

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE

SURRY COUNTY 20 R \_\_\_\_\_

IN RE: CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19) )  
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Closure of the Surry County Courthouse )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER  
CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19)

This Order is entered by the undersigned judge, being the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge of Judicial District 17B, through the inherent authority of those offices and pursuant to Executive Orders of Roy Cooper, Governor of North Carolina and the Emergency Directives of the Honorable Cheri Beasley, Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court, to protect the public as well as state and local employees working in the Surry County Courthouse.

The undersigned received communication from the Surry County Register of Deeds Office that an employee has tested positive for COVID-19, a highly contagious communicable disease. This employee works within the Surry County Register of Deeds department of the Surry County Courthouse.

Based upon a review of information readily available, the following facts are found:

- 1.) An employee of the Surry County Register of Deeds Office has tested positive for COVID-19 on or about August 5, 2020. This individual may have exposed other immediate staff members and they therefore may have exposed other individuals throughout the Surry County Courthouse.
- 2.) These facts came to the attention of the undersigned late afternoon on August 5, 2020.
- 3.) COVID-19 is highly contagious and can be deadly.
- 4.) In similar situations Public Health has advised as a precaution that the affected building be shut down for a deep cleaning prior to re-opening.
- 5.) As has been the case throughout this Pandemic crisis, this court is faced with making unprecedented decisions concerning the closure of courthouse facilities, which are generally required by law to be open to the public. Such decisions necessarily include a balancing of the imperative and absolute necessity of protecting the public from the possibility of infection, while at the same time protecting the constitutional rights of those having pending civil and criminal proceedings that need to be addressed in a timely manner.

Therefore, based upon the foregoing, it is HEREBY ORDERED:

- 1.) The Surry County Courthouse shall be closed on August 6-7, 2020 for a deep cleaning of the Courthouse. The closure shall remain in effect to the employees and public until Monday, August 10, 2020.
- 2.) The Surry County Register of Deeds is closed and will remain closed until August 17, 2020.
- 3.) The Surry County Courthouse shall re-open for employees and public on Monday, August 10, 2020.
- 4.) All Courts and cases scheduled for August 6-7, 2020 shall be canceled and rescheduled.

- 5.) Upon the re-opening at the Surry County Courthouse, it is mandated that no employee within any department located inside the Courthouse return to work if experiencing any symptoms of the CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19).

This the 5<sup>th</sup> day of August 2020.

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/s/ Angela B. Puckett  
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge