

THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 11.23 (v.1)

CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC (COVID-19) EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

WHEREAS, the outbreak of COVID-19 has caused a public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Florida has issued Executive Order 20-52, declaring a state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Supreme Court has issued Administrative Orders AOSC20-12, AO SC20-13, and AOSC20-15, adopting procedures for mitigation of the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Supreme Court in AOSC20-15 has directed the Chief Judge of the Circuit to cancel or postpone non-essential proceedings, unless those proceedings can effectively be conducted remotely without the necessity of in-person court appearances; and

WHEREAS, the court must fulfill its responsibility to address mission critical functions while protecting the health and well being of the public, the bar, court staff, and judges; and

WHEREAS, this Order is entered pursuant to the authority vested in the Chief Judge by Article V, Section 2 of the Florida Constitution, as well as the Administrative Orders issued by the Florida Supreme Court referenced above,

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

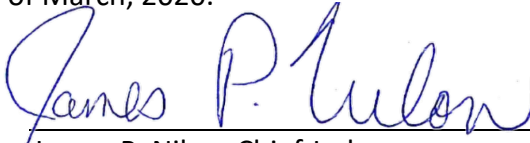
1. This Order shall take effect at 8:00 am on March 19, 2020 and shall continue through 5:00 pm on March 27, 2020.
2. Essential court proceedings shall continue to be performed. If practicable, these proceedings shall be conducted remotely, using telephonic or other electronic means, without the necessity of in-person court appearances.

3. If it is not practicable to conduct essential court proceedings with all individuals appearing remotely, those individuals who are unable to appear remotely shall appear in person, unless the appearance is waived by the presiding judge.
4. Essential court proceedings shall include:
 - (a) First Appearances; (b) Bond Hearings; (c) In-custody Changes of Plea in which the defendant's release from incarceration is expected; (d) Juvenile Detention Hearings; (e) Domestic Violence Injunction Hearings (including repeat, sexual, dating violence and stalking injunction); (f) Risk Protection Orders; (g) Shelter Hearings; (h) Dependency Arraignments and Advisory Hearings; (i) Dependency and Family Law matters where the imminent safety of children is at issue; (j) Baker and Marchman Act proceedings (k) Appointment of Emergency Temporary Guardian; (l) Vulnerable Adult Injunctions; (m) Adult Protective Services proceedings; (n) "Do not resuscitate" proceedings; (o) Seizure of bodily fluid proceedings; (p) All critical proceedings related to the current public health emergency, such as violation of quarantine, travel limitations, closing of buildings, or curfews; and (p) other matters determined to be urgent by the presiding judge.
5. In conducting these essential court proceedings, all practicable methods to minimize the risk of COVID-19 exposure shall be employed; including permitting only those persons essential to the proceeding to enter the courtroom, cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces both before and after the proceeding, using the hallways or additional courtrooms as waiting areas, and dispersing those present in the courtroom to a safe distance.
6. No proceeding, other than those listed in paragraph 4 above, shall take place unless it can be conducted remotely, using telephonic or other electronic means, without any in-person court appearance.

7. Any person, regardless of status, who is exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or any person who has been in contact with another person who has tested positive for COVID-19, shall be prohibited from entering any court facility without the express permission of the Chief Judge or the Trial Court Administrator.

8. The Circuit's Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP) is activated effective immediately.

ORDERED ON this 18 day of March, 2020.



James P. Nilon, Chief Judge