

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
KNOX COUNTY, OHIO  
JUDGE RICHARD D. WETZEL

FILED  
KNOX COUNTY  
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
2020 MAR 13 PM 1:55  
CHRISTY MILLIGAN STATION  
CLERK OF COURTS

IN RE: COVID-19 VIRUS AND PUBLIC HEALTH

JOURNAL ENTRY FOR TEMPORARY EMERGENCY COURT OPERATIONS  
PROTOCOL FOR COVID-19 RISKS

The matter of public health considerations and responses to the COVID19 virus, and current declarations of the Governor of the State of Ohio, are before the Court this 13<sup>th</sup> day of March 2020. In order for the Court to assist all state and local agencies in maintaining public health and safety, and to assist our local law enforcement and healthcare community in preserving all available resources, upon the Court's own motion, the following Temporary Emergency Court Operations Protocol is hereby adopted as a Temporary Emergency Order effective immediately:

1. In all criminal, civil, and domestic relations cases called before this Court, only attorneys, the parties, the victims, and a media representative shall be permitted to enter the Courthouse and to attend hearings in the courtroom. Upon request of the court security officer, all persons shall be required to present a hearing notice or other evidence that they are required to appear that day. All persons entering the Courthouse shall be required to wash their hands at the designated handwashing station as instructed by the court security officer. Any county employee entering the Courthouse for purposes

of filing or delivery of documents or items to the Court and any adult probationer entering the Courthouse to see their Adult Probation Officer shall be subject to the terms and conditions of this Temporary Emergency Order. In all cases, witnesses shall remain separated and on call by the court bailiff, in a location as instructed by the court security officer.

2. Continuances shall be granted by the court upon request when attorneys, parties or victims are or have been ill.
3. Court security officers and court staff are hereby authorized to inquire of all persons entering the Courthouse whether they are or have been ill or have been exposed to anyone who has been ill in the past 30 days. Subject to the determination of the court security officer, any person who responds affirmatively or who refuses to respond may be subject to separation in a secure area, or refused entrance to the Courthouse. In such cases, the Court shall continue the hearing to a date scheduled by the Court.
4. Any party aggrieved by this Temporary Emergency Order shall be permitted to file their objections in the case in writing, subject to further review by the Court at a time to be scheduled by the Court.
5. This Temporary Emergency Order shall be subject to modification as necessary or otherwise in the discretion of the Court, and it shall continue until lifted by Order of this Court.

6. The Court's Adult Probation Department shall adopt additional temporary policies and procedures as necessary to protect the health of the public, Probation Staff, Court employees, and probationers, in the best interest of the public safety, for anyone entering the Adult Probation Department, or the Courthouse.

**IT IS SO ORDERED** this 13<sup>th</sup> day of March 2020.

  
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RICHARD D. WETZEL, JUDGE

cc:

Knox County Jail/Sheriff's Office  
Knox County Prosecutor's Office  
Knox County Public Defender's Office  
Knox County Commissioners  
Knox County Bar Association  
Knox County Clerk of Courts  
Mount Vernon Police Department  
Mount Vernon City Law Director  
Knox County Health Department  
Adult Court Services  
Mount Vernon News  
Knox Pages