



TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
WAKE COUNTY
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December 15, 2020

From: Hon. Paul Ridgeway, Senior Resident Superior Court Judge
Hon. Debra Sasser, Chief District Court Judge
Hon. Lorrin Freeman, District Attorney
Hon. Blair Williams, Clerk of Superior Court
Hon. Chris Graves, Chief Magistrate
Mr. Deonte Thomas, Chief Public Defender
Ms. Kellie Myers, Trial Court Administrator

Re: UPDATED Wake County Court Operations Effective December 14, 2020*

Consistent with the [December 14, 2020 Order of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of North Carolina](#), North Carolina Courts will postpone non-essential, in-person court proceedings for 30 days, beginning Monday, December 14. See the following pages for detailed information regarding the operations of Wake County Courts, which remain open, during this time.

Clerk and court offices in the Wake County Courthouse and Justice Center will remain open for business. However, the number of staff available may be reduced due to safety precautions, approved leave, and adjusted working schedules. Unless you are required to appear in-person to conduct your business, attorneys and the public should use email and telephone to communicate with court staff. Contact information may be found below and on www.nccourts.gov.

[Online court services](#) are available for handling some court business, including citation services, paying your ticket, court payments, signing up for court date notifications and reminders, Guide & File for certain courts and case types, and more. Visit www.nccourts.gov/services.

*The information herein is contingent upon orders of the Chief Justice and Governor and are subject to change at the discretion of the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge, the Chief District Court Judge, and the Trial Court Administrator / COVID-19 Coordinator to protect the health of court personnel and of the public. Parties and attorneys must visit the Wake County COVID-19 Updates page for the most current information regarding court operations <https://www.nccourts.gov/locations/wake-county/wake-county-coronavirus-covid-19-updates>.

<p>CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT – CIVIL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Civil Division of the Clerk’s Office will be available by telephone and email during regular business hours to provide assistance. • Civil District, Civil Superior, and Small Claims filings will be accepted by drop box or by mail only. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Filings by mail should be sent to: PO Box 351, Raleigh, NC 27602. ○ Drop boxes are located on the first floor of the Wake County Courthouse (316 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, NC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Every document dropped in the boxes will be stamped filed by 5:00 p.m. on the business day it was dropped <i>if the document contains proper payment</i>, if required. • Emergency filings (e.g., TRO, custody, and motions to stay eviction) will be accepted by appointment only. Appointment requests shall be submitted by email to: WakeCourtHotline@nccourts.org. • Domestic Violence filings (50B & 50C) will be accepted on the fifth floor of the Wake County Courthouse only. • Civil clerks will be focused on supporting the civil courtrooms in operation and processing filings and continuances. • Public file access requests (copies of files) will be accepted by email only to WakeCivilClerk.FileRequest@nccourts.org.
<p>CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT – CRIMINAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Criminal Division of the Clerk’s Office will be available by telephone and email during regular business hours to provide assistance. • In-person counter assistance will be provided weekdays, between 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. • Criminal clerks will be focused on supporting the criminal courtrooms in operation and processing filings and continuances. • Public file access requests (copies of files) will be accepted by email only to WakeCriminalClerk.FileRequest@nccourts.org.
<p>CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT - ESTATES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estate administration matters will be conducted, although in-person meetings will subject to health precautions as determined by the Clerk of Court. Please schedule estate matters via this link when possible. • Estate hearings will be conducted via WebEx as scheduled. • Public file access requests (copies of files) will be accepted by email only to Wake.Estates.CopyRequest@nccourts.org.
<p>CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT – SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guardianship hearings will be conducted if deemed an emergency. WebEx hearings will be conducted as scheduled. • Special Proceeding hearings will be conducted via WebEx as scheduled. • Public file access requests (copies of files) will be accepted by email only to Wake.SP.CopyRequest@nccourts.org.
<p>CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT COURT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtroom 5D will be closed, and cases will be rescheduled beyond 30 days. • Cases where the defendant is in custody will be heard in Courtroom 2A. • Consent orders and motions for orders to show cause will be handled by the judge in Courtroom 2A.

