




State of Illinois
Circuit Court of Cook County

Timothy C. Evans
Chief Judge

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MEMORANDUM

To: All Employees

From: Timothy C. Evans 
Chief Judge
Circuit Court of Cook County

Date: July 16, 2021

Re: General Administrative Order 2020-07
Emergency Measures, Modification of Operations

Please see the attached General Administrative Order 2020-07, Emergency Measures, Modification of Operations, signed by me today.

Thank you.

TCE:pak

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Cook County Cir. Ct. G.A.O. 2020-07 (eff. April 23, 2021) is hereby amended as follows:

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER No. 2020-07

SUBJECT: COVID-19 EMERGENCY MEASURES, MODIFICATION OF OPERATIONS

As a response to the measures necessitated by the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, including, but not limited to, executive orders of the State of Illinois, Cook County, the City of Chicago, and other local municipalities, guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, including Interim Guidance on Management of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Correctional and Detention Facilities (Jan. 21, 2021), Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People (May 28, 2021), and guidance on Ventilation in Buildings (March 23, 2021), and with the continued decline of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in Illinois and the ready availability of COVID-19 vaccines; in consideration of the successes the court, the bar, and the general public have recently achieved in conducting certain kinds of court proceedings by videoconference; and

In consideration of the Illinois Supreme Court's ongoing support of remote court appearances as a critical part of meeting the current and changing needs of our society and as a means of improving access to justice through the courts of this State and reducing its cost in time and money to litigants, the bar, and other participants;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that, pursuant to Ill. S. Ct., Illinois Courts Response to COVID-19 Emergency/Social Distancing, M.R. 30370 (eff. June 30, 2021) and guidance received June 14, 2021, from the Cook County Dept. of Public Health, the requirement of six feet of distance between persons in the courtroom is modified to require three feet of distance between persons in the courtroom;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, in pursuit of the best practices for conducting court proceedings in person, remotely, or in a hybrid of the two in all Districts and Divisions of the court, conducting proceedings with all persons physically present in court shall be preferred, with the understanding that each impending court proceeding may be evaluated to determine whether it is appropriate for some or all participants to appear remotely;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, except as otherwise provided in this order, court proceedings shall be conducted with the judge, parties, and all other participants physically present in court; except as required by constitutional requirements, operational need, or as otherwise directed by the chief judge, all types of proceedings except jury trials may be conducted telephonically or by videoconference; in appropriate proceedings, judges conducting proceedings telephonically or by videoconference may work remotely or from the courthouse; appropriate proceedings include, but are not limited to, those in which a request for a continuance is the primary issue, a report of case status is made to the court, an agreed order is submitted to the court, prosecution of an alleged violation of a local ordinance, initial bail hearings;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, except as otherwise directed by the chief judge, all employees shall work remotely or in-person, as directed by their department heads or through their chain of command, in support of continuity of service provided by the court;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, in accordance with Illinois Supreme Court Rule 45 (eff. May 22, 2020), unless otherwise ordered by the judge presiding for good cause, all attorneys and self-represented litigants participating by teleconference or videoconference shall be permitted to do so from a location of their choosing; the sheriff shall provide self-represented litigants in the sheriff's custody with access to court proceedings by videoconference or in person, as ordered by the judge presiding;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, when participating in proceedings conducted by videoconference, self-represented litigants and other participants without access to the internet or a telephone shall be encouraged by the court and the circuit clerk to make use of the spaces and equipment provided by the court in each courthouse for participation in court proceedings by videoconference;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pursuant to Ill. S. Ct., M.R. 30370 (eff. Aug. 27, 2020), and to guidance from the National Center for State Courts, all persons, including, but not limited to, judges, court staff, parties, attorneys, jurors, and witnesses shall continue to wear masks or other face coverings in the courthouse at all times other people are present, including while in the courtrooms and when seated behind plexiglass shields, unless the person is otherwise instructed by the judge or court personnel; notwithstanding the foregoing provision, judges may remove their mask or other face covering when speaking on the record behind a plexiglass shield, and language interpreters may instead wear plastic face shields while interpreting;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that official court reporters and interpreters shall be available for remote proceedings as they would be for in-person proceedings; digital reporters shall operate the electronic recording system for in-person proceedings in courtrooms using an electronic recording system; when an electronic recording system is not available, at the discretion of the judge presiding, official court reporters and interpreters shall be present in the courtroom for in-person proceedings; broadcasting, transmitting or publishing audio or video recordings of teleconference and videoconference court proceedings is prohibited, except as authorized by Ill. S. Ct. Rs. 46 and 63;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that residential real estate eviction actions and enforcement of eviction orders entered in proceedings pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/9-101, *et seq.*, mortgage foreclosure proceedings, or tax deed proceedings shall be addressed in a separate order;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED:

