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6 IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON
7 IN AND FOR LEWIS COUNTY

8 In Re:

9 EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION
10 LIMITING COURT OPERATIONS
11 RESULTING FROM PUBLIC HEALTH
EMERGENCY

GENERAL ORDER NO.

GR 21 Dated 03/18/2020

12 Pursuant to General Rule (GR) 21(a), "A court may be closed if weather,
13 technological failure or other hazardous or emergency conditions or events are or
14 become such that the safety and welfare of the employees are threatened or the court
15 is unable to operate or demands immediate action to protect the court, its employees or
16 property. Closure may be ordered by the...presiding... judge in his or her discretion
17 during the pendency of such conditions or events." In addition, the Washington State
18 Supreme Court, through Order No. 25700-B-602 issued on March 4, 2020, authorized
19 the presiding Judges of all Washington courts to "...adopt, modify, and suspend court
20 rules and orders, and to take further actions concerning court operations, as warranted
to address the current public health emergency."

21 Since the date of that order, the situation faced by Washington residents has
22 changed drastically. With mandated school closures and restrictions on other activities,
this court must address the continuing issues presented by the COVID-19 virus.

23 As of the date of this order, there is a public health emergency currently within
24 the state of Washington. Lewis County now has one (1) confirmed case and is under its
25 own proclamation of emergency. Proactive steps to continue to protect Lewis County
26 residents and those in contact with the justice system in Lewis County are necessary.

27 GR 21 Order
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1 With over 1000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and over 50 deaths resulting
2 statewide, the courts have worked closely with local, state and federal health officials to
3 protect those coming into contact with the justice system. To properly respond to
4 COVID-19, the Lewis County Superior Court is taking the following actions (Orders):

- 5 1. Criminal Rule (CrR) 3.4 is hereby suspended until April 27, 2020.
6 Specifically, this order authorizes defendants to appear via video conference
7 for all criminal hearings, including, but not limited to, change of pleas and
8 sentencings.

9 DATED this 18 day of March 2020.

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13 JUDGE JAMES W. LAWLER
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