

24th Judicial District Court

Parish of Jefferson

State of Louisiana

ORDER 2020 – 013

COVID-19 PHASE III

Acting in accordance with Louisiana Constitution Article V, Section 1; pursuant to LSA RS. 1:55; due to the COVID-19 emergency as detailed in Governor John Bel Edwards's Declarations of Public Health Emergency, Jefferson Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng's Declaration of State of Emergency, and the emergency orders of the Louisiana Supreme Court, and in accordance with the inherent powers of this court, and in consideration of ongoing public health recommendations to reduce the risk of exposure to the COVID19 virus and slowing the spread of the disease while balancing the need to protect the constitutional rights and public safety of the citizens of the state by maintaining access to Louisiana courts, the Chief Judge, acting on behalf of the Judges of the 24th Judicial District Court, HEREBY ORDERS THAT beginning on September 14, 2020 at 8:00 A.M. the Thomas F. Donelon Courthouse shall be open to the public with the following Phase III restrictions:

1.

Individuals experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, those currently testing positive for COVID-19, and those under quarantine order or quarantine recommendation in accordance with CDC guidelines, shall not report to court but are ordered to contact the division in which their case is scheduled for further instructions.

2.

Masks covering the nose and mouth shall continue to be required to be worn in the Thomas F. Donelon Courthouse.

3.

Six feet of social distancing is to be observed at all times.

4.

Jury trials may recommence beginning September 14, 2020.

5.

All civil matters shall continue to be conducted via videoconference whenever possible. Requests for in-person appearance should be made in advance of the date scheduled for hearing and shall be granted in the discretion of the presiding judge.

6.

Civil motions and trials requiring witness testimony and submission of documentary evidence may be conducted in person, observing mask and social distancing restrictions.

7.

Criminal matters with incarcerated defendants shall be conducted via videoconference with the exception of substantive motions and jury trials. The defendant's presence shall be permitted for substantive motions upon request of counsel. Defendants shall appear in person for all criminal jury trials.

8.

Attorneys are encouraged to attend court via videoconference for all criminal matters except substantive motions and jury trials. Jury trials shall require in person attendance of all attorneys.

9.

Courts are encouraged to conduct substantive hearings, motions, and trials requiring in person proceedings, one case at a time in the courtroom, to ensure social distancing and public safety. The gallery of the courtroom shall be limited to not more than 14 persons at all times for all proceedings with social distancing observed.

10.

Attorneys and litigants entering the Thomas F. Donelon Courthouse shall continue to use the SinePro app to ensure observance of capacity limitations and six feet of social distancing throughout the courthouse.

11.

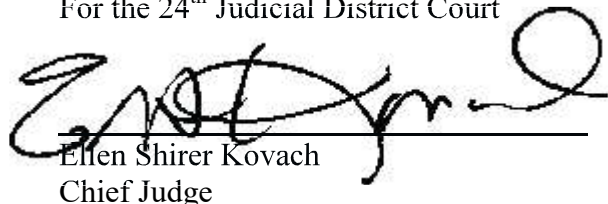
Appointments are no longer required for Clerk of Court filing; however, social distancing must be observed.

12.

Except as specifically modified herein, all previous orders of the court remain in effect.

Gretna, Louisiana this 14th day of September, 2020.

For the 24th Judicial District Court



Ellen Shirer Kovach
Chief Judge