

**IN THE 17<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT  
CASS AND JOHNSON COUNTIES, MISSOURI**

**Administrative Order 2020 – 0316a**

**ORDER**

**WHEREAS**, the Supreme Court of the State of Missouri has ordered that all in person hearings be postponed effective March 17, 2020 through April 3, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, the existence and spread of the COVID-19 has resulted in the declaration of a world-wide pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, it is imperative to take steps to protect the health and safety of all employees of the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, all judicial officers and all attorneys and parties who have court hearings or other business in this Judicial Circuit while also balancing the rights of all said individuals and parties to litigation; and

**WHEREAS**, it is appropriate and necessary to take quick action to reduce the possibility of exposure to COVID-19 and to reduce the spread of COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, the unprecedented circumstances existing at this time warrant this administrative action; and

**WHEREAS**, countless governmental entities and private businesses have implemented numerous immediate actions and modifications to their normal course of business; and

**WHEREAS**, the President of the United States has declared a nationwide State of Emergency and the Governor of the State of Missouri has declared a statewide State of Emergency, to take measures to reduce the possibility of exposure to COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 virus spreads between people who are in close contact with one another through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes; and

**WHEREAS**, a large gathering of individuals without necessary mitigation for the spread of infection may pose a risk of the spread of infectious disease; and

**WHEREAS**, the Court desires to employ all reasonable and prudent measures to help protect the general public, litigants, lawyers, and employees from the spread of COVID-19 creating this emergency;

**WHEREAS**, the Presiding Judge of the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit has the authority over dockets of this Circuit and the authority to enter Orders affecting the general scheduling of cases in this Circuit.

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED**, effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020, that the Municipal Courts of the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit will postpone all in person hearings from March 17, 2020 to April 3, 2020.

1. Each judicial officer and his/her division staff, along with the staff of any supporting department, shall be responsible for notifying all parties and counsel if their cases/dockets will be postponed, and shall be responsible for rescheduling new hearing dates;
2. All non-essential court-related activities, such as weddings, tours, meetings with outside groups, after-hours classes, social activities, events, and off site meetings will be postponed and rescheduled unless they can be held via video conference or telephone conference to mitigate the spread of all diseases.
3. Judicial officers shall have the discretion to exclude any individuals from their courtrooms, in order to comply with the recommendations of the CDC;
4. All nonessential court-related travel for staff and judicial officers is canceled through the end of April, 2020;

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

3-16-2020  
Date



Honorable William B. Collins  
Presiding Judge of the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit