

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
OF THE 4TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE:

4TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
DECLARATION OF JUDICIAL EMERGENCY
MODIFICATION OF PROCEDURES

:
: NO. 177 MD 2020
:
: ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

2020 NOV 17 AM 13
PROTHONOTARY &
CLERK OF COURTS

FILED
TIOGA COUNTY, PA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER OF COURT

AND NOW, this 17th day of November, 2020, pursuant to Order of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania dated May 27, 2020, and in light of ongoing public health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the President Judge of the 4th Judicial District is hereby exercising the power granted by the Supreme Court and ORDERING that the 4th Judicial District emergency declaration is extended through December 31, 2020, and the following provisions apply through that date (unless a different date is indicated below) subject to state and federal constitutional requirements and any subsequent order by the Supreme Court:

1. In-person court proceedings and in-person access to proceedings will be limited in order to safeguard the health and safety of court personnel, court users, and members of the public.
2. The following statewide rules are suspended:
 - a. Rules that restrict, directly or indirectly, the use of advanced communication technologies¹; and
 - b. Rules pertaining to the rule-based right of criminal defendants to a prompt trial.

¹ The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania's "Second Supplemental Order" dated April 1, 2020, defines "advanced communication technology" as including by not limited to systems providing for two-way or simultaneous communication of image and sound; closed-circuit television; telephone and facsimile equipment; and electronic mail.

3. To the extent possible, the Courts will decide matters on the papers and conduct proceedings utilizing advanced communication technology in order to limit in-person contact.
4. Incarcerated defendants will participate by advanced communication technology unless extenuating circumstances necessitate the presiding Judge to authorize transport.
5. It is strongly encouraged that documents be filed via U.S. mail with the office of the Prothonotary and Clerk of Courts and/or the Register and Recorder, whichever the appropriate filing office is. The document and filing fee (check or money order) must be in a closed envelope addressed to the filing office and a self-addressed, prepaid envelope for a return of a receipt for payment of filing fees and a time-stamped copy of the document. If proper payment is not included, the document will be returned to the sender unfiled.
 - a. Due to time constraints, parties may file via facsimile to the Prothonotary at 570-724-2986 or mseymour@tiogacountypa.us. Matters before the Orphans' Court or Register and Recorder may be emailed to jwetherbee@tiogacountypa.us. The original filings and applicable fees shall immediately follow. In addition to filing with the appropriate filing office, all motions requiring immediate attention shall also be sent to the District Court Administrator, Randi Bubb, by email at rbubb@tiogacountypa.us.
6. It is strongly encouraged that documents be filed with the Magisterial District Courts via U.S. mail to the applicable District Court office and payments for

finest/costs/restitution be made via U.S. mail or online at

<https://ujportal.pacourts.us/PayOnline.aspx>.

7. Safety measures including but not limited to the following will be implemented with in-person proceedings until further notice:
 - a. Start times will be staggered and the time between proceedings will be increased in order to minimize person-to-person contact;
 - b. Only necessary participants will be allowed entry to courtrooms and hearing rooms in order to minimize person-to-person contact;
 - c. Participants including but not limited to litigants, defendants, attorneys, and witnesses will wear a facemask and practice social distancing in all areas of the Courts, including but not limited to the courtrooms and waiting areas, unless the presiding Judge authorizes otherwise;
 - d. Participants will utilize the hand sanitizers located in common areas and waiting rooms; and
 - e. High-touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected as practicable throughout the day, and all surfaces will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after hours.
8. All employees and court visitors including but not limited to contractors and vendors will wear a facemask and practice social distancing until further notice.
9. Until further notice, all individuals entering the courthouse will be temperature screened and those with a temperature of 100.4 F or above will be denied entry. Any individual with a scheduled court event who is denied entry shall contact the

respective Court office via telephone as soon as possible for further instruction.

Court Administration can be reached at 570-724-9380.

