

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
IN AND FOR INDIAN RIVER, MARTIN, OKEECHOBEE, AND ST. LUCIE COUNTIES  
STATE OF FLORIDA

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2020-01**

**IN RE: CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC (COVID-19)**

WHEREAS the Governor of Florida has issued Executive Orders declaring a state of emergency and a public health emergency in response to the outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19); and

WHEREAS pursuant to the direction of the Florida Supreme Court is AOSC20-12 and AOSC20-13 that preparing for the impacts of COVID-19 on court operations is a high priority for the Florida State Courts System and all chief judges must take any mitigating measures as may be necessary to address the effects of COVID-19 in their respective circuits; and

WHEREAS the Florida Supreme Court on March 17, 2020 issued AOSC 20-15 which: 1) designates essential proceedings and permits the chief judge to determine additional essential proceedings; 2) requires circuits to employ all methods practicable to minimize the risk of COVID-19 exposure to individual involved in essential proceedings or the general public; and 3) directs the chief judge of each circuit to cancel or postpone non-essential proceedings unless such proceedings can be effectively conducted remotely without court appearances;

In order to provide for continued operations of the courts in the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit during the COVID-19 emergency, and in accord with Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215, and section 43.26, Florida Statutes,

**IT IS ORDERED:**

1. Mission essential proceedings will continue to be handled by the Court, including but not limited to:
  - a. First appearance hearings;
  - b. Juvenile dependency shelter hearings;
  - c. Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) advisory hearings;
  - d. Hearings on petitions for Judicial Waiver of Notice;
  - e. Juvenile delinquency detention hearings;
  - f. Hearings on ex parte petitions for temporary injunctions relating to safety of an individual;

- g. Instanter hearings on child support writ reviews;
  - h. Hearings on ex parte petitions for risk protection orders;
  - i. Hearings on petitions for the appointment of an emergency temporary guardian;
  - j. Hearings on Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) Orders;
  - k. Involuntary commitment hearings under the Baker Act or Marchman Act;
  - l. Hearings on motions to set or modify monetary bond for defendants in custody;
  - m. Hearings on petitions for extraordinary writs as necessary to protect constitutional rights;
  - n. Criminal arraignments as necessary;
  - o. Issuance of warrants or authorization for wiretaps; and
  - p. Other emergency or time-sensitive matters as determined by the presiding judge.
  - r. A change of plea hearing that results in release from county jail.
2. Additionally, the court will hear, as necessary, critical proceedings related to the state of emergency or the public health emergency, including but not limited to:
- a. Violation of quarantine or isolation;
  - b. Violation of orders to limit travel;
  - c. Violation of orders to close public or private buildings; and
  - d. Enforcement of curfew orders.
3. To the maximum extent possible, mission essential proceedings shall be accomplished using electronic means for some or all participants. If it is not possible to conduct these proceeding remotely, the presiding judicial officer shall ensure that a “social distancing” method of at least six feet is utilized. All persons who find themselves in a courthouse facility should maintain this social distance from each other at all times.
4. All grand jury proceedings, jury selection proceedings, and criminal and civil jury trials were suspended effective March 16, 2020 and will remain suspended until further order of the Florida Supreme Court.
5. No proceedings or court events other than essential court proceedings and critical proceedings related to the state of emergency or the public health emergency shall be conducted through in-person hearings until further order of this Court. All judicial officers of the circuit and county courts of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit shall reschedule, postpone, or cancel all non-essential court proceedings and events unless the presiding judicial officer has requested and obtained approval of the chief judge to proceed with such proceedings or events and the presiding judicial officer determines that the proceedings or events can be effectively conducted remotely using telephonic or other electronic means and without the necessity of in-person court appearances. Before making a request to the

chief judge, a judicial officer should consider whether the electronic hearing would cause persons to be in close contact in a remote location where it would be difficult or impossible to utilize social distancing. Each judicial officer will set the procedure for remote proceedings and post the procedures and any policies on their respective webpages.

6. Civil and criminal traffic cases are suspended until further order of this Court.
7. All ordinance violation cases are suspended effective the date of this Administrative Order until further order of this Court.
8. All scheduled foreclosure sales are hereby canceled until further order of this Court.
9. All court mediations are canceled unless conducted remotely using teleconferencing, telephonic or electronic means without the necessity of in-person appearances.
10. All in-person supervised visitation in any family or dependency case previously court-ordered is suspended for the duration of this order, unless said visitation can occur remotely with no in-person contact. The presiding judge who ordered the supervised visitation may determine any appropriate make-up visitation at a later date.
11. Except for review of emergency motions in a Problem-Solving Court, all Problem-Solving Courts (Drug Court, Veterans Treatment Court, and Mental Health Court) in all counties are hereby cancelled, and the clerk is directed to reschedule these dockets to a date after the expiration of this order.
12. The Sheriffs of all four counties are hereby authorized to stay the execution of the following orders:
  - Writs of possession;
  - Levies;
  - Replevins;
  - Five-day evictions;
  - Writs of garnishments;
  - Regular summonses;
  - Department of Revenue paperwork;
  - Out-of-state orders;
  - In-county and out-of-county tax deeds;
13. This Administrative Order shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until further notice or until superseded by further order of this Court or the Florida Supreme

Court. If the timeframes set forth in AOSC20-13 and AOSC20-15 are extended by the Florida Supreme Court, the timeframes in this order will accordingly extend without the necessity of further order from this Court. All procedural provisions and administrative orders of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit inconsistent with Florida Supreme Court administrative orders related to the public health emergency are deemed superseded until such emergency orders are rescinded by the Florida Supreme Court.

DONE AND ORDERED this 19<sup>th</sup> day of March 2020 at Stuart in Martin County, Florida.



---

LAWRENCE MIRMAN, CHIEF JUDGE

Copies to:

All Judges and Magistrates  
Clerks of Court for Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie Counties  
Sheriffs of Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie Counties  
Office of the Public Defender  
Office of the State Attorney  
Office of Criminal Conflict Counsel and Civil Regional Counsel, 19<sup>th</sup> Circuit  
Bar Association of Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie Counties