

FILED IN OPEN COURT

STATE OF ALABAMA)
JEFFERSON COUNTY)

This 12th day of Mar 20 20
ELISABETH A. FRENCH E.A.F.
PRESIDING CIRCUIT JUDGE

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. AO. 2020-025.01

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by Rule 5 of the Alabama Rules of Judicial Administration, as Presiding Judge of the Tenth Judicial Circuit, the following Administrative Order is entered:

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has announced that containment of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) is no longer possible and that community spread is occurring. A response plan is hereby initiated and attached hereto to mitigate the spread of the virus through the Jefferson County Courts.

In order to avoid bringing large groups of people together including individuals at higher risk (e.g. those over sixty (60) years of age, those with underlying health conditions, those who are pregnant), **jury trials previously scheduled for March 30, 2020 and April 13, 2020 are SUSPENDED.**

As to Criminal proceedings, the Court recognizes that we may face serious constitutional considerations. The Court finds that under these unique pandemic circumstances, the interests of public health and safety outweigh any Defendant's right to a speedy trial. To the extent possible, all other non-jury criminal matters and hearings may be conducted by telephone conference (or video conference if available) or continued (if appropriate) pending further Order of this Court.

Judges are encouraged to conduct Civil, Domestic and Family Court hearings by telephone conference (or video conference if available) and continue all non-emergency bench trials pending further Order of this Court.

Smart Board technology may be utilized at each Judges' discretion. Electronic filings may still be made and ruled upon through the Alacourt filing system.

This plan will be updated or vacated as new information is disseminated.

DONE and ORDERED on this the 12th day of March 2020.



ELISABETH A. FRENCH
PRESIDING JUDGE

Via Email Distribution:

Tom Parker, Chief Justice
Rich Hobson, Administrative Director of Courts
Circuit Judges
District Judges
Jacqueline Anderson Smith, Circuit Clerk
Karen Dunn Burks, Deputy Circuit Clerk, Bessemer Division
Bonita G. Conley, Court Administrator

STATE OF ALABAMA)
JEFFERSON COUNTY)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 12, 2020

COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY COURTS

The goal of this response plan is to institute a protocol to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the Jefferson County Courts. This plan is based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The CDC has announced that containment of the virus is no longer possible and that community spread is occurring. The plan may be updated as new information is disseminated.

Effective March 16, 2020, the following persons shall not enter any courtroom in Jefferson County, Alabama:

Persons who have been in any of the following countries within the last fourteen (14) days:
CHINA, SOUTH KOREA, JAPAN, ITALY, IRAN (This list may be updated.);

Persons who reside or have had close contact with someone who has been in one of the countries listed above within the last fourteen (14) days;

Persons who have been asked to self-quarantine by any doctor, hospital or health agency;


Persons who have been diagnosed with or have had contact with anyone who been diagnosed with COVID-19.

Anyone attempting entry in violation of these protocols will be denied entry by Courthouse Security Personnel.

Any person who has a hearing, trial or other appearance scheduled but is unable to appear because of the restrictions above should do as follows:

- 1- If represented by an attorney, please contact your attorney.
- 2- If you are an attorney or *Pro Se* party and you are scheduled to appear in Court, please contact the Judge's chambers. Contact Information can be found at jefferson.alacourt.gov
- 3- Jury trials previously scheduled for **March 30, 2020 and April 13, 2020** are SUSPENDED. If you are a juror, please contact Court Administration at (205) 325-5063 and (205) 325-5064.
- 4- If you are a Grand Juror, please contact Court Administration at (205) 325-5255.
- 5- For any matter not listed about, you may contact the Clerk of Court at (205) 325-5355.

These restrictions shall remain in place until modified by Order of the Presiding Judge of this Circuit.



ELISABETH A. FRENCH
PRESIDING JUDGE