

**Twentieth Judicial Circuit Administrative Office of the Courts
COVID-19 Advisory #3**

The Twentieth Judicial Circuit Courthouses are open, with only essential and critical proceedings taking place due to COVID-19

The 20th Judicial Circuit continues to take precautions to mitigate the effects of COVID-19.

Pursuant to the Florida Supreme Court's statewide order, AOSC20-15, circuit and county courts are to continue to conduct essential proceedings and proceedings critical to the state of emergency or public health emergency while reducing the number of people coming into the Circuit's courthouses.

Chief Judge Michael McHugh today issued Administrative Order 2.39 postponing all non-essential and non-critical court matters effective March, 18, 2020 until further notice.

The following proceedings are deemed essential or critical and will continue to take place:

- First appearance hearings
- Criminal arraignments, as necessary
- Hearings on motions to set or modify monetary bail for individuals who are in custody
- Juvenile dependency shelter hearings and arraignment hearings, including shelter reviews
- Juvenile delinquency detention and arraignment hearings
- Hearings on petitions for temporary injunctions relating to safety of an individual
- Hearings on petitions for risk protection orders
- Hearings on petitions for the appointment of an emergency temporary guardian
- Hearings to determine whether an individual should be involuntarily committed under the Baker Act or Marchman Act
- Hearings on petitions for extraordinary writs as necessary to protect constitutional rights
- Hearings on petitions for judicial waiver of notice pursuant to section 390.01114(4), FL Statutes
- Hearings related to the state of emergency or the public health emergency, including but not limited to proceedings related to violation of quarantine or isolation, violation of orders to limit travel, violation of orders to close public or private buildings, and enforcement of curfew orders

All non-essential and non-critical court proceedings are suspended until further notice unless the Chief Judge approves that the matter may be effectively conducted remotely.

When possible, essential court proceedings shall be held remotely. This includes proceedings involving in-custody defendants. Courtroom attendance within all courtrooms of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit shall be limited to attorneys, parties, the media, and necessary witnesses.

The Twentieth Judicial Circuit Courthouses remain open. In Lee County, people are asked to enter via the Martin Luther King entrance. In addition, the only people allowed into the courthouses for in-person hearings are attorneys, parties, witnesses, the media, and people with official court business. While

conducting business at any of our courthouses, everyone should maintain at least a 6-foot social distance from each other at all times. Anyone who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 is prohibited from entering the courthouse.

All of the 20th Circuit's Probation and Pretrial Services Departments are utilizing telephonic reporting to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. All court mediations are canceled unless conducted remotely using videoconferencing, telephone, or other electronic means.

In a statewide order by Florida Chief Justice Charles Canady (AOSC20-13), grand jury proceedings, jury selection proceedings, and criminal and civil jury trials have been suspended for two weeks. The order is effective until Friday, March 27, 2020. A subsequent order from the Chief Justice may further extend this timeline. This means that jurors do not have to appear for jury duty during these dates. Contact the Clerk of Court's Office for additional juror information.

Please continue to visit our website www.ca.cjis20.org/ and social media @swflcourts on Twitter and Instagram for future updates.

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