1. ALL DIVISIONS AND DISTRICTS:

- a. Judges shall be available, either on-site or remotely, in each division and district to hear emergency matters;
- b. The Presiding Judge of a District or Division may establish guidelines for determining whether all proceedings except jury trials shall be held remotely and

may establish procedures for rescheduling cases by administrative order, as long as such guidelines and procedures are consistent with this order;

- c. **Trials.** Consistent with guidance from the CCDPH and courtroom modifications effected by the Cook County Dept. of Facilities Management, eighty-six (86) courtrooms may be used for trials, seventy-six (76) of which may be used for jury trials; resources and public health guidelines permitting, at the discretion of the judge presiding, bench and jury trials may be held, consistent with Ill. S. Ct., Illinois Courts Response to COVID-19 Emergency/Remote Proceedings in Criminal Matters, M.R. 30370 (Feb. 11, 2021) and the provisions of this order, as follows:
 - i. **Criminal Division, Traffic Division, and Municipal Department criminal cases.**
 - (1) Bench trials shall be held, and may be conducted by videoconference with all participants physically present in court, or by a combination of those means;
 - (2) Jury trials shall be held only with all participants physically present in court;
 - ii. **Juvenile Justice Division.**
 - (1) Bench trials shall be held, and may be conducted by videoconference, with all participants physically present in court, or by a combination of those means;
 - (2) Jury trials shall be held only with all participants physically present in court;
 - iii. **Civil cases.** Bench trials and jury trials may be held in all Departments and Divisions by videoconference, with all participants physically present in court, or by a combination of those means;
- d. Initial and responsive pleadings and responsive motions may be filed, in person or by electronic filing with the circuit clerk, as provided in Ill. S. Ct. R. 9 (eff. Aug. 14, 2020);
- e. Mandatory arbitration hearings, including those previously scheduled, may be held by videoconference, with all participants physically present in court, or by a combination of those means;
- f. Except as ordered herein, procedures for the administration of court operations shall be determined by the Presiding Judge for the Division or District under his or her supervision;
- g. The sheriff, shall take necessary and appropriate measures to ensure the following:
 - i. At no time shall there be more persons in the courtroom than the number established under guidance by the appropriate public health authorities;
 - ii. At all times, all persons in the courtroom shall maintain a minimum distance of 3 (three) feet from all other persons in the courtroom;

2. **PRETRIAL DIVISION:** Bail hearings, including motions to review bail, shall be conducted daily;
3. **CRIMINAL MATTERS, ALL DIVISIONS AND DISTRICTS:**
 - a. Priority shall be given to the following matters, with additional priority given cases in which the defendant is incarcerated:
 - i. arraignment;
 - ii. preliminary hearing or preliminary examination;
 - iii. motion to dismiss on speedy trial grounds;
 - iv. hearing on discovery status;
 - v. evidentiary hearing on motion;
 - vi. conference pursuant to Ill. S. Ct. R. 402;
 - vii. entry of guilty plea;
 - viii. hearing on violation or termination of probation;
 - ix. hearing on violation of bail bond;
 - x. hearing on fitness;
 - xi. trial
 - b. Except as otherwise ordered by the judge presiding, all matters shall be conducted with all parties and other participants physically present in court;
 - c. Waivers of physical presence in court by persons who have been placed on electronic monitoring and are charged with violent felonies, such as murder or Class X violent offenses, must be approved by the judge presiding;
 - d. For any hearing where the physical presence in court of the defendant(s) has been waived, the physical presence in court of victims and witnesses is excused;
 - e. Except as provided in § 3(c) herein, the defendant may waive his or her physical presence in court and appear by videoconference, unless ordered to be physically present in court by the judge presiding;
 - f. **Bail review.** All prosecution and defense counsel shall review their cases upon entry of this order, and at appropriate intervals thereafter, to determine whether a change in circumstances may support a change in bail conditions that would enable a defendant to secure his or her release from the jail; priority shall be given to motions to reduce bail in the following order:
 - i. Agreed orders; factors to be considered, include, but are not limited to:
 - (1) persons at elevated risk of contracting COVID-19, either because of age or underlying health conditions
 - (2) pregnant women
 - (3) persons confined only on misdemeanor charges
 - (4) persons confined on the following felony charges

