Supreme Court of Colorado

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NATHAN B. COATS
CHIEF JUSTICE

SUPREME COURT OF COLORADO

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE

Order Regarding COVID-19 and Operation of Colorado State Courts

In light of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic and the continued spread of the virus throughout communities in Colorado, and in consideration of the obligation of the courts both to protect the constitutional rights and ensure the safety of the citizenry, the courts of this state can no longer continue normal operations and must for the immediately ensuing period operate on an emergency basis. Therefore, I hereby order the suspension of certain court operations and the continued provision of other essential court services throughout the state.

Effective immediately, all jury calls in state courts, with the exception of jury calls for criminal trials facing imminent speedy trial deadlines, are suspended through April 3, 2020. At that time, the continued need for further suspension will be reassessed.

Because the courts of this state are, however, tasked with protecting the basic constitutional rights of the citizens of the state and with providing a forum for addressing matters essential to their safety and wellbeing, I also order that the following classes of matters or operations may not be suspended and will continue in the state courts throughout this period:

1. Petitions for temporary civil protection orders and permanent protection order hearings;
2. Petitions for temporary emergency risk protection orders and hearings on emergency risk protection orders;
3. Crim.P. Rule 5 advisement for incarcerated persons and the initial setting of bail;
4. Revocation hearings on complaints to revoke probation involving an incarcerated defendant;

5. Proceedings necessary to protect the constitutional rights of criminal defendants including bond-related matters and plea agreements for incarcerated individuals;
6. Detention hearings for juvenile delinquency cases;
7. Shelter hearings in dependency and neglect cases or other juvenile proceedings;
8. Petitions for appointment of an emergency guardian and/or special conservator;
9. Hearings on motions to restrict parenting time and parental abduction prevention; and
10. Emergency mental health proceedings.

With regard to operations and matters that are neither designated essential nor prohibited by this order, the Chief Judges of the various districts will retain the discretion to determine whether those operations or matters are necessary to prevent a substantial risk of imminent financial hardship or imminent risk to the health, safety or welfare of any individual or the community at large.

In implementing this order, it is the expectation that the Chief Judges of the various districts will make every effort to facilitate work from remote locations and to minimize or eliminate in-person proceedings and contact.

Done at Denver, Colorado this 16th day of March, 2020.

Nathan B. Coats
Chief Justice, Colorado Supreme Court