

HANCOCK COUNTY, OHIO  
2020 MAR 16 PM 4:07

**Hancock County Common Pleas Court**  
**Temporary Policies and Procedures in Response to Covid-19**  
**(Coronavirus) Public Health Crisis**

*All parties and attorneys are encouraged to exercise good health practices as recommended by the Director of Health and the local Board of Health when it comes to appearing for Court hearings. If you are sick, have been sick, or are concerned that you may have been exposed to the Covid-19 virus (or to someone that may have been exposed to the virus), PLEASE CONTACT THE COURT and opposing counsel to explore options on a case-by-case basis.*

***All Cases:***

- For all hearings, the Court shall be notified prior to the scheduled hearing if any of the following apply to any party, attorney or witness: has travelled outside of the United States to a country with travel restrictions designated as Level 2 or higher by the U.S. Department of State and returned to the United States within the 21 days prior to the scheduled hearing; has been exposed to the Covid-19 virus or anyone infected with the Covid-19 virus within the 21 days prior to the scheduled hearing; or has been quarantined, isolated or otherwise restricted by any health department, director of health, or similar entity. These hearings will be rescheduled by the Court for good cause.

***Civil Cases (including Domestic Relations, Foreclosures and Workers Compensation):***

- All pre-trials scheduled to occur on or before May 31, 2020 that are not designated as a final pre-trial, unless otherwise specifically ordered by the Judge or Magistrate handling the case, shall be conducted by telephone (conference call). Unless otherwise ordered or agreed to by all parties, the Plaintiff shall be responsible for initiating all pre-trial conference calls. If a 'call-in' or 'access' number is required, it shall be provided to all parties and the court at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled pre-trial. The parties, unless appearing *pro se* or otherwise approved by the Court in advance, shall NOT participate in the telephone pre-trial, but shall be available to counsel either in person (but not listening in on the pre-trial) or by telephone.

- All final pre-trials that are scheduled to occur on or before May 31, 2020, if a trial date has already been scheduled, will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- All mediations currently scheduled with the Court's Mediators to occur on or before May 31, 2020 are continued and shall be rescheduled.
- All jury trials currently scheduled to commence on or before May 31, 2020 will be reviewed by the Court, and may be continued and rescheduled by the Court unless good cause is shown as to why a continuance would result in undue hardship or a miscarriage of justice.
- All HOPE and PACT classes that are currently scheduled to occur on or before May 31, 2020 are cancelled. The Court will be reviewing whether or not to substitute an appropriate on-line equivalent. If no on-line equivalent is provided the Court will consider waiving the requirement on a case-by-case basis.

***Criminal Cases:***

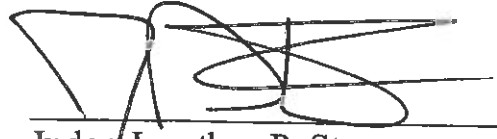
- All first and second pre-trials that are scheduled to occur on or before May 31, 2020 and that are not scheduled to occur with the Judge assigned to the case shall be held by telephone between defense counsel and the prosecuting attorney assigned to the case on or before the scheduled date and time. The prosecuting attorney shall initiate the calls for all pre-trials. Defense counsel shall, prior to the pre-trial occurring, have had appropriate contact with their client and shall have reviewed with the defendant all discovery provided by the State of Ohio up to that time. Defense counsel shall either sign the pre-trial form or otherwise approve the form within 24 hours of the pre-trial occurring. The State of Ohio shall, within 48 hours of the scheduled date/time for the pre-trial, submit the appropriate pre-trial form to the Court.
- All jury trials scheduled to begin on or before May 31, 2020 will be reviewed by the Court, and may be continued and rescheduled by the Court if BOTH of the following are present: the Defendant is not currently incarcerated in the case scheduled for trial (as opposed to someone incarcerated on an unrelated matter), and a time waiver has been previously executed and not revoked.

- For all pre-trials with the Court scheduled to occur on or before May 31, 2020 in cases where the Defendant is currently incarcerated, the Defendant shall not, unless specifically ordered by the assigned Judge, be transported to the Court by the Hancock County Sheriff. Counsel for the Defendant shall meet with the Defendant prior to the pre-trial with the Court and again within 24 hours following the pre-trial with the Court.
- All CBCF 'completion' or 'exit' hearings currently scheduled to occur on or before May 31, 2020 will be either conducted by video or cancelled. Counsel for the Defendant and the State of Ohio shall contact the Court prior to the hearing date/time to determine how to proceed.
- All arraignments on or before May 31, 2020 for Defendants that are in custody (in-custody arraignments) shall occur in Courtroom 2 and not in the Hancock County Jail. The Defendant will continue to be taken to the 'jail courtroom' and shall appear by video. **Counsel for the Defendant shall meet with the Defendant prior to the scheduled arraignment.** Counsel for the Defendant, if appointed or retained less than 48 hours prior to the scheduled arraignment, shall make all reasonable efforts to meet with the Defendant prior to the arraignment. Defense counsel, if needed, will be permitted to speak privately with the Defendant by video during arraignments.
- During in-custody arraignments, due to the need of counsel to be able to speak privately with their clients by video during the hearings, those not directly associated with the case being conducted shall wait in the hallway until their case is called.
- The parties are encouraged, to the extent appropriate, to utilize written pleas in lieu of appearing in person for arraignments.
- Financial Review Hearings scheduled to occur on or before May 31, 2020 are continued and will be rescheduled as necessary.
- The Adult Probation Department will continue to review, on a case-by-case basis, appropriate modifications to reporting requirements for both bond and community control supervision. All questions should be directed to the supervising officer.

***UNLESS MODIFIED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS, THESE MODIFIED  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES SHALL BECOME EFFECTIVE  
IMMEDIATELY.***

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RJR', written over a horizontal line.

Judge Reginald J. Routson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JPS', written over a horizontal line.

Judge Jonathan P. Starn