

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
COUNTY OF BOONE
COUNTY OF WINNEBAGO

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2020-8
TEMPORARY ORDER - COVID-19 Procedures Civil Division and Family Division

The following procedures are being implemented in connection with all Winnebago and Boone County civil cases and family cases (but excluding orders of protection and stalking/no contact orders):

- A. **All court dates currently set between March 17 and April 20, 2020, are canceled and will be continued to a date falling after May 17, 2020** (not including orders of protection and stalking/no contact orders). This includes all dates currently scheduled for status, first return, argument, hearing, decision, bench trial or jury trial. All cases will eventually be given a new date for status, and parties will be notified by mail.
- B. **Emergency Matters:** Matters involving exigent circumstances may be set on a date less than 60 days out with court approval. To request an emergency hearing, an attorney shall email the assigned judge, including all counsel in the email chain. The assigned judge will determine if the matter qualifies as an emergency and set the matter accordingly via the email chain.
- C. **Agreed settings for argument, motion, etc.:** For matters which are already positioned for argument or decision at a non-evidentiary hearing, the parties may *mutually* request such a hearing from the judge presiding in that matter. The presiding judge will decide whether granting a hearing is appropriate.
- D. **Mode of hearing:** It is the Court's preference that parties appear via CourtCall or other telephonic means for any such hearing (and will likely require it for any non-emergency matter). Those personally appearing for any hearing as discussed above are required to remain seated at counsel table or behind available lecterns with safe distances (6-10 feet) between themselves and any other persons in the courtroom. While parties have a right to be present whenever a case is called, during the COVID-19 crisis counsel should *strongly discourage* clients from attending hearings unless their presence is essential to the hearing.
- E. **Self-represented litigants** shall continue to file motions with the Circuit Clerk's office. All requests for an emergency hearing shall be in writing and clearly labeled as "emergency", and will be forwarded by the Circuit Clerk to the presiding judge for ruling or scheduling.
- F. **Individual civil division and family division judges** may issue orders that direct attorneys and litigants how to submit agreed orders, etc.

This order remains in effect until further order of the court. To give flexibility for extension of this order if necessary, matters will be rescheduled to dates falling after May 17, 2020. The court will continue to review and adjust this order as is necessary.

ENTER: _____


Eugene G. Doherty, Chief Judge

DATED: _____

3/17/20