



**VIRGINIA: IN THE JUVENILE AND DOMESTIC RELATIONS DISTRICT COURT
OF AMHERST COUNTY**

ORDER

Pursuant to Section 16.1-69.35 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, and in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic which has led to declarations of national, state, and local emergencies, this Court finds that current prevailing conditions constitute an ongoing threat to the health and safety of the Court and Clerk's Office personnel and the general public. Furthermore, the Supreme Court of Virginia has declared (see order of March 16, 2020) and has subsequently extended (see order of March 27, 2020) a statewide Judicial Emergency. The Supreme Court's most recent order directs that all non-emergency matters between now and April 26, 2020 shall be continued. Accordingly, it is hereby ORDERED:

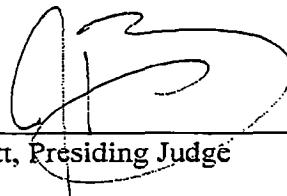
Access to this Court shall continue to be limited through April 26, 2020. The following provisions shall apply during this time:

- 1) All non-essential and non-emergency cases (matters involving custody and visitation, child support, truancy, adult criminal and traffic where the defendant is NOT incarcerated, and juvenile delinquency and traffic where the juvenile is NOT detained) are hereby CONTINUED and all witnesses for those matters are EXCUSED.**
- 2) Whenever permitted by the Code of Virginia, hearings that must proceed during this period shall utilize video and telephone to the extent possible (bond hearings, advisements, civil matters, etc.) Whenever permitted by the Code of Virginia, orders shall be issued pursuant to affidavit only (preliminary protective orders).**

- 3) Only employees of the Court and Clerk's Office will be permitted entry beyond the public lobby of the J&DR Court. Attorneys and other professional staff with mail slots in the Clerk's Office may pick up their documents at the window during the hours noted above.
- 4) All business with the Clerk should be conducted by phone, fax, or other electronic means to the extent possible during this time; please refrain from coming to the courthouse or the Clerk's office in person unless absolutely necessary.
- 5) The Court will not permit more than ten (10) people in the courtroom at any given time, nor will the Court permit any groups of more than ten (10) people to congregate anywhere in the Courthouse. Standards of social distancing will be enforced by the bailiffs in the Courthouse and courtroom.
- 6) This order may be superseded and/or expanded by any relevant orders of the Amherst County Circuit Court and the Supreme Court of Virginia.

The Clerk of Court is directed to place a copy of this order into the file of any case which is continued or otherwise affected by this order.

Entered this 30th day of March, 2020.



Jeffrey Bennett, Presiding Judge