



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUDGE
Ninth Judicial Circuit
State of Illinois

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Counties of Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, McDonough and Warren

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Office of the Chief Judge

Ninth Judicial Circuit

Macomb, Illinois

**NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ILLINOIS COURTS REMAIN OPEN
WITH PRECAUTIONS CONCERNING COVID-19**

Due to the global coronavirus pandemic, the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court will reduce operations in order to minimize personal contact and deter the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus. The attached Administrative Order is consistent with Supreme Court recommendations and shall remain in effect until further order of the court.

Additionally, the courts within the Ninth Judicial Circuit will be taking the following precautions:

Court Facilities and Employees:

- All employees have been encouraged to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands; stay home when ill or if having had contact with anyone who has the COVID-19 coronavirus; avoid close contact with persons who are sick; and clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects.
- Custodial staff are conducting regular cleaning and disinfection of court facilities with emphasis on public areas which have frequent contact (doorknobs, restroom and elevator areas, etc.).

Attorneys, Litigants and Parties to a Case

- If you have a case scheduled and you begin to feel ill, you should consider contacting the opposing party or attorney to explore an agreed continuance.
- If there is no agreement, contact the circuit clerk's office to advise that you are unable to attend court. Judges will consider on a case-by-case basis whether the continuance of a court date is in order. Providing medical documentation of your condition will be of assistance.

Jury Service

- If you are summoned for jury service and are experiencing any symptoms of illness, please contact the Circuit Clerk of your county and advise them of the situation for further instruction before coming in person to the court facilities.

General Public

- The court facilities in the Ninth Circuit remain open. However, if you are experiencing any acute respiratory illness symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, headaches), flu-like symptoms, fever, coughing or sneezing, please do not come to the court facilities. If you do come to the court facility with such symptoms, the court may refuse you access to the court facilities.

Adult and Juvenile Probation, Juvenile Detention, Court Services

- All probation, detention and court services facilities remain open.
- A plan has been developed to limit contact with persons who are exhibiting symptoms of illness.
- Probationers should contact their probation officer via telephone and follow their directions. Probationers should not appear at the probation office.

This situation presents challenges to the Court's normal operating procedures. The Ninth Circuit continues to examine procedures to preserve the public health while continuing to perform the function of an operational court system. Your patience and understanding are greatly appreciated.



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ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2020-01

IN THE MATTER OF COURT OPERATIONS
IN THE NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
PURSUANT TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

WHEREAS, in light of the global COVID-19 pandemic, and in order to protect the general health and well-being of the general public, there has been declared both a state of emergency in Illinois and a national emergency in the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the above declarations direct that persons take certain precautions in response to global pandemic; and

WHEREAS, precautions include that large gatherings of persons are to be avoided and group activities have been restricted in order to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 illness to the general public; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the administrative authority given to the Chief Circuit Judge pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 21 and the court's inherent authority.

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED by the Chief Judge of the Ninth Judicial Circuit of Illinois that the following cases set in the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court which have a scheduled court date are **postponed**:

- Civil matters, including jury trials
- Traffic violations (TR, DT)
- Ordinance violations (OV, CL)
- Misdemeanor cases (CM)
- Probate (P)
- Small Claims (SC)
- Family Cases (F,D)
- Law magistrate (LM, L, CH)
- Juvenile Cases (except as outlined below)
- Marriages
- Criminal and Traffic Reviews and Status Hearings
- Tax cases (TX)

Each party litigant shall receive a notice in the mail upon rescheduling. Litigants are directed to ensure that their mailing addresses are updated and current. Litigants may contact the Circuit Clerk in the county of the pending case with any questions.

Emergency matters may be scheduled on a case-by-case basis. Individuals shall contact the Circuit Clerk in the county where the case is to be heard for the purpose of seeking approval from the Court to schedule an emergency matter.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

The following court proceedings will be held as scheduled, with appearances expected for all litigants, unless travel or health exemptions apply (see below):

- All matters with individuals in-custody, including bond review
- Criminal felony matters except probation and payment reviews
- Juvenile temporary custody hearings (shelter care)
- Juvenile detention hearings
- Petitions for Emergency Order of Protection/No Contact Stalking Orders (OP)
- Plenary Order of Protection/No Contact Stalking Orders
- Emergency hearings in family matters (D and F cases) scheduled with approval of the Court
- Any other emergency hearing as scheduled and approved by the Court

It is requested that individuals **should not** enter the courthouse if they:

- Have been in any of the following countries within the last 21 days: China, South Korea, Italy, Japan, Iran, or
- Reside or have close contact with anyone who has been in one of those countries listed above within the last 21 days; or
- Have been directed to quarantine, isolate or self-monitor at home for the coronavirus by any medical provider; or
- Have been diagnosed with, or have had close contact with anyone diagnosed with, COVID-19; or
- Have flu-like symptoms including, fever, cough or shortness of breath

If you are an attorney or litigant and have a scheduled case, appointment or are otherwise required to appear at the courthouse in connection with a court case, but are unable to appear because of the above restrictions, please contact the Circuit Clerk in the county where the case is pending.

This Order shall be effective March 17, 2020, and until further order of this Court.

Dated this 16th day of March, 2020.



David L. Vancil, Jr., Chief Judge
Ninth Judicial Circuit