- (a) non-violent Class 3 and 4 felony charges
 - (b) eligible for probation
- (5) persons confined because they cannot afford the monetary bond set in their cases
- (6) persons released on electronic monitoring who have been compliant with the conditions of their bail
- (7) persons confined on a warrant or alleged violation of parole or probation and who are not charged with or suspected of a crime of violence
- (8) persons sentenced to imprisonment in the Cook County Jail
- (9) persons eligible for release on electronic monitoring who have no place to stay
- (10) agreed orders in other circumstances
- ii. Contested orders; factors to be considered include those set forth in § 3(f)(i) of this order;
- g. Any delays resulting from this order on or before Sept. 30, 2021, or from Cook County Cir. Ct. G.A.O.s 2020-01 and 2020-02 shall not be attributable to either the State or the defendant for purposes of section 103-5 (speedy trial) of the Code of Criminal Procedure of 1963 (725 ILCS 5/103-5);
- h. **Restorative Justice Community Courts.** Except as otherwise ordered by the judge presiding, all matters shall be conducted with all persons physically present in court;

4. **JUVENILE JUSTICE DIVISION:**

- a. Juvenile detention hearings, including all motions to review detention, and other emergency matters shall be conducted daily at 1100 S. Hamilton Ave., Chicago;
- b. Priority shall be given to the following matters, with additional priority given cases in which the respondent is incarcerated:
 - i. arraignment;
 - ii. probable cause hearing;
 - iii. motion to dismiss on speedy trial grounds;
 - iv. hearing on discovery status;
 - v. evidentiary hearing on motion;
 - vi. conference pursuant to Ill. S. Ct. R. 402;
 - vii. entry of guilty plea;
 - viii. hearing on violation or termination of probation;
 - ix. hearing on violation of pretrial release;
 - x. hearing on fitness;

- xi. trial
 - c. Except as otherwise ordered by the judge presiding, all matters shall be conducted with all persons physically present in court;
 - d. Any delays resulting from this order on or before Sept. 30, 2021, or from Cook County Cir. Ct. G.A.O. 2020-01 (eff. Mar. 17, 2020, and as subsequently amended) shall not be attributable to either the State or the juvenile for purposes of section 5-601 of the Juvenile Court Act (705 ILCS 405/5-601);
- 5. **CHANCERY DIVISION:**
 - a. The Presiding Judge shall establish procedures for hearing all matters, including, but not limited to, scheduling by administrative order, as long as such procedures are consistent with this order,
 - b. All mortgage foreclosure actions may proceed to judgment of foreclosure. Consistent with Ill. Exec. Order 2021-01 (Jan. 8, 2021), residential and commercial foreclosure actions shall be immediately stayed upon entry of a judgment of foreclosure until further order of the court; notwithstanding the foregoing provision, vacant or abandoned properties may proceed to sale based upon sufficient proof as determined by the court;
- 6. **MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT, CRIMINAL CASES.** (eff. August 23, 2021)
 - a. In Districts 2-6, the sheriff shall provide the equipment and location for defendants to participate in bail hearings by videoconference;
 - b. Except as otherwise ordered by the Presiding Judge, criminal proceedings in all districts shall be conducted with all persons physically present in court; proceedings shall be conducted by videoconference only when the defendant has furnished a waiver of his or her physical presence in court that has been approved by the court;
- 7. **ADULT PROBATION DEPARTMENT, SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT, AND JUVENILE JUSTICE AND COURT SERVICES DEPARTMENT.** Probation officers and social service caseworkers shall contact clients to schedule meetings, which may be held by videoconference, teleconference, or in person; clients may be required to report in person to probation officers or social service caseworkers for the purpose of undergoing substance use testing or providing DNA samples;
- 8. **CIVIL MATTERS, ALL DIVISIONS AND DISTRICTS:**
 - a. Discovery shall continue as scheduled; oral depositions may be taken by videoconference pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 206(h) (eff. Oct. 1, 2019);
 - b. Where it is not reasonably possible to conduct an oral deposition for reasons related to the COVID-19 emergency, the parties shall use their best efforts to postpone the deposition by agreement and stipulation for a period not to exceed 60 days; absent such agreement, the proceedings shall be deferred until such later date as the court can review the matter and issue appropriate directives; nothing in this order shall be construed to limit the discretion of the judge presiding to

determine the merits of an attorney's alleged inability to comply with a notice of an oral deposition;

