

SUFFOLK GENERAL DISTRICT COURT
TEMPORARY POLICIES & PROCEDURES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 JUDICIAL EMERGENCY
DECLARED BY THE SUPREME COURT OF VIRGINIA
EFFECTIVE MARCH 17, 2020

DETERMINATIONS OF COUNSEL & BOND HEARINGS

- All determinations of counsel for incarcerated defendants will be conducted via video.
- All bond hearings, unless otherwise authorized by the Court, will be conducted via video.

CONTINUANCES

- All civil, traffic and criminal matters scheduled from March 17, 2020 through April 3, 2020 are continued, subject to a defendant's right to a speedy trial, with the exception of emergency matters, with the exception of arraignments of incarcerated defendants, bond hearings, protective order matters, quarantine or isolation matters, and civil commitment hearings.
- Judges may exercise their discretion with regard to proceeding with cases where the defendant is incarcerated. **Counsel for an incarcerated defendant may file a motion setting forth any extenuating circumstances that warrant hearing a scheduled matter prior to expiration of the Judicial Emergency declared by the Supreme Court of Virginia on March 16, 2020. Such motion, for demonstrable good cause shown, shall be in writing and set forth the specific grounds upon which defendant relies and will be presented to one of the judges for consideration.**
- Individuals that fall into the following categories are advised not to enter the courtroom if they have:
 - a. visited China, Iran, South Korea, any European countries or any other high-risk countries identified by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in the previous 14 days;
 - b. traveled domestically within the United States where COVID-19 has sustained widespread community transmission;
 - c. been asked to quarantine, isolate, or self-monitor by any doctor, hospital, or health agency;
 - d. been diagnosed with, or have had contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19;
 - e. A fever, cough, or shortness of breath;
 - f. or resided with or been in close contact with any person in the above-mentioned categories.
 - g. Individuals attempting to enter the court in violation of these protocols may be denied entrance by a bailiff or court security officer and directed to contact the clerk's office by telephone or other remote means to inform the clerk of their business before the court so as to receive further instruction regarding alternate arrangements for court access.
- The new court date for cases continued pursuant to the Supreme Court of Virginia's order will be posted on the court's website. Notices for new court dates will also be mailed.

PRELIMINARY PROTECTIVE ORDERS

- All determinations will be made based upon the affidavit provided by the petitioner; the petitioner will not appear before a judge to present evidence.

HEARINGS/TRIAL

- Only necessary individuals, including parties, witnesses, attorneys, and court reporters, and members of the press, will be permitted in the courtroom.
- All hearings/trials will be heard from the counsel tables; no hearings/trials will be conducted at the bench.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Attorneys: Please make efforts to obtain written stipulations of facts, when possible, in order to avoid witnesses attending court unnecessarily.