

AMENDED on June 26, 2020

To: Members of the 18th Judicial District

From: Honorable Teresa Vincent, Chief District Court Judge

Chief Justice Cheri Beasley entered an order implementing measures designed to curb the spread of COVID-19 and minimize the risk of exposure caused by crowded sessions of court. Consistent with the Chief Justice's order, effective Monday, March 16, 2020, several superior court, and district court proceedings of the 18th Judicial District will be rescheduled for **July 1, 2020, at the earliest**, with several exceptions, which appear on the following pages.

The emergency directive of the Chief Justice does not apply to proceedings in which a jury has already been empaneled and, it does not prohibit a judge or other judicial officer from exercising in chambers or *ex parte* jurisdiction conferred by law upon that judge or judicial officer, as provided by law.

The Clerk's Office and Judges Chambers will remain open from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm for business. However, unless you are required to appear in-person to conduct your business, attorneys and the public are strongly encouraged to use email and telephone to communicate with staff of the Eighteenth Judicial District. The Office of the District Attorney and the Public Defender offices are also open to the public. **All individuals that visit either of the above-referenced offices are requested (various offices may require them) to wear face mask or coverings.**

Online court services are available for handling some court business, including citation services, paying your ticket, court payments, signing up for court date notifications and reminders, e-filing court documents for certain courts and case types, and more.

CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT

- Involuntary Commitments will be conducted as needed, subject to necessary precautions, including, but not limited to, video testimony.
- Guardianship Hearings will be conducted as needed, subject to necessary health precautions, as determined by the Clerk of Court.
- Estate Administration matters will be conducted. However, person to person interactions will be limited if health concerns arise, as determined by the Clerk of Court.

MAGISTRATE AND SMALL CLAIMS

- The Greensboro and High Point magistrate offices will operate as normal for Warrants for Arrest, Magistrate's Orders, Criminal Summons, Initial Appearances, Cash Bonds/Property Bonds, Involuntary Commitment Orders, Juvenile Petitions and Secured and Non-Secured Custody Orders. As of June 1, 2020, the civil magistrates' office

resumed regular business hours from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Contact Chief Magistrates Julie Antonelli (GSO) and Chad Landen (Hpt.) if you have any questions.

- All Small Claims court proceedings will proceed as usual. (GSO in Rms. 210 & 215 until further notified; Hpt. in Rm. 140)
- **The number of cases and defendants will be limited to achieve social distancing.**
- Magistrates shall perform wedding ceremonies on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm by appointment only in the High Point and Greensboro jails.
- **All magistrate administrative courts are closed, except courtroom 1B in Greensboro. Except for cases in courtroom 1B, cases shall be continued past July 31, 2020. [Courtrooms 1A (GSO) and HP02 (Hpt. - Rm. 162)]**

District Court

- **The office hours resumed regular business hours from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on June 1, 2020.**
- Judges will be available to consider *Ex-Parte* Emergency Custody request(s) and other matters, if appropriate, that may be addressed *ex parte*, such as a Motion to Recall an Order for Arrest from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm through May 29, 2020. **On June 1, 2020, the Judges' Chambers resumed regular business hours from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.** Consequently, judges will be available to consider *ex parte* orders.
- **All court personnel, litigants and attorneys are requested to wear a face mask or face covering, If the county or court provides face mask or coverings to members of the public, the Court may require defendants to wear one while in the courtroom.**

Arraignment Court (Courtroom 3B- Hpt.)

- **All cases shall resume on July 6, 2020. (See COVID Protocol for Courtroom 1B and 3B (Hpt) for more details) Attorneys are requested to report to the courtroom(s) between 9:00 to 11:00 am; whereas defendants are to report at 2:00 pm unless otherwise notified.**

Civil Domestic Violence Court

- Courtrooms 2B (GSO) and 3A (High Point) will operate as usual, handling domestic violence *ex-parte* matters and return hearings, unless otherwise indicated.

Civil/Domestic District Courts

- Courtrooms 2B & 3A (Hpt) – Courts will operate as indicated in the following provisions. Emergency custody hearings will also be held in courtrooms 2B & 3A (Hpt). Request for ex-parte emergency custody orders may be handled remotely or in person. Please contact Stephanie Wallace or Pat Dixon (Trial Court Coordinators) to request remote hearings.
- Courtrooms 2E and 3A (in GSO & Hpt) will remain open per COVID19 protocol. **Pro-se and Magistrate appeals cases will resume in July 2020, according to COVID19 protocols. There will be remote calendars calls for courtrooms 2E and 3A (GSO & Hpt) on until otherwise notified.** Also, in July 2020, there will be NO daily docket calls; only parties in

the first case for a hearing will report to the courtroom; otherwise, attorneys and litigants will be on telephone standby.

- All District Court arbitrators, attorney(s), or litigant(s) may request a remote hearing as opposed to an in-person arbitration. Please contact Doretta Sims in the Judges' Chambers with any questions at (336) 412-7800.
- Special Settings – Please contact the Trial Court Coordinator (Mrs. Stephanie Wallace or Pat Dixon) to reschedule.
- Please contact Stephanie Wallace or Pat Dixon if you have any questions.