- c. Except for good cause shown, participants in litigation shall not be penalized if discovery compliance is delayed for reasons relating to the COVID- 19 emergency; this provision is to be liberally construed;
- d. The Presiding Judge of a District or Division shall establish procedures for hearing all matters, including, but not limited to, scheduling by administrative order, as long as such procedures are consistent with this order;

9. CIVIL NO CONTACT ORDERS, CIVIL ORDERS OF PROTECTION, FIREARMS RESTRAINING ORDERS, STALKING NO CONTACT ORDERS:

- a. Notwithstanding a related case pending elsewhere in the court, all petitions for emergency orders filed at 555 W. Harrison St., Chicago, or in Municipal Districts 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6 shall be heard where they are filed; completed petitions for emergency orders emailed to 555dv.courthouse@cookcountyil.gov (Chicago) by 3:00 p.m. shall be heard that day; a petition shall be considered complete only if it is accompanied by the following documents and information:
 - i. **Domestic Violence Coversheet** (Form CCDV 0601)
 - (1) Petitioner's and Respondent's names
 - (2) dates of birth of both parties, placed in caption by the name
 - (3) Attorney/Pro Se information section completed
 - ii. **Summons/Alias Summons** (Form CCDV 0100)
 - (1) Petitioner's and Respondent's names
 - (2) dates of birth of both parties, placed in caption by the name
 - (3) Respondent's USPS address
 - iii. **Protective Order Information Sheet** (Form CCCR 0100)
 - iv. **Petition for Order of Protection** (Form CCG 0800 or OP-P 403.1)
 - (1) Petitioner's and Respondent's names
 - (2) dates of birth of both parties, placed in caption by the name
 - (3) additional affidavit attached, if necessary
 - (4) Attorney/Pro Se information section completed
 - v. **Emergency Order of Protection** (Form CCG 0801 or OP-E 404.2)
 - (1) Petitioner's and Respondent's names
 - (2) dates of birth of both parties, placed in caption by the name
 - (3) Attorney/Pro Se information section completed
 - vi. **Certification of Exemption from E-filing for Pro Se Litigants** (Form EW-C 3401.3). Petitioner information section completed

- b. In the suburban Municipal Districts, the Presiding Judge of each District may establish procedures for the remote filing of petitions for emergency orders by email;
- c. Advocate agencies assisting with the remote filing of petitions shall provide the court with the following additional information with the petition:
 - i. advocate's first name
 - ii. advocate's Google phone number
 - iii. Petitioner's email address
 - iv. whether the petitioner needs an interpreter
 - v. language to be interpreted for Petitioner, if any
- d. Advocate agencies shall provide the petitioner with the (Zoom) videoconference and teleconference contact numbers and information and instructions on how to connect to the hearing.
- e. Notwithstanding the 3:00 p.m. deadline in section 9(a) above, petitions prepared by advocates shall be promptly printed in the courthouse office of the advocate agency and filed with the circuit clerk.
- f. At the discretion of the Presiding Judge, completed petitions for emergency orders filed in any district after 3:00 p.m. may be heard on the day they are filed;
- g. Proceedings subsequent to hearings on petitions for any of the following sought in connection with a related Domestic Relations Division or Probate Division case shall be heard at the Richard J. Daley Center, or the relevant suburban Domestic Relations Division or Probate Division courtrooms hearing such matters, or at a location as determined by the Presiding Judge of the Division in which the related case is pending:
 - i. emergency civil no contact orders;
 - ii. emergency civil orders of protection;
 - iii. emergency stalking no contact orders;
- h. Petitioners and respondents for civil no contact orders, civil orders of protection, and stalking no contact orders shall be permitted to participate in hearings by videoconference from places of their choosing;

10. DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION:

- a. The Presiding Judge shall establish procedures for hearing all matters, including, but not limited to, scheduling by administrative order, as long as such procedures are consistent with this order;
- b. In child-support cases in which the state's attorney has filed an appearance, the circuit clerk shall notify the parties of new court dates scheduled pursuant to this order;
- c. Court ordered participation for litigants in programs such as mediation, evaluations, counseling, parenting classes, and classes for children shall continue, but are to be done by remote audio-visual means until further order of the court;

