

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

**FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT, DISTRICT COURT SCHEDULING CHANGES
DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC DIRECTIVES ISSUED BY
CHIEF JUSTICE CHERI BEASLEY, EFFECTIVE MARCH 16, 2020**

I. CRIMINAL DISTRICT COURT

1. All pending criminal court cases scheduled to be heard within the next 30 days shall and will be continued until after April 30, 2020 WITH THE EXCEPTION OF:
 - i. First Appearance Hearings;
 - ii. Bond Hearings
 - iii. Probable Cause Hearings;
 - iv. Probation violation Hearings (only if the defendant IS IN CUSTODY);
 - v. Limited Driving Privilege Hearings.
2. All regularly scheduled criminal courts in each county shall continue to be held and presided over by a judge to hear the above listed limited matters EXCEPT THAT THE DARE COUNTY FRIDAY ADMINISTRATIVE SESSIONS WILL BE CANCELLED UNTIL AFTER APRIL 30, 2020.
3. All Law Enforcement Officers in the First Judicial District are advised not set any new cases before May 1, 2020.

II. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/NO CONTACT HEARINGS

1. Ex Parte Domestic Violence (50B) and 50C Hearings shall be scheduled to be heard before a District Court Judge during a regularly scheduled Criminal District Court Sessions if possible.
2. As usual, if a District Court Judge is unavailable, a magistrate may hear and rule on the Ex Parte Motions and if granted, if at all possible, that Order shall be scheduled to be heard before a District Court Judge at the next scheduled District Court Criminal Session in that County. If said Motion is denied by the Magistrate, the Clerk or Chief District Court Judge's Office shall schedule this matter to be heard after April 30, 2020.
3. If after an Ex Parte Domestic Violence Order is entered by a judge and there is no regularly scheduled Criminal District Court Sessions scheduled within 10 days in that County, the Clerk is to notify the Chief District Court's Office so that arrangements can be made to have a judge made available to hear the matter.

III. CIVIL DISTRICT COURT

1. All civil matters/hearings/trials currently scheduled to be heard between March 16, 2020 and May 1, 2020 are hereby CANCELLED with the EXECEPTION OF:
 - i. Emergency Custody Proceedings;
 - ii. Preliminary Injunctions Proceedings;
 - iii. Temporary Restraining Proceedings; and
 - iv. Any civil hearing that, with consent of all the parties and the presiding judge, can be heard remotely and through video, telephonic or internet means.
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IV. CHILD SUPPORT COURTS

1. EFFECTIVE MARCH 16, 2020, all Child Support Sessions in the First Judicial District are CANCELLED until after April 30, 2020.

V. JUVENILE DELINQUENCY COURTS

1. Juvenile Delinquency Court Sessions shall remain scheduled as usual in each county but shall be limited for the following matters:
 - i. First Appearance Hearings;
 - ii. Probable Cause Hearings; and
 - iii. Secured Custody Hearings.
2. The Clerk's Office, Public Defendant's, District Attorney's and/or Juvenile Probation Office shall notify the scheduled presiding judge if matters categorized above need to be heard during that session. If no matters are required to be heard, the session shall be cancelled.
3. All other cases/matters/hearings shall be continued until after April 30, 2020.

VI. DSS COURTS

1. DSS Courts shall remain scheduled as usual in each county but only to hear EMERGENCY and TIME-MANDATED matters. All other matters not falling into these two categories shall be continued until after April 30, 2020.
2. The Clerk's Office, DSS Attorney and/or involved attorneys shall give the scheduled judge prior notice that such emergency and time-mandated cases need to be heard during that session. If no matters are required to be heard, the session shall be cancelled.

VII. MAGISTRATES AND MAGISTRATE'S COURT

1. The Magistrate's Offices in each county shall continue to follow their usual office hour schedules.

2. All currently scheduled Magistrate's Court Trial Sessions set to be heard between March 16, 2020 and April 30, 2020 are hereby CANCELLED and shall be rescheduled to be heard after April 30, 2020 with proper notice to all parties.

VIII. CUSTODY MEDIATION PROGRAM

1. The Custody Mediation Program shall continue to operate under the following LIMITED PROCEDURES ONLY:
 - i. Face to face Orientation Sessions and Mediation Sessions are cancelled until after April 30, 2020
 - ii. If all parties agree, they may participate in the Orientation Sessions and Mediation Sessions by and through the REMOTE means of video, telephonic or internet communications.

IX. CIVIL ARBITRATION PROGRAM

1. The Arbitration Program shall be suspended until after April 30, 2020.
2. All pending Arbitration Hearings shall be continued until after April 30, 2020.

X. CASE/HEARING RESCHEDULING PROCEDURES

1. The Clerk's and Magistrate's Offices in conjunction with the District Court Judge's Office, shall notify all parties as soon as possible that their cases have been cancelled, postponed or continued until a date after April 30, 2020.

This Order may be AMENDED at any time if it deemed necessary by the Chief District Court Judge.

All Terms and Conditions of this Order are EFFECTIVE as of 6:00 a.m. March 16, 2020.



Edgar L. Barnes
Chief District Court Judge
First Judicial District