



CHIEF'S REPORT

Good afternoon,

I hope all is well with each of you. The corona virus that we are contending with has impacted communities and our courts in a manner that has left many people feeling uneasy and a bit anxious (at best). However, we still must make every effort to continue to provide access to justice within the context of the parameters established by Chief Justice Cheri Beasley. Of course, we have made every effort to comply with her directives. However, as you might imagine, our responses are fluid and subject to amendments and/modifications as the recommendations from the CDC and our governor change in response to the spread of this pandemic.

Thank you for your patience and understanding regarding the dilemma that we are faced with. Please find the most recent updates for district courts and several other court offices and departments in the attached file. I appreciate your time and attention. I hope and pray for your safety and well-being.

With Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Teresa H. Vincent".

Teresa H. Vincent

Chief District Court Judge, 18th Judicial District

AMENDED on March 23, 2020

FILED

To: Members of the 18th Judicial District

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From: Honorable Teresa Vincent, Chief District Court Judge

GUILFORD CO., C.S.C.

BY km

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, superior court, and district court proceedings of the 18th Judicial District will be rescheduled for at least 30 days, with limited 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 a.m. to 1:00 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. Any emergency and essential filings filed after 1:00 pm will be accepted by the Magistrates office in Greensboro and High Point between 1:00 pm and 5:00 pm. Although, many offices are closing early, courts that are open shall continue to operate normally until the work is complete unless otherwise noted.

The Office of the District Attorney will not be open to the public but will be in the office to accept calls.

The Office of the Public Defender will not be open to the public but will be accepting phone calls from their assigned clients.

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
- Maintain normal office hours to for filings unless otherwise notified
- 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.

- Estate hearings will be postponed for thirty days unless the parties consent to the matter being heard remotely.
- Special Proceeding hearings will be postponed for thirty days unless the parties consent to conduct a hearing at a remote location, except judicial hospitalization cases shall be heard.

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. However, the civil magistrate's offices in Greensboro and High Point shall be closed to the public at 1:00 pm. Contact Chief Magistrates Julie Antonelli (GSO) and Chad Landen (Hpt.) if you have any questions.
- All Small Claims court proceedings are suspended. Pending matters will be continued and rescheduled.
- Magistrates are no longer performing marriage ceremonies.

District Court

- Maintain office hours from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
- 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.

Civil Domestic Violence Court

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

Civil/Domestic District Courts

- Courtrooms 2B & 3A (Hpt – They will operate as indicated in the foregoing provision). Emergency custody hearings will also be handled in courtroom 2B & 3A (Hpt). Civil Courtrooms 2E or 3A (GSO) may be available for assistance with cases in courtroom 2B. Otherwise, all other matters shall be continued.
- Courtrooms 2E and 3A (in GSO & Hpt) will be closed other than being available to assist with cases scheduled in courtroom 2B.
- All District Court Arbitrations will be rescheduled for a minimum of thirty (30) days.
- Special Settings – Please contact the Trial Court Coordinator (Mrs. Stephanie Wallace or Pat Dixon) within ten to fourteen days to reschedule.
- Cases scheduled for March and April will be continued. Trial court coordinators and assistants will facilitate the continuances. Please contact Stephanie Wallace or Pat Dixon if you have any questions.

Criminal/Traffic District Court

- Courtroom 1C & 3C (Criminal Courts in GSO & Hpt.) will be closed and cases will be continued, except as otherwise indicated.
- Courtroom 1D (Traffic Court) will be closed and cases will be continued.
- Courtroom 2C will be operating as normal for First Appearances/Bond Motions and will be available for probation violations (jail cases) and other criminal jail cases (preferably older cases) on Tuesdays and Thursdays (beginning March 24th and March 26th, 2020, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.). The number of cases will be limited based on the time constraints.
- Courtroom 3C (High Point on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning April 13th from 9:00-12:30 for District Court – probation violations & misd. criminal jail cases) The number of cases will be limited based on the time constraints.

Juvenile Abuse Neglect & Dependency Court/Delinquency Court

- Courtrooms are open only for felony first appearances, non-secure or secured custody hearings as scheduled. Otherwise, cases will be continued.

Child Support Court

- This court shall be closed.

Specialty Courts

- Specialty Courts (Adult DTC, Mental Health Court and Juvenile DTC) will operate in accordance with the current schedule. However, only non-compliant participants shall appear in person for court sessions.

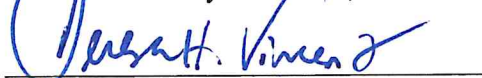
Mediation Program

- 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.

This the 23rd day of March, 2020.



Teresa H, Vincent

Chief District Court Judge, 18th Judicial District