

As you are aware we are all dealing with the constantly evolving coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. We want to assure the bar that we are monitoring events closely, seeking the advice of the informed professionals and taking all appropriate and necessary precautions to protect all people who come to, work at, or need access to the Common Pleas Court in this County.

The health experts have emphasized that we must do everything we can to slow the spread of the virus in our Community. This means anyone who is ill, has been around someone who is ill or who otherwise been exposed to the virus through travel should voluntarily avoid all public places including the County Courthouse. We are asking for the bar to assist us in this by avoiding any non-essential contact with the Court while the pandemic abates.

If you have a current case with the Court and are scheduled to appear in the next few weeks, and you are ill, have been ill in the past two weeks or have been around anyone who has been ill please file to continue your case. The same applies for your clients, witnesses, support staff and the like. You will be assigned a new Court date to permit any possible illness and contagiousness to pass.

If you are scheduled to appear in any Court in the next few weeks please contact the Court to see if the matter will proceed as scheduled. You will be informed of any changes to the scheduling of your case. Those changes in scheduling may include appearing by phone or video conference for the scheduled event.

Erie County Common Pleas Court-

General/Criminal/Domestic Relations Divisions-

Cases assigned to Judge Tygh Tone

Call 419-627-7731

Cases assigned to Judge Roger Binette

Call Lori Rickenbaugh or Vicki Fitzgerald at 419-627-7732

Probate Division-

Judge Beverly McGookey Call 419-627-7754

Juvenile Division

Judge Robert DeLamatre Call 419-627-7782

Please be advised, If you appear at the Courthouse, you will be subject to normal security screening. Further, you may be subject to additional screening for illness or exposure and you may ordered to leave the premises at the discretion of the Court or security staff.

IN THE COMMON PLEAS COURT OF ERIE COUNTY, OHIO
GENERAL DIVISION

IN RE: TEMPORARY ORDER : CASE NO: 2020-MS-_____
IN RESPONSE TO THE :
COVID-19 PUBLIC :
HEALTH CRISIS :
:

This Court issues this General Order in response to the recent outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Ohio and across this country.

The Governor of the State of Ohio, Michael DeWine, has declared a state of emergency which, among other things, limits large indoor gathering.

The Governor's Declaration follows the Center for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") Interim Guidance recommending that all employers consider how best to decrease the spread of COVID-19, including the review of guidance from state and local officials.

In light of discussions with this Court's security committee, and the Director of Health for Sandusky and Erie County, it is hereby ORDERED that effective Friday, March 13, 2020:

- (1) All civil and criminal matters scheduled for jury trial before any judge in the General Division are CONTINUED until further order of the Court.
- (2) With regard to criminal matters, due to the Court's reduced ability to obtain an adequate panel of prospective jurors, and the effect of the above public health recommendations on the availability of counsel and Court staff to be present in the courtroom, the time period of continuances implemented by this General Order will be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, as the Court finds that the ends of justice served by ordering continuances under these severe circumstances outweigh the best interests of the public and a defendant's right to a speedy trial.

- (3) Case by case exceptions to the continuances provided herein may be ordered at the discretion of the assigned judge after consultation with counsel.
- (4) This ORDER does not affect the Court's consideration of civil, criminal, or domestic relations motions that can be resolved without oral argument.

The Common Pleas Court shall remain open. The staff of each individual Judge and the Clerk's office will be available by telephone, mail will be received, and essential hearings will be had. Electronic filing will be continued through CourtView.

The public is instructed to utilize the courthouse, but in furtherance of the above-mentioned health guidelines, would ask that individuals only enter the courthouse as absolutely necessary.

Counsel and/or parties are hereby instructed to call the Court prior to coming to Court if there is any question that your case may or may not be proceeding on the date previously assigned.

The Court will vacate or amend this General Order no later than April 14, 2020.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Judge Roger E. Binette

Judge Beverly K. McGookey

Judge Tygh M. Tone