

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER OF THE PRESIDING JUDGE

June 4, 2020

It is hereby ordered that the previous administrative orders related to the COVID-19 virus in Pettis and Cooper County Circuit Court Divisions related to in-person proceedings are hereby superseded and this new order is entered effective June 8, 2020. In accordance with the Missouri Supreme Court directives, the 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit shall move from Phase 1 restrictions to Phase 2 to more normalize court functions. Phase 2 relating to in-person proceedings is effective under the following directives.

- a. Jury trials are suspended until allowed under Supreme Court order and that of the Presiding Judge of the 18<sup>th</sup> Circuit;
- b. A Grand Jury may meet in the Circuit Division courtrooms so long as distance between jurors is 6' or more;
- c. Increased in-person court proceedings, including the most extraordinary, pressing, and urgent grand and petit jury proceedings, can begin where they can safely be conducted in compliance with social distancing and occupancy rate limitations subject to the Supreme Court's restricts on jury proceedings that are yet forthcoming.
- d. Hearings by video conferencing are to be utilized if practicable;
- e. Judges are encouraged to allow vulnerable litigants, witnesses, victims, attorneys, and any other individual to participate in any proceeding remotely or may continue or postpone their required presence at the court facility. Vulnerable persons are defined as individuals 65 years of age or older or those that have underlying medical conditions;
- f. Any persons who have symptoms related to COVID-19 are not allowed to participate in any in-person proceeding;
- g. Any court proceeding necessary to protect the constitutional rights of criminal defendants, shall be an exception to these directives; and
- h. All Judges of the various divisions of the Circuit Court, including Municipal divisions, are authorized to conduct in-person hearings subject to the directives here stated and which are in their judgment sufficiently safe for those who participate in those hearings. Judges are to further concern themselves with the rights of litigants to confrontation in any cases pending before them.

June 4, 2020

  
Robert L. Koffman  
Presiding Judge  
18<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit