Serial: 230786

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF MISSISSIPPI

No. 2020-AD-00001-SCT

IN RE: EMERGENCY ORDER RELATED TO CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER–2

On March 15, 2020, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), addressing the national emergency declared by the President on March 13, 2020, issued its "Interim Guidance for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)." The CDC recommends the cancellation or postponement of all in-person events that consist of 50 people or more for the next eight weeks, as such events and mass gatherings can contribute to the spread of COVID-19. Their recommendation does not apply to day-to-day operations of organizations, such as schools and businesses.

The Supreme Court has previously found that certain emergency actions are required in light of the pandemic nature of this emergency and the rapidly changing circumstances. In my capacity as chief administrative officer of all courts in this state and consistent with the first Emergency Administrative Order, I find that the following modifications and/or amendments are required.

I find the CDC's Interim Guidance to be the latest information available to the Court. I find it is necessary for the general welfare and health of the citizens of this state to further restrict the size of gatherings in our courts, for the next eight weeks. This step is

to hinder the introduction of the virus into the courthouses of this state and to slow the spread of infection into our communities.

The March 13, 2020 Emergency Administrative Order is amended and modified as follows:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. To comply with the CDC's Interim Guidance of March 15, 2020, courts shall not permit gatherings of more than 50 people beyond the persons involved in the day-to-day operations of the courts. Courts shall not conduct any proceedings that require witnesses or parties to travel from an infected area or that involve vulnerable persons, increasing the chances of transmission of the disease.

2. Individual judges have discretion to control their general dockets and are authorized to instruct their clerks that jury summonses may not be sent to jurors which would be returnable to any date prior to May 18, 2020.

3. Individual judges have the discretion to postpone any trials on their own docket scheduled through May 15, 2020.

4. Parties, jurors, attorneys, and witnesses who have traveled to areas with confirmed coronavirus cases shall contact the clerk of the court by telephone before coming to that court. Those who have been diagnosed with the virus or who are primary caregivers for a vulnerable person who has been diagnosed with the virus shall contact the clerk of the court by telephone. The aforementioned shall not come to the courthouse before speaking with court personnel.

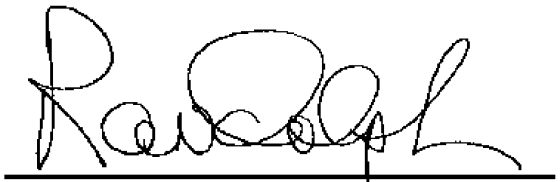
5. Each judge conducting drug intervention courts is authorized to modify the scheduling of drug testing and home-supervision visits for the next 60 days as they see fit.

All other portions of the first Emergency Administrative Order that have not been amended or modified by this Order remain in full force and effect.

It is the Judiciary's responsibility to ensure constitutional rights are protected during this national emergency. This Order may be amended, extended, or otherwise modified as circumstances dictate.

SO ORDERED.

DIGITAL SIGNATURE
Order#: 230786
Sig Serial: 100001306
Org: SC
Date: 03/15/2020



Michael K. Randolph, Chief Justice