

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
COVID-19 EMERGENCY HEALTH CRISIS
COURT OPERATIONS SCHEDULE**

NOW COMES the undersigned Senior Resident Superior Court Judge and enters this Administrative Order concerning Court operations.

WHEREAS, it is necessary to ensure that the Court establish additional policies to address matters in Superior Court given the restrictions limiting the numbers and types of hearings that are and will be in place;

WHEREAS, public health officials in the district have been consulted and made recommendations for the safety and welfare of the public;

WHEREAS, it has become evident, as the Courts move to expand operations in the Second Judicial District, there will be necessary limitations and spacing of individuals in courtrooms, and an expanded need to use calendaring authority and other administrative procedures to effectuate the safe and efficient administration of justice;

WHEREAS, jury trials will resume under the rules of the Administrative Order Special COVID-19 Procedures-Jury Trial plan issued October 9, 2020.

- 1. Hearing of in custody, non-custody, and defendant pleas, motions and probation violations.**
 - (a) The District Attorney shall calendar any cases that are ready for administrative setting. Plea offers shall be made prior to the date of court in writing.
 - (b) Plea transcripts should be prepared and signed by the parties if possible, prior to the court date. If no plea is agreed upon, the case will be called and the plea offer rejected on the record, and a trial date set.

- (c) No defendant shall be allowed to accept the plea offer after it is rejected, unless extraordinary circumstances exist and approved by the court.
- (d) The District Attorney shall prepare a calendar which allocates designated time periods for each defense attorney, with 2 attorneys and no more than 20 defendants scheduled at the same time period.
- (e) Essential victim rights witnesses and defense witnesses who are to address the Court shall be allowed to appear. All persons present shall at all time sit at least 6 feet apart.
- (f) The previous 10 person limit in the courtroom is hereby lifted.
- (g) All persons present in the courtroom shall sanitize their hands and shall wear a mask or face covering.

2. Specific rules for Grand Jury sessions until further notice:

- a.) The Grand Jury will meet in Courtroom B. All Grand Jurors shall be seated at least 6 feet apart.
- b.) Each Grand Juror shall be provided a mask, and sanitizer shall be on site for their use.
- c.) All witnesses appearing before the Grand Jury shall wear a mask.
- d.) Breaks to include hand washing shall be taken as needed.

SCHEDULE OF COURT

March 4, 2021- Judge Sermons

02:00 pm Tyrrell County criminal admin for in custody and scheduled non custody pleas, motions and probation violations.

March 15, 2021- Judge Sermons

10:00 am Tyrrell County criminal trial session, 130 jurors will be summoned to the Tyrrell County High School gym where 9 new Grand Jury members will be selected and asked to return on March 17, 2020. Jury Selection will proceed before returning to the Courthouse for the trial.

March 17, 2021- Grand Jury

09:30 am Tyrrell County Grand Jury will meet in the Superior Courtroom to be sworn in and instructed. They will then proceed to Courtroom B to hear the indictments.

May 13, 2021- Judge Jesse Caldwell, III

02:00 pm Tyrrell County criminal admin for in custody and scheduled non custody pleas, motions and probation violations.

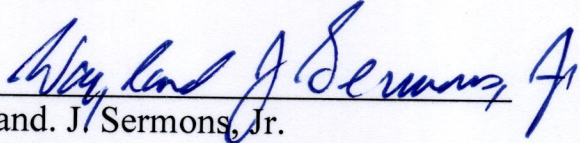
May 24, 2021- Judge Sermons

10:00 am Tyrrell County criminal trial session, 130 jurors will be summoned to the Tyrrell County High School gym where jury selection will proceed before returning to the Courthouse for the trial.

May 26, 2021- Grand Jury

09:30 am Tyrrell County Grand Jury will meet in Courtroom B to proceed with the indictments.

This the 9th day of February, 2021.



Wayland J. Sermons, Jr.
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge
Second Judicial District