<p>CIVIL DISTRICT COURT - GENERAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtroom 9C will be closed. The TCC will continue all trials scheduled on the 9C calendar during this closure. New calendar requests will have to be submitted for motions on the calendars during this time frame. • Courtroom 2A will be operating daily with an in-person Judge to hear general civil emergency and time sensitive <i>ex parte</i> matters including, but not limited to: Motions for TRO, Motions to Stay Eviction, Requests for temporary No Contact Orders pursuant to the Workplace Violence Prevention Act, etc. • Courtroom 2A will also hear overflow DVPO cases and 50C cases from Courtroom 5A as needed and child support enforcement cases where the defendant is in custody. • All District Court Arbitrations will be rescheduled beyond 30 days.
<p>CIVIL SUPERIOR COURT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil superior court motions will be heard remotely by Webex, as already scheduled by the TCA’s Office during the week of December 14, 2020. • Per the Judicial Branch Superior Court Master Calendar, superior court sessions are not scheduled during the week of December 21 – 25 and the week of December 28 – January 1. Requests for emergency matters in civil superior court must be submitted by email to Lisa Tucker. • See Operation of Civil Superior Court in January 2021 for more information.
<p>CRIMINAL DISTRICT COURT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtroom 301 will be operating daily for morning sessions only to hear scheduled felony cases with defendants in custody and any emergency matters. Any cases that were set for the PM session will be heard in the AM session of the scheduled court date. All cases with defendants not in custody will be continued. • Courtroom 303 will operate daily morning and afternoon to hear domestic violence first appearances and any scheduled misdemeanor cases (DV, DWI, Criminal, Traffic) with defendants in custody. All cases with defendants not in custody will be continued. • Courtroom 304 will operate daily in the afternoon to hear non-DV first appearances by video remote. • Courtroom 304 will operate on Tuesday and Wednesday AM only to hear probation violation cases with defendants in custody. All cases with defendants not in custody will be continued. • Courtroom 304 will operate on Friday afternoons for car seizure matters. • Writ cases will not be heard. • All other criminal and traffic courts will be closed, and cases will be continued.
<p>CRIMINAL SUPERIOR COURT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtroom 701 will operate Monday PM, Tuesday – Thursday AM & PM, and Friday AM only to hear pleas with defendants in custody. • Courtroom 401 will operate Monday – Thursday AM sessions only to hear probation violations cases with defendants in custody. • Grand Jury will proceed as scheduled. • Per the Judicial Branch Superior Court Master Calendar, superior court sessions are not scheduled during the week of December 21 – 25 and the week of December 28 – January 1.

DIVORCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divorces scheduled for Summary Judgment hearings on December 18, 2020 and January 8, 2021 will continue to be heard remotely in 9C by the remote miscellaneous judge. There are no divorces scheduled for December 25, 2020 (Christmas) or January 1, 2021 (New Year Day). • Live or in-person divorces set on December 18, 2020 and January 8, 2021 will be continued by the clerk's office.
DOMESTIC COURT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Courtrooms will run remote calendar calls at 9:00 a.m. each day in Courtroom 2B, 2C, and 2D. All cases, except those that are considered emergencies or those that can be heard remotely, will be continued. Emergency cases will include DVPO returns, emergency custody returns, Temporary Restraining Orders, ex parte motions, and petitions for expedited enforcement. • Cases set for remote hearings, including emergency cases, will be heard in the regularly scheduled WebEx virtual courtroom. Emergency cases that cannot be heard remotely will be sent to Courtroom 2A for an in-person hearing. • See August 2020 Family Court Update and November 2020 Family Court Update for Webex details.
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT (CIVIL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Violence filings (50B & 50C) will be accepted on the fifth floor of the Wake County Courthouse only. • Courtroom 5A will operate daily for the purpose of hearing ex parte Domestic Violence Protective Order (DVPO) requests and ten-day return hearings pursuant to G.S. 50B. and for requests for emergency relief pursuant to G.S. 50C. • Daily calendar calls will be held remotely via Webex at 9:00 a.m. • DVPOs with no Ex Parte Order, Motions to Show Cause, Motions to Modify or Set Aside and Motions for Return of Weapons may be continued beyond 30 days. • See Protocol for Domestic Violence Webex Calendar Calls and Remote Hearings and November 2020 Family Court Update for Webex details.
FAMILY COURT OFFICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Family Court office will operate with a reduced staff. • Individuals with emergency filings should knock on the door to the Family Court office (11th floor of the Wake County Courthouse) for assistance. • Child custody mediation orientation and mediation sessions that have been scheduled will continue to be conducted remotely, and will not be interrupted during this 30-day reduction in operations. • All other inquiries and requests for assistance should be directed to the case coordinator for the assigned judge or to Family Court Administrator, Yvette Smith, via email. Case coordinator's names and email addresses can be found at www.WCFCC.com.
IVC HEARINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involuntary commitment hearings will continue to be conducted remotely. • The paperwork associated with petitions for which there was no hearing will continue to be handled on the 12th floor of the Wake County Courthouse by an in-person judge.
JURY DUTY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the instructions on your Summons or call the Jury Information Line at (919) 792-4040. • Requests for excusals and deferrals will not be accepted by email.

JUVENILE ABUSE NEGLECT & DEPENDENCY COURT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtroom 4C will operate only for the purpose of nonsecure custody hearings and will be scheduled after consultation with the Family Court and District Court Judges' Offices. • All cases which are currently scheduled to be heard remotely will be heard as scheduled. • Any case which is scheduled to be heard in-person can be heard remotely after consultation with the attorneys and/or parties. • All other cases that are scheduled to be heard in-person will be continued beyond 30 days, if they cannot be heard remotely. • Filings may be restricted to the courtroom.
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY COURT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtroom 4B will operate in-person and remotely for cases involving a juvenile in secured custody. • Cases involving a juvenile who is out of custody will likely be continued, subject to certain exceptions. • Filings may be restricted to the courtroom. • Juvenile matters should be coordinated with ADA Katherine Edmiston or ADA Patricia Flood.
MAGISTRATES' OFFICES	<p>Hammond Road Magistrate's Office (3301 Hammond Road, Raleigh, NC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magistrate's Court located at the Wake County Detention Center is open 24/7/365 • All proceedings will continue as normal including probable cause hearings for Arrest/Search Warrants, Initial Appearances, Involuntary Commitment Orders, Juvenile Petitions, Secured and Non-Secured Custody Orders, and Bail Transactions
SMALL CLAIMS COURT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Claims Court proceedings will be postponed beyond 30 days, unless a remote hearing is consented to by all parties and approved by presiding Magistrate.
TRAFFIC COURT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Traffic/Misdemeanor cases scheduled for Courtroom 101 will be postponed.
TRIAL COURT ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff of the Superior Court Judges and Trial Court Administrator's Office will be working on a reduced schedule. For assistance, please contact the appropriate staff member: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Civil District Court: Amy.L.Turner@nccourts.org ○ Civil Superior Court: Lisa.R.Tucker@nccourts.org ○ Civil Superior Orders & MSC: Shanda.R.Smallwood@nccourts.org ○ Criminal Superior/LEA: Bettye.D.Cooper@nccourts.org ○ District Court Arbitration: Carol.R.McLeod@nccourts.org
WEDDINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weddings are performed by appointment only with maximum of 10 weddings per day in Courtroom 901; appointments may be requested by emailing WakeMagistrateWeddings@nccourts.org. • A strict limit of 6 individuals, including the couple getting married, are allowed to be in attendance • Couples seeking to be married by a Magistrate must first obtain a valid marriage license from a North Carolina Register of Deeds Office.