



CHAMBERS OF
TRACY C. HUDSON
JUDGE

THIRTY-FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF VIRGINIA

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY
CITIES OF MANASSAS AND MANASSAS PARK

CIRCUIT COURT CHAMBERS
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For Immediate Release –

From:
Tracy C. Hudson, Chief Judge
Circuit Court of Prince William County

Statement Concerning Operation of Prince William County Courts March 16, 2020

In response to evolving public health concerns and the Governor's declaration of a state of emergency, the Prince William County courts will immediately begin limiting operations as outlined below. It is important for all persons having business with the courts to follow CDC guidelines in order to minimize exposure to COVID-19. To that end, persons experiencing fever or flu-like symptoms should remain out of public places.

The following is a summary of the policy changes that have been memorialized by written Orders entered by the courts. This press release does not modify the Orders. For complete information, please contact the individual courts for copies of the governing Orders.

All three courts, Circuit Court, General District Court and Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, have adopted a liberal continuance policy for cases that are presently scheduled for trial or hearing between March 16, 2020 and April 30, 2020. Such cases may be continued by submitting a fully endorsed Agreed Order to the appropriate court or by notifying the appropriate court that an attorney of record, one of the parties or an important witness is experiencing flu-like symptoms, or is under either self-quarantine or mandatory quarantine, or is caring for a family member who is experiencing flu-like symptoms or is under either self-quarantine or

mandatory quarantine. All continuance requests should be submitted by electronic mail to the respective court's designated contact. The designated contacts are:

Circuit Court: circuitcourts@pwcgov.org

General District Court: JPleitez@vacourts.gov

Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court: dfuller@vacourts.gov

Each of the three courts will implement additional policies that are unique to their particular operations. Therefore, it is important for concerned citizens to note in which court a person has interests. The additional policies applicable to each court are as follows:

Circuit Court:

Subject to further Order of the court, criminal cases will continue to be scheduled and heard in accordance with the normal practice.

Effective immediately, with the exception of cases having statutory priority, no additional civil hearings, motions or trials shall be scheduled for the period from March 16, 2020 through April 30, 2020. Some examples of cases entitled to such priority are Protective Orders, Involuntary Commitment Orders and Quarantine or Isolation Orders.

Civil Term Day for April 7, 2020 is cancelled. All civil cases presently set on the April 7, 2020 Term Day will be continued to May 5, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. Criminal Term Day for April 7, 2020 will go forward as scheduled.

Civil cases, including trials and motions, without statutory priority, scheduled to begin after Wednesday March 18, 2020 will be continued to a date after April 30, 2020. Attorneys and parties should contact the court at circuitcourts@pwcgov.org to obtain a new date.

The Clerk of Court has been given the authority to excuse any juror who reports that he or she is experiencing flu-like symptoms, or is under either self-quarantine or mandatory quarantine,

or is caring for a family member who is experiencing flu-like symptoms or is under either self-quarantine or mandatory quarantine.

The Circuit Clerk's Office will continue to operate under normal hours and conditions unless otherwise determined by the Clerk of Court.

General District Court:

The Prince William County General District Court will suspend and continue all cases for the next five days, Monday the 16th of March through Friday the 20th of March. This includes Criminal, Traffic and Civil cases. On March 20, 2020, the General District Court will make a public announcement regarding its court schedule for the future. All cases set between March 16 and March 20 will be continued to the officer's May court date for Criminal and Traffic cases. Civil cases will be reset for status hearings on a date in May. General District Court will continue to conduct arraignment hearings and any bond motions arranged through the Commonwealth's Attorney Office. Any additional questions may be forwarded to JPleitez@vacourts.gov.

Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court:

Effective Wednesday, March 18, 2020 and continuing through April 17, 2020 the Court will only hear the following matters:

Adult Criminal Cases: The Court will continue to conduct arraignments and bond motions in all adult criminal misdemeanor and felony cases. Arraignments and bond motions for incarcerated adults will continue to be heard via video from the Adult Detention Center and for those who have been released by the magistrate to be arraigned in Court, the procedure remains unchanged. The Court will also continue to hear trials and preliminary hearings in cases in which the accused adult is incarcerated. All other adult criminal matters will be continued to a trial date after April 30th.

Juvenile Delinquency Cases: The Court will continue to hear detention hearings and bond motions at 9:00 each morning involving juveniles who are detained or being held in Shelter Care. In cases where the juvenile is detained at the Juvenile Detention Center, all such hearings will be conducted via video conferencing. Delinquency reviews for juveniles being held and trials currently set for detained juveniles will be heard as currently scheduled. Juvenile Dispositions, juvenile traffic, CHINs cases and other delinquency matters will be continued to a date after April 30th. Requests for emergency docketing remains available in all cases and will be considered in all situations where a juvenile needs medical or mental health treatment or is considered at risk for harm.

Protective Orders: The Court will continue to hear all currently scheduled protective order cases as well as receive any new requests for protective orders and will schedule those new requests as required by statute.

Child Abuse and Neglect Matters: The court will continue to schedule and hear any new petitions for the removal of children in abuse and neglect claims as well as requests for the issuance, extension, modification or dismissal of all Child Protective Orders. Adjudications and Disposition hearings in child abuse and neglect cases as well as all termination of parental rights hearings will continue to be heard as currently scheduled unless agreed continuances are requested.

The Court will continue to review matters filed for emergency consideration and determine appropriate action on a case by case basis. The Court anticipates a return to normal operations as of April 20, 2020 and appreciates everyone's patience and assistance in reducing ongoing public health risks.

Point of Contact:

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