

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
GENERAL DIVISION  
FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO**

20MS \_\_\_\_\_

**FIFTH GENERAL ORDER IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19  
(CORONAVIRUS) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**

The General Division Judges of the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas make the following Findings of Fact:

1. On March 9, 2020 Ohio Governor Mike DeWine issued Executive Order 2020-01D “Declaring a State of Emergency” in response to the growing COVID-19 public health emergency.
2. On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 to be a global “pandemic” requiring “urgent and aggressive action” to control the spread of the virus.
3. On March 11, 2020 the first “community transfer” positive case of COVID-19 in the state of Ohio was confirmed.

Based upon these Findings of Fact, the General Division of the Court of Common Pleas developed protocol in response to this public health emergency. These protocols are intended to protect public health, maintain essential court functions, and continue to protect the rights of all individuals subject to the authority of the Court.

**THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

1. The General Division Local Rules of Court may be temporarily modified to allow Court flexibility, within Constitutional limits, in response to the public health emergency.
2. The General Division policies may be temporarily adjusted to maintain essential court operations and functions.
3. The General Division authorizes the use of audiovisual devices and technologies for all actions and proceedings.
4. The General Division has determined the public health emergency is a good cause for continuances.

5. The hours of operation for the General Division will be 8:00am – 3:00pm until further order of the Court.
6. The General Division will have the lawful authority, within constitutional limits, to do or direct to be done all things necessary to ensure the orderly and efficient administration of justice and public safety for the duration of the declared state of emergency.
7. Except for cases suspended by federal law, rule, or regulation, beginning June 1, 2020, all stays regarding foreclosure cases, including Sheriff’s sales, are hereby lifted and cases shall be reactivated as appropriate.
8. All civil Duty Magistrate hearings will resume June 1, 2020.
9. Beginning June 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020, the Court will operate utilizing a rotating docket schedule. To limit the number of people entering the courthouse, in-person proceedings (civil and criminal) will be held in the respective courtrooms utilizing the following schedule:

Judicial Courtrooms A and E  
Magistrate Courtrooms C

July 27–31  
August 10 – 14  
August 24 – 28  
September 7 – 11  
September 21 – 25  
October 5 – 9  
October 19 – 23  
November 2 – 6  
November 16 – 20  
November 30 – December 4  
December 14 – 18  
December 28 – 31

Judicial Courtrooms B and F  
Magistrate Courtrooms D

July 20 – 24  
August 3 – 7  
August 17 – 21  
August 31 – September 4  
September 14 - 18  
September 28 – October 2  
October 12 - 16  
October 26 - 30  
November 9 - 13  
November 23 - 27  
December 7 - 11  
December 21 - 25

No in-person proceedings shall be held during a non-scheduled week. However, other docket matters can be held via video/telephone conference.

All Duty Judge and Duty Magistrate schedules will remain as scheduled. Only duty matters will be heard during the respective duty week.

Civil Stalking Protection Order matters are not subject to the schedule set forth in this section.

10. All garnishment proceedings will resume June 1, 2020.

11. Beginning June 1, 2020, both in-custody and out-of-custody arraignments will be held at 1:00pm.
12. Based upon recommendations from the Supreme Court Responsible Restart Ohio, any individual entering the courthouse is required to wear a protective mask, covering the nose and mouth unless a medically documented reason prevents the person from covering their face. N95 medical masks are not required; cloth masks that have been purchased or are homemade are acceptable. The protective covering shall be worn at all times while the individual is inside the courthouse, including courtrooms and the Adult Probation Department. Individuals are encouraged to bring their own facial covering; however, the Court will provide a mask if a person does not have access to their own facial covering.
13. All Court employees are required to wear masks. Masks are not required when working alone in an assigned work area.
14. All individuals in the courthouse and the Adult Probation Department shall adhere to the 6-foot social distancing protocols.
15. All time frames set forth above may be further extended for a greater period of time subject to further order of the Court if deemed necessary.
16. The Court will issue an Order when normal operations resume.
17. This Order supersedes any provision in Orders 20MS156, 20MS159, 20MS168, and 20MS198 that are inconsistent with this Order.

HON. STEPHEN L. McINTOSH  
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE



7/23/2020