The Supreme Court of Ohio

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

June 8, 2020

[Cite as *06/08/2020 Administrative Actions*, 2020-Ohio-3226.]

In re Notary Requirements for Domestic-Relations, Juvenile, General, and Probate Forms

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, the Governor of Ohio issued Executive Order 2020-01D and declared a state of emergency in Ohio in response to COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization publicly characterized COVID-19 as a global "pandemic" requiring "urgent and aggressive action" to control the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a National Emergency;

WHEREAS, certain domestic-relations, juvenile, general, and probate forms promulgated by the Court include a notarization requirement;

WHEREAS, several domestic-relations, juvenile, general, and probate matters are widely acknowledged as "matters requiring immediate attention" under the Court's May 15, 2020, Nunc Pro Tunc Order;

WHEREAS, social distancing must be observed during the emergency period in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, social distancing impedes the ability to have these forms notarized in person;

WHEREAS, online notarization may not be readily known or available, may be costly for indigent litigants, and requires access to the internet;

WHEREAS, it is imperative to maintain access to the courts during the emergency period while ensuring confidence in the veracity of filings with the courts;

NOW THEREFORE, the Court hereby orders the following:

(A) This order shall apply retroactively to the date of the emergency declared by Executive Order 2020-01D and shall remain in effect until further order of the Court.

(B) The domestic-relations, juvenile, general, and probate forms available on the Court's website may be used by courts and parties in lieu of the similar versions of the forms requiring notarization in the Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure, the Ohio Rules of Juvenile Procedure, and the Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio.