FILED
MAY 06 2020
CLERK SUPREME COURT

In the Iowa Supreme Court

In the Matter of Resuming Jury Trials Postponed by Coronavirus/COVID-19

Order

The Iowa Judicial Branch continues to carefully monitor the public health situation created by the Coronavirus/COVID-19 outbreak and its impact on Iowa's justice system. The judicial branch is committed to providing access to justice for all Iowans while balancing the need to take measures to reduce the spread of the virus. In response to the public health recommendations regarding social distancing and limitations on larger gatherings of people, the supreme court continued all jury trials to a later date. At this time, criminal jury trials are scheduled to resume on July 13, 2020 and civil jury trials are scheduled to resume on August 3, 2020.

Trial by a fair and impartial jury is the touchstone of our justice system. As the Iowa Judicial Branch begins planning to resume jury trials, it seeks to develop policies and procedures to ensure parties' fundamental rights while protecting the health and safety of jurors, court staff, parties, attorneys, judges, and all Iowans who access the courthouse.

The supreme court establishes the Jumpstart Jury Trials Task Force to develop temporary policies and procedures for jury trials resuming following the COVID-19 postponements. The following individuals are appointed to the Task Force:

Honorable Matthew McDermott, Justice, Iowa Supreme Court, West Des Moines, chair

Guy Cook, private practice attorney, Des Moines, co-chair

Honorable Judge Michael Hooper, District Judge, Atlantic

Honorable Judge David Porter, District Judge, Des Moines

Angela Campbell, private practice attorney, Des Moines

Jim Craig, private practice attorney, Cedar Rapids

Janietta Criswell, Clerk of Court and Jury Manager for Keokuk, Poweshiek, and Mahaska Counties, Montezuma

Kathy Gaylord, District Court Administrator, Davenport

Mark Headlee, Director, Judicial Branch Information Technology, Des Moines

Patrick Jennings, Woodbury County Attorney, Sioux City

Julie Kneip, Clerk of Court for Bremer, Butler, Floyd, and Franklin, Waverly

Bill Miller, private practice attorney, Des Moines

Todd Nuccio, State Court Administrator, Des Moines

Jerry Schnurr, private practice attorney, Fort Dodge

Jennifer Solberg, Chief Public Defender, Sioux City

Chad Swanson, private practice attorney, Waterloo

Brian Williams, Black Hawk County Attorney, Waterloo

The Task Force will review the current schedule to resume jury trials established by the supreme court's supervisory orders and, in consultation with

public health officials and medical professionals, make a recommendation to the supreme court regarding the feasibility of that schedule.

Next, the Task Force will make recommendations to the supreme court to help facilitate decision making on how to proceed with jury trials when they resume. The Task Force shall consult with public health officials, medical professionals, county officials, and law enforcement to develop policies and procedures aimed to protect the health and safety of jurors, court staff, parties, attorneys, judges, and visitors throughout the trial process, including in particular:

1. Identification of potential jurors
2. Summons of potential jurors
3. Jury selection and voir dire
4. Trial
5. Jury instructions
6. Deliberations

These recommendations shall be submitted to the supreme court six weeks before criminal jury trials are scheduled to resume.

Task Force members may be reimbursed for necessary and reasonable travel expenses according to Iowa Court Rules 22.16 through 22.20.

Dated this 6th day of May, 2020.

THE SUPREME COURT OF IOWA

By _____
Susan Larson Christensen, Chief Justice

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