**SUPREME COURT OF LOUISIANA**

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**O R D E R**

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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, most recently extended in Governor Edwards' announcement on February 9, 2021 extending modified Phase 2 measures until March 2, 2021, and in consideration of ongoing public health recommendations to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus and slowing the spread of the disease, including the ongoing distribution of vaccine, 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 April 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.

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

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.

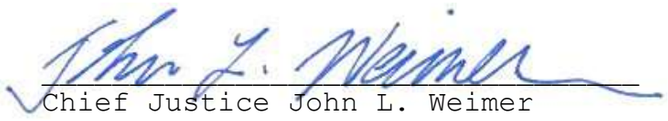
3. In-Person and Remote Proceedings: The provisions set forth in this Court's January 11, 2021 Order regarding in-person and remote proceedings remain in full force and effect.

4. Expiration of Order: Commencing on April 1, 2021, local courts will be responsible for evaluating and determining whether jury trials may be conducted safely within their jurisdictions, subject to any restrictions that might be in place at that time. Safety protocols, including strict social distancing and mask mandates, must be enforced to ensure the safety of all participants. In-custody criminal trials should take priority over all other matters when the moratorium is lifted, and potential jurors citing pandemic-related health concerns should be excused.

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 February, A. D., 2021, New Orleans, Louisiana.

FOR THE COURT:



Chief Justice John L. Weimer

HUGHES, J., dissents and would allow moratorium to expire.