

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON  
IN AND FOR GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF EMERGENCY  
RESPONSE TO A THREAT TO PUBLIC  
HEALTH

**GENERAL ORDER 2020-11**  
**COVID-19 Mitigation in**  
**Grays Harbor County**  
**Superior Court**

WHEREAS, this Court has issued its General Orders #1 through #10 to respond to the health emergency and to mitigate the effect of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the infection rate for COVID-19 in Grays Harbor County has dramatically increased from June 1, 2020 to the present date, which has substantially increased the risk of infection for all persons who are employed at the courthouse or who enter the courthouse to conduct any type of business;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

1. All persons entering the Grays Harbor County Courthouse will be subject to the rules and restrictions set forth in this order.
2. Any person who is sick or in quarantine shall not enter the Courthouse.
3. Frequently touched surfaces will be routinely cleaned with disinfectant.
4. Staff and visitors are expected to practice good hygiene by washing hands frequently or by using hand sanitizer when hand washing is not practicable.
5. Effective immediately, no person may enter the courthouse without a face mask. Face masks or face coverings must be worn at all times in all public areas and courtrooms within the courthouse. Face shields are not approved by the Washington State Department of Health.
6. Individuals actively participating in a court proceeding may remove their masks when speaking with permission of the Court. The Court may also direct the removal of masks worn by active participants to facilitate clear communication and due process. Attorneys and

1 litigants shall address the Court from behind the counsel tables. The podiums in the  
2 courtrooms shall no longer be used.

3 7. Effective Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, the Civil and Domestic-attorney dockets will be  
4 conducted via Zoom. The scheduling process will remain the same, i.e., you must contact the  
5 Court Administrator to reserve time slots on these dockets.

6 8. The DV-Protection docket will be conducted via Zoom. The Temporary orders being issued  
7 in these cases will be modified to clearly instruct the parties regarding the procedures which must be  
8 followed to prosecute or defend one of these cases.

9 9. The Dependency docket was switched to Zoom 2 weeks ago and will continue via Zoom  
10 until further notice. Contested shelter care hearings will be conducted in-person. Fact finding  
11 hearings on Dependency petitions and on petitions to terminate parental rights will be conducted  
12 in-person. The Court Administrator will schedule such fact-finding hearings for the Fairgrounds  
13 courtroom whenever possible.

14 10. The Monday Criminal docket will be conducted via Zoom effective October 26, 2020,  
15 except for sentencing and change of plea hearings, which shall be conducted in-person. The  
16 defendant and his or her attorney must be present in court for any sentencing or change of  
17 plea. The Friday criminal docket is being eliminated. That docket was being utilized primarily  
18 for sentencing hearings and readiness hearings, which will now be heard as part of the regular  
19 Monday docket.

20 11. Family members, friends and spectators will not be permitted in the courtroom during the  
21 Monday Criminal docket. Anyone wishing to observe the criminal docket may do so via Zoom  
22 or YouTube. **It will be the responsibility of each attorney to notify his or her clients  
23 regarding these changes.**

24 12. All Civil and Domestic hearings and trials will be conducted by Zoom, unless the Court  
25 Administrator determines that an in-person proceeding is necessary. The Court Administrator  
26 will provide the necessary login information to all attorneys, witnesses, and parties. To have a  
hearing or trial scheduled via Zoom, your case must substantially meet the following criteria:

- All participants must have access to a computer or device which has Zoom capabilities.
- Trials and hearings will be limited to a length of not more than one day.
- Any witnesses you intend to have testify must be persons who will voluntarily appear without service of a subpoena.
- You must communicate with opposing counsel for the purpose of agreeing upon available dates and to confirm compliance with the criteria of this memorandum.

- 1 • Counsel are encouraged to stipulate to the admission of exhibits. Any exhibits you intend  
2 to use must be scanned and transmitted to the court clerk in advance of the hearing date  
3 to be marked. Additional copies shall be transmitted to the court administrator, opposing  
4 counsel, and, if necessary, to the witnesses who may be asked questions regarding the  
5 exhibits.

6 If you have a case that meets these criteria, you may request a hearing or trial by sending  
7 an e-mail to the Court Administrator. Your request should contain a brief description of  
8 the issues you expect to litigate, the amount of time necessary to present all of your  
9 witnesses, suggested/agreed dates, and the names of all persons who will be testifying  
10 and the estimated length of each witness's testimony. Please indicate if opposing counsel  
11 agrees with the suggested dates and agrees that the case meets the criteria of this  
12 memorandum.

13 The Court expects that the cases which meet these criteria to include, by way of example,  
14 proceedings to establish temporary or permanent parenting plans, modifications of  
15 parenting plans, dissolution trials, non-parental custody proceedings and a broad array of  
16 civil matters which would include pretrial motions, discovery disputes, and bench trials.

17 If your case does not meet these criteria, as determined by the Court Administrator, a date  
18 will be assigned to your case for an in-person hearing or trial.

19 12. The Domestic/ pro se, Paternity & Default Dissolution dockets will remain in-person  
20 dockets.

21 DATED this 26TH day of October, 2020.

22 

23 DAVID L. EDWARDS  
24 PRESIDING JUDGE  
25  
26