



TWENTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
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MICHAEL T. MCHUGH
CHIEF JUDGE

SCOTT WILSKER
COURT ADMINISTRATOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Judges in the Twentieth Judicial Circuit
Amira Fox, State Attorney
Kathleen A. Smith, Public Defender
Ita Neymotin, Regional Counsel
Clerk of Courts of Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry, and Glades Counties
Sheriffs of Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry, and Glades Counties
County Managers of Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry, and Glades Counties
Scott Wilsker, Trial Court Administrator

FROM: Michael T. McHugh, Chief Judge, Twentieth Judicial Circuit

DATE: March 13, 2020

RE: COVID-19 – Limitation of Persons in Courtrooms

On March 1, 2020, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-51 directing that the Florida Department of Health issue a Public Health Emergency as a result of COVID-19.

On March 9, 2020, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-52 declaring that a State of Emergency exists in the State of Florida as a result of COVID-19.

On March 11, 2020, Chief Justice Charles T. Canady issued Supreme Court of Florida Administrative Order No. AOSC20-12 directing that all Chief Judges of the courts continue ongoing planning and take mitigating measures as may be necessary to address the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak. The goal is that all efforts be consistent with the policy of mitigating the impact of COVID-19 while keeping the courts open to the fullest extent consistent with public safety.

In accordance with the directive of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Florida and in compliance with the goal of implementing policies to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 while keeping the courts open to the fullest extent possible, I, as Chief Judge of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit, hereby direct that:

Courtroom attendance within all courtrooms of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit shall be limited to attorneys, parties, and necessary witnesses.

Court Bailiffs and local Sheriff Deputies are hereby granted the authority to screen and eject persons from courtrooms in accordance with this directive. Exceptions may be made at the sole discretion of presiding judges on a case-by-case basis.

This directive shall be in effect until further notice or until superseded by further order of this Court or the Florida Supreme Court.