

**H. Chris Ryan, Jr.**

**CHIEF JUDGE**

State of Illinois  
Thirteenth Judicial Circuit

La Salle County Courthouse  
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Ottawa, Illinois 61350  
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**COURT ADMINISTRATOR**

Lori Wakeman

**ASSISTANT COURT**

**ADMINISTRATOR**

Dawn Bidasio

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Jennifer Sellett

**COUNTIES**

La Salle

Bureau

Grundy

**CIRCUIT JUDGES**

Marc P. Bernabei  
Eugene P. Daugherty  
Joseph P. Hettel  
Troy D. Holland  
Robert C. Marsaglia  
Lance R. Peterson  
Cynthia M. Raccuglia  
H. Chris Ryan, Jr.

**ASSOCIATE JUDGES**

Karen C. Eiten  
Cornelius J. Hollerich  
Michael C. Jansz  
Sheldon R. Sobol  
Michelle A. Vescogni

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Procedures for COVID-19 Coronavirus**

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Courts (which consists of LaSalle, Bureau and Grundy Counties) will be operating at a reduced capacity performing only essential functions beginning Wednesday, March 18, 2020 through Thursday, April 30, 2020 unless otherwise ordered by the Court. The Illinois Supreme Court recommends that courts follow the CDC's directives to avoid large gatherings and practice "social distancing". The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Courts will take all reasonable measures to minimize personal contact to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus. While keeping the courts available, all proceedings must be consistent with public safety as well as any further policy directives from federal, state and local public health advisories.

**Beginning Wednesday, March 18, 2020 through Thursday, April 30, 2020 unless otherwise ordered by the Court, the following cases and court proceedings are postponed:**

- All Non-Emergency civil court appearances, including Civil Jury Trials, Probate, Small Claims, Family Court, Child Support, Law & Law Magistrate, Chancery, Tax cases, Miscellaneous Remedy cases and Adoptions
- Traffic cases (TR, DT)
- Misdemeanor cases (CM)
- Juvenile cases (except as outlined below)
- Marriages (not currently scheduled as of 3/18/20)
- Courthouse tours

Each party litigant shall receive an amended notice in the mail upon rescheduling. Litigants are directed to ensure that their mailing address is updated and current. Emergency matters may be scheduled on a case-by-case basis. Individuals shall contact the Clerk of the judge that the case is assigned to for purposes of scheduling emergency matters.

**The following court proceedings will be held as scheduled, with appearances expected for all litigants unless travel or health appearance waivers apply (see below):**

- All matters with individuals in custody
- Criminal felony matters (CF)

- Juvenile temporary custody (shelter care) (JA)
- Juvenile detention hearings (JD)
- Petitions for Emergency Orders of Protection (OP, D, F)
- Hearings for Plenary Orders of Protection (OP, D, F)
- Emergency hearings on family matters (D and F cases) as scheduled by the Court
- Hearings on Petitions to Rescind Summary Suspensions
- Grand Jury proceedings
- Grundy County Mental Health Court
- Grundy County Drug Court

If you have a court date that requires an appearance as listed above and are ill, please consider taking the following steps:

- Contact your attorney or opposing side to determine if an agreed continuance can be obtained and submitted to the Court.
- If there is no agreement, contact the Clerk of the judge assigned to the case and advise that you are not able to attend court due to illness. Judges will consider on a case-by-case basis whether a continuance will be granted.

The following individuals **should not** enter the courthouse and their appearance in court will be waived if they:

- Have been out of the country within the last 21 days, or
- Reside or have close contact with anyone who has been out of the country within the last 21 days; or
- Have been directed to quarantine, isolate or self-monitor at home for coronavirus by any medical provider; or
- Have been diagnosed with, or have had close contact with anyone diagnosed with, COVID-19; or
- Have flu-like symptoms including, fever, cough, sneezing, or shortness of breath

Prospective Petit Jurors: A trial by jury is a constitutional right and as such, a court cannot function without jurors. Therefore, the 13th Judicial Circuit (LaSalle, Bureau and Grundy Counties) will continue to summons jurors. The Court is implementing a plan to reduce the number of jurors summoned in order to reduce congestion. If you have been summoned for jury duty and are ill, please contact the number on the jury summons to discuss your situation. Attempts will be made to accommodate your situation.

The Department of Probation and Court Services has implemented a plan to meet the needs of their clients, while reducing the number of in person meetings.

At the LaSalle County Juvenile Detention Center, a plan to limit in-person contacts has been implemented.

A notice shall be posted at each Courthouse entrance notifying the public that only essential cases will be heard March 18, 2020 through April 30, 2020 unless otherwise ordered by the court.

This unprecedented situation presents unique challenges to the 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit's normal operating procedures. Court leadership will continue to work with state and local officials to monitor the situation and make changes as necessary and communicate those changes to members of the public, other branches of government, and judicial partners. We ask for your understanding, cooperation and patience as we work to minimize the risk to those utilizing the services of the Court, while continuing to perform the Court's essential and mandated functions.

**Court Facilities:** Cleaning and disinfecting efforts have been intensified, especially regarding commonly touched surfaces.

**Employees and Staff:** All court staff have been reminded to use good personal health habits as recommended by the CDC, and we ask all visitors to do the same. This includes cleaning hands often, avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth, avoiding close contact, and covering coughs and sneezes with tissues or elbows.