile detention, ChIPS temporary physical custody requests, and TPR cases should proceed as originally scheduled unless the parties have been specifically directed otherwise by the Court. Unless addressed specifically in this order, the procedure for handling juvenile cases will be addressed on a case by case basis by the responsible court official.
9. All counsel shall communicate with the Court via the Judicial Assistant through telephonic or electronic means.
10. All paperwork submitted for hearings (i.e., guilty plea questionnaires, waiver of preliminary hearing forms, Marital Settlement Agreements, Financial Disclosures, etc...) shall be timely filed by electronic means prior to the Court hearing; paper will not be accepted at the hearing. In extenuating circumstances, the Court may dispense with the filing of certain paperwork (i.e., waiver of preliminary hearing) if the attorney and/or the Court are satisfied that the mandated issues have been reviewed orally with the defendant. This may be necessary, for example, if the defendant is incarcerated, unable to have personal visits and unable to have paper document pass through at the jail.
11. Family Court Commissioner hearings: All parties wishing to schedule a hearing shall contact the Family Court Commissioner to obtain a date and time for hearing and then electronically file the paperwork. If a pro se party is unable to efile, the party may leave a paper copy of the document at the Clerk of Court's Office for the Family Court Commissioner. The Family Court Commissioner has discretion to prioritize hearings of a

critical nature and may likewise determine that cases shall not be scheduled until after May 15, 2020 if appropriate. All temporary orders and stipulated divorce hearings held before the Family Court Commissioner shall be conducted telephonically and no personal appearances will be permitted.

12. Small claims hearings shall be conducted telephonically only and no personal appearances will be allowed. Plaintiffs are not required to appear during this period for the emergency order through May 15, 2020.

a. For small claims cases where return dates have already been set:

All answers or requests for adjournment must be made in writing by filing the same at the Clerk's office prior to the return date. Filings can be made electronically or by FAX at (715)2840270. If a party disputes the claim by timely filing a written answer, the Clerk will set the matter for trial after May 15, 2020 unless the matter concerns eviction. If no appearance is made by a defendant on the return date the court may enter judgment in favor of the Plaintiff absent good cause.

b. For new small claims matters filed on or after March 17, 2020, the return dates shall be delayed to a date beyond May 15, 2020, unless the matter is an eviction.

c. Evictions: All eviction matters that must be heard in a statutory time frame will be scheduled on a case by case basis. If personal appearances are required, the court will attempt to minimize contact by parties by ensuring proper distancing between parties and be requiring that the parties must file and pre-mark with the Clerk all evidentiary exhibits they intend to use at trial ahead of time at the clerk's office.

13. All informal probate matters that can be completed telephonically may proceed; otherwise, the matter shall be scheduled for an informal hearing after May 15, 2020.
14. Cases involving emergency or special circumstances shall be brought to the attention of the Court and will be handled at the discretion of the assigned judicial officer considering the needs of the case, the needs of the parties, and the interests of the public.
15. Treatment Court will make modifications on a case by case basis as appropriate to minimize the need for in person attendance at staffings and Court hearings by the team members and participants.
16. Court facilities shall remain open and the Court will continue to accept filings. Litigants are encouraged to file pleadings and other documents electronically whenever possible. Members of the bar and public are discouraged from making non-essential visits to court facilities.
17. The courthouse bailiffs have authority to turn any person away and deny admission to the courtroom if a person is actively exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. They will when necessary take the name and contact information of the person and provide that information to the court to ensure that we are aware the party attempted to appear. If a person involved in any litigation, civil or criminal, that involves personal appearances believes that they are at risk if they appear or suspects that they may be afflicted with the virus, call the Judicial Assistant immediately and **DO NOT ATTEND THE HEARING**. The Court will generously grant valid requests for adjournments on a case by case basis when requested in advance with good cause.

18. The information and advisories are constantly changing and therefore this is a court order
subject to change.

Dated this 17th day of March, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Becker', written over a horizontal line.

Hon. Anna L. Becker
Jackson County Circuit Court Judge