2020 Press Releases

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THE LOUISIANA SUPREME COURT ISSUES TWO NEW COVID-19 ORDERS

New Orleans - The Louisiana Supreme Court issued two new orders dated June 5. Acting under the authority of Article V, Sections 1 and 5 of Constitution of 1974, and the inherent power of this Court, and considering the continuing Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) emergency in Louisiana, Governor John Bel Edwards' declaration of a public health emergency in Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020, renewal of state of emergency for COVID-19 and extension and modification of emergency provisions in Proclamation Numbers 74 JBE 2020 and 75 JBE 2020, President Donald Trump's declaration of a national emergency on March 13, 2020, the Order of this Court dated May 15, 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, the Louisiana Supreme Court issued the following two orders.

The first Order (/COVID19/Orders/2020-06-05_LASC_Order.pdf) addresses statewide court operations and reads as follows:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. Prior Orders: All provisions of the May 15, 2020 Order of this Court shall remain in effect except as expressly modified herein.

2. In-person proceedings: Courts continue to be authorized to conduct in-person proceedings on all matters. This authority does not extend to any matters suspended by executive action by the Governor, including but not limited to evictions. Courts must continue to 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 maybe issued. All matters should continue to be conducted with the use of video and telephone conferencing whenever possible.

3. 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 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.

The second Order (/COVID19/Orders/2020-06-05_LASC_DEADLINES.pdf) extends filing deadlines for the Louisiana Supreme Court and reads as follows:

> IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:
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> All filings which were or are due to this Court between Thursday, March 12, 2020 through Monday, June 15, 2020, shall be considered timely if filed no later than Tuesday, June 16, 2020. Parties who are unable to meet this deadline due to the COVID-19 emergency may submit motions for extensions of time, supported by appropriate documentation and argument.

"As we continue to function during the challenging times of the pandemic, we are motivated by the best interest of the citizens of Louisiana." said Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson. "We are ever mindful of their rights to continued safety as well as an accessible and fair judiciary."

REMINDER FOR ALL MEDIA:

In response to the public health emergency created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Louisiana Supreme Court is posting Orders and information from Louisiana's courts on its website, www.lasc.org (/) and www.lasc.org/COVID19 (/COVID19). We ask and encourage all who are seeking information on Louisiana courts and the COVID-19 pandemic to visit the Supreme Court's website for information.

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