

**IN THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT
CASS AND JOHNSON COUNTIES, MISSOURI**

Administrative Order 2020 - 0626

ORDER

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have declared that the outbreak of COVID-19 is a worldwide pandemic, and 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 ; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative to take steps to protect the health and safety of all employees of the 17th 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, notwithstanding the fact that the Court will remain open, it is imperative that the Court take steps to protect the health and safety of all employees of the Court, all judicial officers, all attorneys, all litigants, all victims, all witnesses and any other individuals or entities who have cases and hearings pending in Court, while also balancing the rights of all said individuals to have their matters heard; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the fact that the Court will remain open, the Court's operations are and will be significantly modified during the term of the outbreak; 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 Missouri Supreme Court entered an Order dated March 16, 2020 together with other Orders regarding on-going court operations and his instructed courts in this state to "prepare for potential infection in their community"; and

WHEREAS, the Missouri Supreme Court has directed its courts to "consider strategies to prevent the spread of respiratory germs into, within, and between facilities"; and

WHEREAS, the Court desires to employ additional necessary and reasonable measures to protect the general public, litigants, lawyers, employees and all other individuals from the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Presiding Judge of the Court has the administrative authority over dockets of the Court and the administrative and discretionary authority regarding the manner in which any hearings are conducted in the Court.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that the Circuit Clerk of each County is authorized to suspend the impaneling of all jurors for all civil trials beginning August 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020. All civil jury trials scheduled for those weeks are hereby continued and will be rescheduled to a later date.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

6-26-20

Date

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William B. Collins', written over a horizontal line.

Honorable William B. Collins
Presiding Judge of the 17th Judicial Circuit