SUPREME COURT OF LOUISIANA

O R D E R

Acting under the authority of Article V, Section 1 of Constitution of 1974, and the inherent power of this Court, and considering the continuing spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Louisiana, Governor John Bel Edwards' declaration of public health emergencies in Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020, and most recently renewed by Proclamation Number 209 JBE 2020, and in consideration of ongoing public health recommendations to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus and slowing the spread of the disease while balancing the need to protect the constitutional rights and public safety of the citizens of the state by maintaining access to Louisiana courts,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. Jury Trials: No civil or criminal jury trial shall commence in any Louisiana state court before March 1, 2021. Civil and criminal jury trials that are in progress as of the date of this Order may continue to conclusion, in the discretion of the local court.
2. Speedy Trial Computations: Given the public health concerns and the necessity of taking action to slow the spread of the disease, the continuances occasioned by Section 1 of 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.

3. In-Person Proceedings: Courts are expressly authorized to continue to conduct in-person proceedings on all matters other than trial by jury. Therefore, for cases involving trial by jury, courts may conduct in-person proceedings in a pre-trial and post-trial posture.

Grand jury proceedings may continue and are not suspended by this Order. New grand juries may be empaneled as necessary.

In all matters, Courts should take measures to limit access to courtrooms and other spaces, with minimum physical contact, to practice social distancing and limit in-person court capacity to 50% of the total capacity, as determined by the State Fire Marshall, counting both the number of employees and members of the public present in the building at one time.

As this situation is constantly changing, courts are further instructed to follow all guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control, the President and the Governor, and to further limit access to courtroom and other spaces to the maximum number of people set forth in any future guideline or official proclamation that may be issued.

4. Remote Proceedings: Courts are encouraged to conduct remote proceedings by telephone, video, teleconferencing, or any other means that do not involve in-person contact with consent of all parties and the judge. Any consent required for remote proceedings in civil matters shall not be unreasonably withheld by any party, which shall be enforced by the trial judge pursuant to the authority

granted by Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure Article 191, or as expressly provided by law.

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.lasc.org, and in the news media.

Given under our hands and seal this 11th day of January A. D., 2021, New Orleans, Louisiana.

FOR THE COURT:

Chief Justice John L. Weimer