



Amanda S. Ade-Harlow

Resident Circuit Judge of Shelby County, Fourth Judicial Circuit
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PRESS RELEASE

Chief Judge Kimberly G. Koester has announced that the Fourth Judicial Circuit is open, which includes the Shelby County Circuit Court, and will continue to monitor state and local responses to the coronavirus and will follow guidance provided by state and local public health agencies and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Out of an abundance of caution, the Chief Judge is directing that the following steps be taken to reduce, temporarily, the number of persons entering the courthouse during this period.

Employees, Facility, and Users of Facility:

All employees have been encouraged to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands; stay home when sick; avoid close contact with people who are sick; and clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects.

Facility crews are conducting regular cleanings with an emphasis on first-touch areas such as doors knobs and areas inside elevators and restrooms.

I ask that those persons who do not have to appear before the court not attend court sessions or come into the courthouse. If you are feeling sick and your appearance is not required, please stay home. If you have a case set before the Court and feel too ill to attend, please contact your attorney and/or the Circuit Clerk's office the day of your scheduled appearance or before. If you have a case set and appear ill, you may be asked to leave and a new court date will be provided to the address the Circuit Clerk has on file.

Jury Service:

There is a plan in place to reduce the number of trials and number of jurors necessary for service. If you are summoned for jury duty and are experiencing any symptoms of any kind, including flu-like symptoms, have a fever or are coughing or sneezing, contact the Shelby County Circuit Clerk's office on weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Your jury duty service will be deferred to a later date.

Expansion of Remote Court Appearances:

Attorneys or litigants that are unable to be present in courtrooms that are hearing civil and family matters (except Orders of Protections) may be able to appear remotely through use of conference calls with the court. To schedule said conferences, call the Circuit Clerk's Office in Shelby County at (217) 774-4212 or (217) 774-3622.

Criminal cases with individuals that are in custody of the Shelby County Sheriff may be handled through video conferencing and they may not be brought into the open courtroom. Said procedure will be conducted per Administrative Order.

Shelby County Problem Solving Court will be canceled for a period of 14 days except to those individuals as directed by the Problem Solving Court Team. Staffing of Problem Solving Court will be conducted by video conferencing, where available.

Shelby County will continue to perform marriages in the courthouse during this time. However, we will allow only the couple being married to attend. Please do not bring additional people with you to the courthouse to attend your wedding.

Adult and Juvenile Probation, Juvenile Detention:

The Shelby County Probation Department will remain open. A plan has been implemented to limit unnecessary contacts with persons who do not have a probation appointment like friends or family members who are accompanying the individual.

Certain treatment related group meetings may be relocated to larger areas to accommodate social distancing.

Probationers who are feeling sick or have had contact with someone who has the coronavirus should contact their probation officer. Probation clients should also contact their probation officer if they have any questions about their next appointment.

State's Attorney Office and Public Defender Office:

These offices will remain open but will be subject to the determination of the State's Attorney and the Public Defender regarding face-to-face appointments. Please call these offices if you wish to schedule appointments.

These are precautionary measures only. The health and welfare of all employees and courthouse users is our priority. As more information becomes available or if there are changes to court operations, we will advise.

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