Criminal/Traffic District Court

- On July 6, 2020, Courtroom 1C & 3C (Criminal Courts in GSO & Hpt.) will resume subject to limitations regarding the number of defendants on dockets due to COVID19. Cases that were previously scheduled for July 2020 and in upcoming months will remain calendared for hearing (unless otherwise notified). Attorneys and represented defendants are requested to report to the courtroom(s) between 9:00 to 11:00 am; whereas defendants are to report at 2:00 pm unless otherwise notified. The Court will ensure that limited numbers of defendants are seated in courtrooms to achieve social distancing. (See COVID 19 Protocol for Criminal Courts for additional information). The Court will resume trials in August 2020.
- On July 6, 2020, Courtroom 1D/3C (Traffic Court) will resume for Driving While Impaired cases only subject to limitations regarding the number of defendants on dockets due to COVID19. Cases that were previously scheduled for July 2020 and in upcoming months will remain calendared for hearing (unless otherwise notified). Attorneys and represented defendants are requested to report to the courtroom(s) between 9:00 to 11:00 am; whereas defendants are to report at 2:00 pm unless otherwise notified. The Court will ensure that limited numbers of defendants are seated in courtrooms to achieve social distancing. (See COVID 19 Protocol for Criminal Courts for additional information). Attorneys requesting Non-Driving While Impaired hearings shall calendar such cases for the Remote Traffic Calendar (except for triple-digit speeds and DWLR Impaired Revocations). If non-traffic cases that are not related to DWI cases are scheduled in a traffic courtroom, the Court will remove or continue the cases. Trials may be heard by consent in July 2020; and will resume in August 2020.
- Remote Traffic Court shall be held in Courtroom 2C (unless otherwise notified) on Wednesdays from 9:00 am to 11:00 am and on Thursdays in High Point from 9:00 to 11:00 am. (See COVID19 Protocol for Traffic Courts and Remote Hearings).
- Courtroom 2C is open for First Appearances/Bond Motions at 2:00 pm each day (unless otherwise notified). Felony court will resume on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning on July 6, 2020. The number of defendants will be limited to achieve social distancing. Therefore, an Assistant District Attorney may contact attorneys in advance of the courtroom regarding continuances for newer cases to manage the number of defendants on a docket.

- Courtroom 3D (Hpt) is open for First Appearances/Bond Motions at 2:00 pm each day (unless otherwise notified).
- Assistant District Attorneys will NOT call calendars; but will process defendants and attorneys cases upon arrival. This practice will continue until otherwise notified.
- No orders for arrest shall be issued for failures to appear in Criminal and Traffic Courts until otherwise notified.

Juvenile Abuse Neglect & Dependency Court/Delinquency Court

- Courtrooms are open only for all matters per the COVID19 protocol. The Court shall hear cases remotely when it is feasible to do so.

Child Support Court

- This Court shall be open with limitations on the number of cases set; and with restrictions on the number of litigants allowed in the courtroom. (See COVID19 Protocol for Child Support Court). High Point court shall continue to operate as usual. Greensboro Child Support Court shall resume on Monday, June 29, 2020.

Specialty Courts

- Specialty Courts (Adult DTC, Mental Health Court and Juvenile DTC) will operate in accordance with the current schedule. However, in some instances, only non-compliant participants may be ordered to appear in person for court sessions. Courts also may be held remotely when it is feasible to do so.

Mediation Program

- Orientation sessions will be presented online.
- Mediations will be handled remotely.
- Mediation offices will be open from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Judicial Waivers/Hospitalizations

- Cases will be heard as usual.

Minor Settlement Conferences

- Minor settlements shall be handled remotely. Please contact Stephanie Wallace in Greensboro or Pat Dixon in High Point (Trial Court Coordinators) for assistance in scheduling a conference.

Superior Court

We will run courts on June 1, assuming that is the official start date. Jury trials will not begin until September 8, 2020, at the earliest.

Criminal Court

- Until September 8, 2020, court sessions will continue to consist of nonjury matters including Administrative hearings, guilty pleas, bond motions, and other motions.
- Probation Violation calendars will remain on their scheduled weeks.
- Calendars will be done daily in order to control the number of people who come to the courtrooms
- After receiving AOC approval in advance, jury trials may be held in locations other than the courthouses in order to adequately maintain social distancing

Civil Court


- There will not be any trials for the first month
- We will focus on the backlog of motions
- Some weeks we will run two civil courts
- Calendars will be done daily in order to control the number of people who come to the courtrooms
- The presiding judge shall have the sole discretion to hold remote hearings via WebEx, Zoom, or some other appropriate videoconferencing program, to be set up by the attorneys or parties

For Civil Court matters, please contact Brittany Robinson in Greensboro or Wendy Stuart in High Point.

This the 25th day of June, 2020.



John O. Craig
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge



Teresa H. Vincent
Chief District Court Judge, 18th Judicial District

*Provisions in red denote changes since the entry of the previous order.