

IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT OF SEATTLE, WASHINGTON  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDING JUDGE

COURT OPERATIONS UNDER )  
THE EXIGENT )  
CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED )  
BY COVID-19 AND )  
RELATED CORONAVIRUS )

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER  
No. 2020 - 04  
COVID-19 EMERGENCY LIMITED  
COURT CLOSURE

This matter comes before the Court on the extraordinary public health emergency in the City of Seattle, King County, State of Washington:

1. On February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency due to the public health emergency posed by the spread of the coronavirus disease 2020 (COVID - 19).
2. On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan issued a Proclamation of Civil Emergency for the City of Seattle due to the spread of COVID-19;
3. On March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Chief Justice Debra Stephens of the Washington State Supreme Court adopted Order No. 25700-8-602, granting emergency authority upon all Washington courts to adopt, modify, and/or suspend court rules and orders, and to take further actions concerning court operations, as warranted to address the current public health emergency that affects operations of trial courts in Washington State; and
4. On March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 the Governor imposed additional restrictions prohibiting gatherings of more than 250 people within King, Snohomish, and Pierce County due to the danger of continued spread of the virus and the increasing danger the virus presents to the health care system in the region;
5. On March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Dr. Jeff Duchin, Health Officer for Public Health - Seattle & King County, issued a parallel local Health Officer Order for King County to prohibit gatherings of fewer than 250 people unless measures are taken by event organizers to minimize risk;

6. On March 12, 2020, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee ordered the closure of all public and private K-12 schools in King, Snohomish and Pierce counties;
7. The Seattle Municipal Court is committed to the health and safety of all court staff, attorneys, service providers and the public who access court programs and services daily through the Seattle Justice Center;
8. In accordance with the latest recommendations from Public Health – Seattle and King County and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to implement community mitigation strategies to slow the spread of COVID-19 that include limiting large work-related gatherings, encouraging telework and implementing social distancing while meeting our constitutional obligations to provide a forum to resolve violations of the law in a respectful, independent and impartial manner, the Seattle Municipal Court must significantly limit court operations to meet both obligations.

PURSUANT TO order No. 25700-B-602 of The Supreme Court of Washington, as Presiding Judge of the Seattle Municipal Court, in the interest of both public safety and public health during the COVID-19 public health crisis

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. Effective Monday March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Seattle Municipal Court will be closed with the limited exception of in-custody cases and mandatory appearance hearings.
2. Matters relating to the impound of a motor vehicle may be scheduled if a written request to the Court is presented explaining the urgent need for a hearing.
3. For all hearings currently scheduled and for hearings on new cases filed during the pendency of this order, the delay or continuance shall constitute

an excluded period for purposes of Speedy Trial, CrRLJ 3.3, CrRLJ 4.1, IRLJ 2.2, IRLJ 2.4, IRLJ 2.6 and any other applicable court rule.

4. All hearings currently scheduled during the period of emergency limited court closure shall be continued to the next available Court date no sooner than April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Notices will be mailed to the parties of the next scheduled hearing date via US mail.
5. The Court will remain open to the public during this limited Court closure for adjusted hours of 8:00am to no earlier than 3:00pm Monday through Friday. The Saturday in-custody calendar at Courtroom 2 of the King County Jail will continue.
6. The Court will resume regular operations no sooner than Monday April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
7. This order may be modified or extended as the Court continues to evaluate the impacts of the COVID-19 public health crisis on the safety of the public, Court partners and employees.

DONE this 13<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020

  
Willie Gregory, ACTING PRESIDING JUDGE