PIERCE COUNTY DISTRICT COURT, STATE OF WASHINGTON

In Re

COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY IN WASHINGTON STATE

GENERAL ORDER NO. 2020-07

WHEREAS On February 29, 2020, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency due to the public health emergency posed by the spread of the coronavirus (COVID – 19).

WHEREAS during this state of emergency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Washington State Department of Health have recommended increasingly stringent social distancing measures of at least six feet between people, and encouraged vulnerable individuals to avoid public spaces; and

WHEREAS consistent with these recommendations, Governor Inslee issued and extended a "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order directing non-essential businesses to close, banning public gatherings, and requiring Washingtonians to stay home except to pursue essential activities; and

COVID-19 COURT CLOSURE ORDER - 1

WHEREAS our court facilities are ill-equipped at the present time to effectively comply with social distancing and other public health requirements and therefore continued in-person court appearances jeopardize the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, judges, court staff, and members of the public; and

WHEREAS on March 16, 2020 this Court issued emergency General Orders 2020-02 and 2020-03 based on the March 4, 2020 Order No. 25700-B-602 from Chief Justice Debra Stephens of the Washington State Supreme Court authorizing Presiding Judges to adopt, modify and suspend court rules and orders and to take further actions concerning court operations, as warranted to address the current public health emergency; and

WHEREAS on March 19, 2020 Chief Justice Debra Stephens of the Washington State Supreme Court adopted Corrected Order No. 25700-B-607, setting forth direction and authority to Presiding Judges of trial courts across the State to effectively administer their courts in response to this state of emergency, including the authority to adopt, modify, and suspend court rules and orders as warranted to address the emergency conditions; and

WHEREAS in response to the Governor's order, the majority of court staff are working remotely from home, with only minimal staff on site; and

WHEREAS Chief Justice Stephens on April 29, 2020 issued Second Revised and Extended Order Regarding Court Operations, No. 25700-B-618, suspending all jury trials until at least July 6, 2020 and continuing all non-emergency civil matters and all out of custody criminal matters until after June 1, 2020; now

THEREFORE, pursuant to the Court's authority to administer justice and to ensure the safety of court personnel, litigants, and the public,

## IT IS HEREBY ORDERED

- (1) That the provisions of Pierce County General Orders 2020-02, 2020-03, 2020-04 and 2020-05 and Supreme Court Orders 25700-B606 and 25700-B607 (corrected) and 25700-B-618 are hereby incorporated by reference.
- (2) The public counters for Pierce County District Court are currently closed. Filing documents with the Court is more difficult. Until further Order of this Court, Motions will be accepted by email to the individual Courtroom.
- (3) Attorneys requesting discovery in civil infractions, may obtain that discovery via e-mail by providing an e-mail address. Otherwise, the Court will continue to provide such discovery via the U. S. Postal Service.

Dated this  $6^{th}$  day of May, 2020.

/s/ Judy Rae Jasprica
Judy Rae Jasprica, Presiding Judge