IN THE SUPREME COURT OF ALABAMA

ADMININSTRATIVE ORDER CONCERNING WORKERS' COMPENSATION CASES DURING THE PERIOD OF SUSPENSION OF IN-PERSON PROCEEDINGS

March 18, 2020

WHEREAS, an Administrative Order Suspending All In-Person Court Proceedings for the Next Thirty Days dated March 13, 2020, was issued by this Court providing that all in-person proceedings in all states and local courts in Alabama, including, but not limited to, proceedings in the circuit court, district court (including cases on the small claims docket), juvenile court, municipal court, probate court, and appellate courts, are suspended beginning Monday, March 16, 2020 through Thursday, April 16, 2020, subject to several exceptions listed in the order;

WHEREAS, since the Administrative Order dated March 13, 2020, was issued, a question has been raised pertaining to workers' compensation cases;

WHEREAS, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama is authorized pursuant to Section 12-2-30(b)(8), Ala. Code 1975, to ". . . take any such other, further or additional action as maybe necessary for the orderly administration of justice within the state, whether or not enumerated in this section or elsewhere"; and

WHEREAS, Section 25-5-12, Ala. Code 1975, provides as follows: "The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama, from time to time as he deems it is necessary, may prepare uniform rules for the circuit judges and circuit courts which may be necessary for carrying out the provisions of this chapter, including such forms for orders and judgments as said Chief Justice of the Supreme Court deems best. Such rules and forms when so prepared and promulgated by the chief justice shall be followed and used by the said judges and courts."

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama on this date, March 18, 2020, that, pursuant to the authority provided above, the following provisions pertaining to settlements in workers' compensation cases shall be in effect statewide through April 16, 2020:

(1) Any workers' compensation settlement hearing in any court may be conducted telephonically or by videoconferencing.

(2) Any workers' compensation settlement may be approved by an ombudsman of the Alabama Department of Labor or by a circuit judge. If a workers' compensation case pending in a court is settled with written approval of an ombudsman from the Alabama Department of Labor, that settlement shall result in the dismissal of the workers' compensation claim pending in court.

IT IS FURTHER DIRECTED that this Order be spread upon the minutes of the Court.

ORDERED at Chambers this the 18th day of March, 2020.

TOM PARKER
Chief Justice
Alabama Supreme Court

c: Honorable Julia Jordan Weller, Clerk of the Supreme Court
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