

RITZVILLE DISTRICT COURT, STATE OF WASHINGTON, ADAMS COUNTY

In Re:)
) ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE PUBLIC) NO: 2020-01
HEALTH THREAT CREATED BY COVID-19)
)

Pursuant to GR 21 and the Washington State Supreme Court Order No. 25700-B-602 which grants emergency authority to this Court to adopt, modify, and suspend Court Rules and Orders, and to take further actions concerning court operations, as warranted to address the current state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee signed a Proclamation declaring a State of Emergency exists in all counties in the State of Washington due to the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the State and directed that the plans and procedures of the Washington State comprehensive Emergency Management Plan be implemented; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency for the United States due to the COVID-19 health threat; and

WHEREAS, as of today's date there are no lab-confirmed cases in Adams County; and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2020, the CDC provided guidance that large events and gatherings be canceled or postponed for eight (8) weeks.

WHEREAS, this Administrative Order is being issued in response to the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in Washington State, which has been home to the first reported domestic case of the disease and some of the first significant community impacts from school and business closures. Given the number of identified and projected cases of COVID-19 in Washington State and the severity of risk posed to the public, and given the above public health recommendations from local public health authorities; and

WHEREAS, conducting regular court hearings with large groups of persons in the courtroom results in exposure to large groups of people which is contrary to the recommendations of health authorities and contrary to the Governor's Proclamations under the current state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Court seeks to limit the number of in-person hearings/contacts during the health emergency;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, and UNTIL FURTHER ORDER OF THE COURT:

Relating to COURT ADMINISTRATION

1. The Adams County Commissioners have secured all entrances to the Courthouse.
2. The Court Clerk's window will remain open to Courthouse employees and to outside persons with prior telephonic approval (509)659-1002.
3. Filings may also be submitted by mail or fax (509)659-3245.
4. Emergency motions and agreed orders may be submitted by the parties to the Court by mail or fax.
5. Payments will continue to be accepted online, by mail, by credit card payment over the phone.
6. The Court will maintain regular hours of operation unless otherwise amended by further order and notice to the Administrative Office of the Courts.
7. The Judge will be available for any necessary hearings by use of video or telephone appearances, and other appropriate means.

Relating to CRIMINAL MATTERS

8. Defendants may apply for a Public Defender by fax or telephone.
9. Probation functions will generally be limited to telephonic meetings and all substance abuse monitoring will be addressed on a case by case basis. Contact Probation at (509)488-2035.
10. CrRLJ 4.1(a)(2) regarding "speedy arraignment" is hereby suspended until further order of this Court.
11. CrRLJ 3.3(e)(8): All continuances granted and matters ordered rescheduled by the Court while this Order is in effect shall be "excluded periods" for the purpose of calculating time for trial.

Relating to CIVIL INFRACTION MATTERS

12. Operation of IRLJ 2.6 and GR 2.6 are hereby suspended until further of this Court.
13. Effective immediately, all civil infraction matters will be continued to June 23, 2020 or later. The Clerk of the Court will send written notice to all parties. In lieu of the rescheduled hearing, parties have the option to waive their right to hearing and submit a written statement or request statutory deferral if qualified. Written statements or deferral requests shall be sent to the Court by mail.

This Order may be amended or withdrawn as warranted to address the on-going public Health emergency.

DATED this 17th day of March, 2020.

ADALIA A. HILLE, JUDGE
RITZVILLE DISTRICT COURT