- d. The administrative orders entered by the Presiding Judge of the Domestic Relations Division addressing access to programs and proceedings during the COVID-19 pandemic shall remain in full force and effect until further order of the court;
- 11. **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DIVISION:** When a defendant in a criminal case at 555 W. Harrison St., Chicago, Ill., is denied bail or is unable to post required monetary bail at the conclusion of the bail hearing, the arresting agency shall transport the defendant to the Cook County Department of Corrections, 2700 S. California Ave, Chicago, Ill.;
- 12. **CHILD PROTECTION DIVISION:**
 - a. The Presiding Judge shall establish procedures for hearing all matters, including, but not limited to, scheduling by administrative order, as long as such procedures are consistent with this order;
 - b. Priority shall be given to the following matters:
 - i. temporary custody hearings;
 - ii. motions to modify or vacate an order granting temporary custody;
 - iii. motions regarding visitation;
 - iv. motions for the minor to be returned home;
 - v. motions to close the case;
- 13. **COUNTY DIVISION:** The Presiding Judge shall establish procedures for hearing all matters, including, but not limited to, scheduling by administrative order, as long as such procedures are consistent with this order;
- 14. **LAW DIVISION:**
 - a. The Presiding Judge shall establish procedures for hearing all matters, including, but not limited to, scheduling by administrative order, as long as such procedures are consistent with this order;
 - b. The Presiding Judge shall establish procedures for pretrial proceedings in cases that are ready for trial but are not permitted to proceed due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - c. The Presiding Judge shall establish procedures for mediation of cases by agreement of the parties as an alternative to pretrial proceedings;
 - d. The Presiding Judge shall establish procedures for cases to be heard by bench trial or jury trial, whether remotely or in person;
- 15. **PROBATE DIVISION:** The Presiding Judge shall establish procedures for hearing all matters, including, but not limited to, scheduling by administrative order, as long as such procedures are consistent with this order;
- 16. **TRAFFIC DIVISION:** The Presiding Judge shall establish procedures for hearing all matters pending in the city of Chicago, including, but not limited to, scheduling by administrative order, as long as such procedures are consistent with this order;

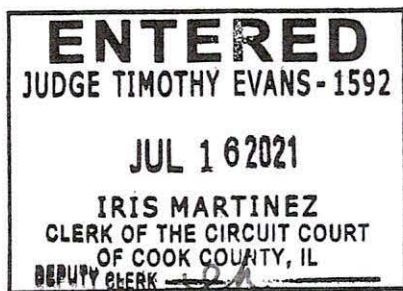
17. **GRAND JURY:** Grand juries shall continue to meet a maximum of three times per week, and be impaneled from time to time as ordered by the Chief Judge;
18. **FORENSIC EXAMINATIONS:** In criminal cases, forensic examinations of defendants, both adult and juvenile, may be conducted by videoconference;
19. **BAIL, FEES, COURT COSTS, AND PENALTIES, CRIMINAL CASES:**
 - a. Charitable Bond Funds
 - i. Pursuant to Cook County Code § 18-49,
 - (1) The circuit clerk shall not deduct any fees, court costs, or penalties from bail bond funds posted by a Charitable Bond Fund without the surety's voluntary, written consent;
 - (2) The circuit clerk shall not use bail bond funds posted by a Charitable Bond Fund to pay attorney fees, including reimbursement for representation by the public defender, without the surety's voluntary, written consent;
 - ii. At the conclusion of the case, the circuit clerk shall return all available funds posted by a Charitable Bond Fund to the surety;
 - b. Pursuant to 705 ILCS 105/27.3B, where a charitable bond fund or other third-party surety posts cash bail for a defendant, the clerk shall accept payment by credit card, debit card, or other electronic funds transfer and shall not collect the service fee authorized by said statute;
20. **MARRIAGES:** Marriages shall be performed only by appointment;
21. **HELP DESKS.** At the discretion of the Presiding Judge of the Division or District, all help desks, including, but not limited to, the Guardianship Assistance Desk for Minors, 69 W. Washington St., Chicago, may operate by videoconference;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this order supersedes Cook County Cir. Ct. G.A.O. 2020-02 (eff. Oct. 17, 2020); and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, except as otherwise ordered herein, this order is effective July 23, 2021.

Dated this 16th day of July, 2021.

ENTER:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy C. Evans".

Timothy C. Evans
Chief Judge