

IN THE DISTRICT COURTS OF THE 20th JUDICIAL DISTRICT
JOHNSTON, LOVE, MARSHALL, and MURRY COUNTY
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER)
)
IN RE:)
CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN) AO-2020-1A
FOR THE 20th JUDICIAL DISTRICT)

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER SUSPENDING
CERTAIN IN-PERSON COURT PROCEEDINGS AND
CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN FOR THE 20TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

AO-2020-1 is hereby vacated and rescinded, and replaced with AO-2020-1A.

On March 12, 2020, the World Health Organization designated the COVID – 19 outbreak as a global pandemic. On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a national emergency as a result of the emerging public health threat posed by COVID – 19. On March 15, 2020, the Governor of Oklahoma issued an Executive Order declaring an emergency in all 77 Oklahoma Counties caused by the impending threat of the COVID – 19 to the health of the people of Oklahoma. In addition, the Oklahoma Department of Health has urged all Oklahomans to take steps to reduce the spread of infection.

Accordingly, the following **Continuity of Operations Plan for the District Court for the 20th Judicial District, Office # 2** is hereby enacted:

The District Court for the 20th Judicial District, Office #2, is open and will remain open unless otherwise ordered or directed by the Chief Judge, the Supreme Court of Oklahoma, the Governor, or supplemental Administrative Order.

Any person entering the Marshall, Johnston, Love, or Murray County Courthouse is subject to the limitations set forth in **SCAD Order 2020-24**, issued by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Oklahoma and the Presiding Judge of the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals, which is incorporated with, and adopted as a part of, this Order.

All in-person proceedings in the 20th Judicial District, Office #2, are suspended from the close of business on March 16, 2020, until further order, subject only to constitutionally mandated hearings and civil matters involving emergencies.

All Judges shall reschedule all regular civil dockets set before April 16, 2020, and shall, at their discretion only, allow any matter previously set during this time that does not require a hearing to be held if it is simply a walk-through signing of an order.

The intent of this ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER is to clarify SCAD Order # 2020-24. In that regard all Judges of the 20th Judicial District, Office #2, shall conduct Initial Appearances on all new misdemeanor and felony charges, and any criminal pleas that will result in criminal defendants being released from their respective county jails. This Court has been informed this morning that the Oklahoma Department of Corrections is not accepting any new criminal defendants, but all judges should still take pleas that result in Department of Corrections time and let the Executive Branch deal with that decision.

Further, all judges should continue to hear all civil, juvenile deprived and delinquent, and criminal cases that constitute emergencies. All preliminary hearings and conferences on felonies should be held as to those defendant's who are incarcerated. Those cases where the defendant is not incarcerated should be continued to a time after April 16, 2020.

This Order expressly does not prohibit court proceedings by telephone, video, teleconferencing, email, or other means that do not involve in-person contact. This Order does not affect Courts' consideration of matters that can be resolved without in-person proceedings.

Orders of protection and temporary injunctions that would otherwise expire during the effective period of this Order are hereby extended until further order unless otherwise directed and ordered by the assigned judge.

Under the terms of this Order, the 20th Judicial District, Office #2, shall remain open, consistent with the Judicial Branch's obligation to mitigate the risks associated with COVID – 19.

This Order is intended to be interpreted broadly for protection of the public from risks associated with COVID – 19.

This Order will remain in effect until it is expressly rescinded by the Chief Judge, the Supreme Court of Oklahoma, or the Governor.

The following contact information is provided should any have questions not answered by this Administrative Order:

Johnston County: Cassandra Slover, Court Clerk: 580-371-3281/ Judge Laura Corbin: 580-371-2387.

Marshall County: Wanda Pearce, Court Clerk: 580-795-3278 / Judge Wallace Coppedge or Judge Greg Johnson: 580-795-3392.

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Love County: Kim Jackson, Court Clerk: 580-276-2235 / Judge Todd Hicks: 580-276-3373.

Murray County: Christie Pittman, Court Clerk: 580-622-3224 / Judge Aaron Duck: 580-622-2110.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 18th day of March, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wallace Coppedge", written in a cursive style.

WALLACE COPPEDGE
District Judge

GUIDELINES FOR THE PROTECTION OF PERSONS APPEARING FOR COURT PROCEEDINGS

General Guidelines

1. Communications between counsel should occur prior to appearing for court in order to reduce the amount of people entering the building and the amount of time necessary to be in the building. This includes but is not limited to, negotiations, notices regarding the manner in which a proceeding will be conducted, the number of witnesses that will need to be present, etcetera.
2. Communications between defense counsel and the District Attorney's Office should be by email or other remote communication method unless, by agreement, counsel for the defense and State wish to meet in person.
3. Communications between counsel and the Court should be accomplished by email or other remote communication method unless otherwise directed by the specific judicial office. Any emails directed to the Court shall also include all counsel. No *ex parte* communications shall be allowed.
4. Courtesy copies of pleadings or materials which consist of no more than ten (10) pages total may be emailed to the judicial offices rather than presenting the same in person. Submissions of more than ten (10) pages shall be left in the place designated by the specific judicial office pursuant to the guidelines for each office.
5. Requests for continuances of matters set during the effective period of the Order Suspending Certain In-Person Proceedings may be emailed to the Court along with a proposed order. All matters remain as set unless a request is approved by the Court prior to the hearing date.
6. No defendant housed in the Marshall, Johnston, Murray or Love County Jail shall be brought to the Marshall, Johnston, Murray or Love County Courthouse unless specifically order by the respective assigned judge.