

ABERDEEN MUNICIPAL COURT

IN THE MATTER OF THE
EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO THE
THEAT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE
ORDER**

WHEREAS, the Mayor of the City of Aberdeen on March 13, 2020 declared a state of emergency related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, the Grays Harbor County Board of Commissioners on March 12, 2020 declared a county emergency in Grays Harbor County related to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of Washington on February 29, 2020 declared a state of emergency in all counties in the state of Washington due to the COVID-19 virus; and

WHEREAS, President Donald Trump on March 13, 2020 declared a national emergency related to the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020 declared that the spread of the COVID-19 virus had created a global pandemic; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has the potential to adversely affect the health of people in Grays Harbor County; and

WHEREAS, the Grays Harbor County Health Officer and the Director of Grays Harbor County Public Health reported to the Grays Harbor County Board of Commissioners on March 2, 2020 that COVID-19 can result in serious impacts to the health and well-being of the public and could overwhelm the health and medical system in Grays Harbor County; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court issued an emergency order in response to the public health emergency that affects operations of trial courts in Washington State on March 4, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Supreme Court adopted order No.25700-B-602 granting 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:

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

- 1) Effective immediately, the Aberdeen Municipal Court lobby and front counter are closed to the public until further order of the court. The court staff will continue to report to work as usual unless otherwise authorized. During this closure, the public may contact court staff by phone, email or fax. The public is also encouraged to visit the court's website to pay fines, pay quash warrant fees, and find court dates. Requests for warrant quashes may be made through the public defender or by calling the court. All requests shall be reviewed in chambers. Defendants shall be notified by mail or telephone of the court's decision.
- 2) All jury trials currently scheduled for April 21, 2020 shall be continued and rescheduled for trial on May 19, 2020. The court specifically finds that the continuances are required in the administration of justice as summoning jurors to the small municipal courtroom violates the social distancing public health policy being required nationwide to prevent the spread of deadly infection. The court further finds that no defendant will be prejudiced in the presentation of his or her defense by a continuance.
- 3) Criminal arraignments and pretrial hearings will be scheduled/continued approximately six weeks unless the court determines a sooner setting is required in the interests of public safety.
- 4) All hearings on motions to modify or rescind a domestic violence no-contact order issued by this court shall be conducted by written statement. The instructions and form are located on the court's website and may be submitted by mail, email or fax. The court will review the matter in chambers and enter a written order. The court reserves the right to conduct the hearing on the record in person, by video or by telephone with notice to the protected party.
- 5) There will be no traffic court in April. All mitigation hearings currently scheduled for April 13, 2020 will be continued to May 13, 2020.
- 6) Civil cases, including dog hearings, may be heard telephonically or on written statements.
- 7) Community Court participants shall continue to check in weekly with the Judicial Coordinator, Joey Bannish, by telephone.
- 8) The Community Service Program which is run in conjunction with the Aberdeen Parks and Recreation Department is suspended until further notice.
- 9) For all hearings currently pending and for hearings on new cases filed during the pendency of this order that are delayed by effect of this order, the delay/continuance shall constitute an excluded period for purposes of speedy trial, CrRLJ 3.3, CrRLJ 4.1, IRLJ 2.4, IRLJ 2.6, and any other applicable court rule.
- 10) For all hearings continued by effect of this order, notices will be mailed, or court staff will contact the parties by telephone. Any party needing to update his/her address, should contact the court.

- 11) For all hearings not continued by effect of this order, telephonic and video hearings will be permitted to the greatest extent possible in order to encourage social distancing as recommended by both the Centers for Disease Control and local public health officials.
- 12) This order may be modified consistent with the Court's continual assessment of the needs of the community, as well as the recommendations of public health officials.

DATED: March 15, 2020

JUDGE SUSAN L SOLAN