

18TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISHES OF IBERVILLE, WEST BATON ROUGE & POINTE COUPEE

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**COURT ORDER RELATIVE TO COVID-19
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY**

Acting under the authority of Article V, Section 1 of Constitution of 1974, and the inherent power of this Court, and considering the recent outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Louisiana, Governor John Bel Edwards' Declarations of Public Health Emergency in Proclamation Number's 25 JBE 2020, 27 JBE 2020, 30 JBE 2020, President Donald Trump's Declaration of a National Emergency on March 13, 2020, Louisiana Supreme Court's Order on March 16, 2020 and in consideration of public health recommendations to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus and slowing the spread of the disease while balancing the need to maintain access to Louisiana courts,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. All jury trials, both civil and criminal, scheduled to commence between the date of this order and March 27, 2020, are hereby continued, and will be reset by the respective Court.
2. Except as otherwise provided herein, all civil and criminal non-jury trials, Traffic Court, Misdemeanor Court, Civil and Criminal hearings, Civil and Criminal Court Appearances and Criminal Arraignments, Pretrial Conferences, Sentencing Hearings and Revocations set for any date between the date of this order and March 27, 2020 are hereby continued, and will be reset by this Court, except for hearings related to the following emergency matters:
 - A. Civil protective orders;
 - B. Child in Need of Care proceedings;
 - C. Emergency child custody matters, including La. C.C.P. Art. 3945 matters.
 - D. Proceedings for children removed from their home by emergency court order;
 - E. Proceedings related to emergency interdictions and mental health orders
 - F. 72 hour hearings and continued custody proceedings; and
 - G. Any other matter considered an emergency by the Court.
3. All non-incarcerated individuals set to appear for criminal court in Iberville, West Baton Rouge or Pointe Coupee Parishes between March 18, 2020 and March 27, 2020 are to report to the respective courthouses on their scheduled court dates to be served with a new court date.



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4. Criminal initial appearances for adults and juveniles, arraignments for incarcerated individuals and bond hearings (including Gwen's Law) shall continue as usual and shall be conducted with the use of telephone and video conferencing whenever possible.
5. Iberville, West Baton Rouge and Pointe Coupee Clerks of Court Offices are open; however, all business will be conducted by appointment only. Effective immediately, the processing of birth certificates and passports are suspended until further notice. All offices are urged to limit in-person contact as much as possible by utilizing available technologies as follows:
 - A. Fax filing (convenience fee for fax filing shall be waived)
 1. Iberville Clerk of Court Fax # 225-687-5260
 2. West Baton Rouge Clerk of Court Fax # 225-383-3694
 3. Pointe Coupee Clerk of Court Fax # 225-638-9594
 - B. Online Records Database and E-Recording for the following Clerk of Court offices:
 1. Iberville Clerk of Court www.ibervilleclerk.com
 2. West Baton Rouge Clerk www.wbrclerk.org
 3. Please contact Pointe Coupee Clerk of Court's office @ 225-638-9596 to access their Online Imaging Database by Subscription.
6. This Order expressly does not prohibit any court proceedings by telephone, video, teleconferencing, or any other means that do not involve in-person contact. This Order does not affect courts' consideration of matters that can be resolved without in-person proceedings.
7. Given the public health concerns and the necessity of taking action to slow the spread of the disease, the continuances occasioned by this Order serve the ends of justice and outweigh the best interest of the public and the defendant in a speedy trial. Therefore, the time periods of such continuance shall be excluded from speedy trial computations pursuant to law, including but not limited to those set forth in the Louisiana Code of Criminal Procedure and the Louisiana Children's Code, and presumptively constitute just cause.
8. The Court may issue further Orders regarding this matter as necessary to address the circumstances arising from this pandemic and will post such Orders on the Court's website at www.18jdc.com and the Louisiana Supreme Court's website at www.lasc.org.

THUS ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED, in chambers, on this 18th day of March, 2020 in Plaquemine, Louisiana.


ALVIN BATISTE, JR.
CHIEF JUDGE



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