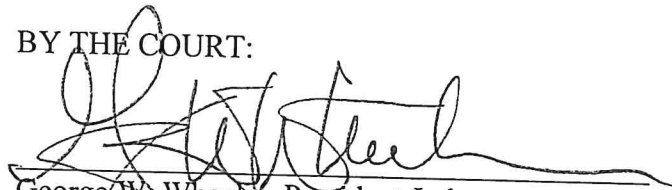
10. Court employees may attend off-site conferences and trainings at the discretion of their supervisor.
11. Court events and meetings involving a large number of individuals will be rescheduled or held via advanced communication technology until further notice.
12. Individuals on supervision will NOT report to the Adult Probation Office unless specifically directed to do so. Adult probation will supervise individuals in the field or via advanced communications technology until further notice. Those individuals under supervision who have questions should contact their assigned probation officer.
13. Juveniles on supervision will NOT report to the Juvenile Probation Office unless specifically directed to do so. Those juveniles under supervision who have questions should contact their assigned probation officer.
14. The Domestic Relations Office will take measures to limit the number of individuals reporting to its office until further notice. Those with questions should contact the Domestic Relations Office for additional information. The Domestic Relations Office can be reached at 570-724-9330.
15. All Magisterial District Court offices are encouraged to implement similar strategies to minimize exposure to themselves and the public.
16. These guidelines are fluid and are continually subject to change as additional information becomes available. Questions or concerns should be directed to the Office of the District Court Administrator at 570-724-9380 or to the applicable Magisterial District Court as below:

- a. Magisterial District Judge James Edgcomb (04-3-01)—814-258-7138
 - b. Magisterial District Judge Robert Repard (4-3-02)—570-724-9220
 - c. Magisterial District Judge Tiffany Cummings (04-3-03)—570-662-2904
17. All jury trials previously scheduled during this period covered by this declaration are cancelled and shall be rescheduled after December 31, 2020.
18. The application of Pa. R. Crim. P. 600 is suspended for the period of time covered by the emergency declaration.
19. Any urgent, time-sensitive child custody matters shall be addressed using the expedited and simplified process described in the emergency petition and associated instructions posted to the County website self-help center. All applications will be individually reviewed.
20. Any person who believes that they are being unjustly denied access to the Courts within the 4th Judicial District of Pennsylvania may immediately:
 - a. Contact Randi Bubb, District Court Administrator of the 4th Judicial District of Pennsylvania by telephone at 570-724-9380 or email at rbubb@tiogacountypa.us to address being deprived of access to the Courts of the 4th Judicial District; and/or
 - b. File a petition with the Court of Common Pleas at the above captioned docket number to address being deprived of the access to the Courts within the 4th Judicial District.
21. The exclusive purpose of this Order of Court is to promote and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, county, and court employees, and users of the Tioga

County Court of Common Pleas, Magisterial District Courts, Probation, and the Domestic Relations Office of the 4th Judicial District of Pennsylvania.

22. A copy of this Order shall be prominently posted on the main entry of the Tioga County Courthouse and the offices of the Magisterial District Judges Robert Repard (Wellsboro, PA), Tiffany Cummings (Mansfield, PA), and James Edgcomb (Elkland, PA).

BY THE COURT:



George W. Wheeler, President Judge
4th Judicial District

CERTIFIED TRUE AND CORRECT COPY
TIOGA COUNTY PROTHONOTARY &
CLERK OF COURTS

CC: Randi Bubb, District Court Administrator
Board of Commissioners
Mark Spencer, Director of Domestic Relations
Dave Stager, Chief Probation Officer
Marie Seymour, Prothonotary/Clerk of Courts
Jane Wetherbee, Register and Recorder
Mary Morris & Eric Gurney, Public Defender
Krista Deats, District Attorney
Frank Levindoski, Sheriff
Erick Coolidge, Warden
MDJ Robert Repard
MDJ James Edgcomb
MDJ Tiffany Cummings
Tioga County Bar Association
North Penn Legal Services
Haven of Tioga County
Tioga County Children and Youth
SAM, Inc.