

## **AMENDED ORDER (COURT CLOSURE)**

### **CIVIL DISTRICT COURT AND FIRST AND SECOND CITY COURT AMENDED EMERGENCY ORDER IN RESPONSE TO PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS (COVID-19)**

This amended Order is being issued in response to the COVID-19 virus (coronavirus) outbreak in Louisiana. On March 11, 2020, the Governor of the State of Louisiana declared a State of Emergency. On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a National Emergency. The World Health Organization has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) has described the outbreak in the United States as a ‘rapidly evolving situation’ and is providing continuous guidance regarding appropriate public and private response to COVID-19. The CDC guidance includes multiple types of mitigation strategies including but not limited to social distancing as well as other strategies aimed at reducing or avoiding exposure to infected individuals which, the Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans and the First and Second City Courts of New Orleans carefully considered.

To combat the spread of the disease, given the severity of risk posed to the public, court staff, and other court agencies, and considering the CDC’s advisements to take precautions by limiting exposure to the virus, and the recommendation of the Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court, the Civil District Court the First and Second Court **WILL BE CLOSING THE CIVIL DISTRICT COURT AND THE FIRST AND SECOND CITY COURTHOUSES EFFECTIVE AT 4:00 PM, March 16, 2020 THROUGH MARCH 27, 2020.** The following emergency court procedures, effective **March 16, 2020**, will be in place:

- 1) All jury trials are suspended through April, 13, 2020, with further orders to follow;
- 2) Jurors who are scheduled to register for jury service on April 2, 2020 for service in May are not to appear in person; rather, they should register on-line. A letter will follow with specific instructions;
- 3) Except as otherwise provided herein, all civil trials, hearings, status conferences, and court appearances set for any date between the date of this order and March 27, 2020 are hereby continued to a date to be set by local order, except for civil protective orders, emergency child custody matters, proceedings related to emergency interdictions and mental health orders, matters of public health related to this crisis and other emergency matters necessary to protect the health, safety and liberty of individuals as determined by Civil District Court and First and Second City Court;
- 4) First and Second City Court have suspended all evictions hearings from the date of this order until April 13, 2020;
- 5) Each Division of Civil District Court and First and Second City Court will be limiting in-person contact on emergency matters as much as possible by

utilizing available technologies, including alternate means of filing, teleconferencing, email and video conferencing;

- 6) Civil District Court will have a duty judge available to sign civil protective orders, emergency orders in need of immediate action, hear proceedings related to emergency interdictions and mental health orders, and matters of public health related to this crisis and other emergency matters necessary to protect the health, safety and liberty of individuals.
- 7) Domestic Court judges will be hearing only emergency child custody matters and civil protective orders;
- 8) The Court will continue to do additional screening for entry into the courthouse and entry to the courthouse shall be denied to those who have traveled to China, Italy, or South Korea within the last 14 days; reside or have had close contact with someone who has traveled in one of the above areas within the last 14 days; have been asked to self-quarantine by any hospital or health agency; or have been diagnosed with, or have had contact with, anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, that those denied entry are ordered to contact the appropriate division for further instructions; and, that attorneys, litigants, visitors, and members of the public who are at higher risk of serious illness due to the COVID-19 pandemic according to the Centers for Disease Control including but not limited to factors such as age and serious health conditions should refrain from entering the Courthouse and that those persons are ordered to contact the appropriate division for further instruction. If the conditions indicate that the Court needs to adjust the above policy, notice will be posted on the Court's website ([www.orleanscdc.com](http://www.orleanscdc.com)), the Louisiana Supreme Court's website ([www.lasc.org](http://www.lasc.org)), and in the media.
- 9) This order supersedes any previous orders issued by the Civil District Court and the First City and Second City Court; portions of the March 15<sup>th</sup> order not in conflict with this order remain in effect.

Signed this 16<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020 at New Orleans, Louisiana.

  
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CHIEF JUDGE CHRISTOPHER J. BRUNO  
CIVIL DISTRICT COURT

  
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CHIEF JUDGE VERONICA HENRY  
FIRST CITY COURT