

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI
16TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, STATE OF MISSOURI**

In Re: Continued Cancellation of Jury Trials Resulting from Impact of COVID-19

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2020-096

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have declared that the spread of COVID-19 has become a worldwide pandemic; and

WHEREAS, among other means, the COVID-19 virus spreads between people who are in close contact with one another through respiratory droplets; and

WHEREAS, the State of Missouri, Jackson County and various Mayors of cities in Jackson County have previously entered stay at home Orders and other emergency Orders requiring residents to remain at home except for activities essential to health and safety, and requiring businesses to cease operations unless they are considered essential businesses; and

WHEREAS, previously entered stay at home Orders and emergency Orders have been lifted or terminated and/or have been replaced with Orders allowing for the phased and gradual re-opening of society, businesses, communities and the courthouses in which the Court operates, while also including restrictions to minimize the potential spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the ending of various Stay at Home Orders and the phased re-opening of society, businesses and government, social distancing guidelines remain in effect, which guidelines recommend, suggest or require a minimum separation distance of 6 feet between people as a way to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the ending of various Stay at Home Orders and the phased re-opening of society, businesses and government, limitations on the size of groups that may gather at any one time and in any one location remain in effect, although the size of allowed gatherings continues to grow and expand; and

WHEREAS, it remains imperative that the Court continue to take steps to protect the health and safety of all employees of the Court, all judicial officers, all attorneys, all litigants, all victims, all witnesses, all prospective jurors, any other individuals or entities who have cases and hearings pending in Court and all members of the general public, while also balancing the rights of all said individuals to have their matters heard; and

WHEREAS, the Missouri Supreme Court has authorized the Presiding Judge of each Circuit to determine the timing and manner in which hearings are to be conducted and facilitate local solutions regarding the continuation and/or restoration of court operations, while also considering and maintaining a certain degree of uniformity; and

WHEREAS, the Court has been evaluating and continues to evaluate all factors that impact the timing and ability to resume jury trials and all options and mechanisms by which the Court could resume jury trials, while also continuing to evaluate appropriate steps to protect the health and safety of all employees of the Court, all judicial officers, all attorneys, all litigants, all victims, all witnesses, all prospective jurors, any other individuals or entities who have cases and hearings pending in Court and all members of the general public; and

WHEREAS, the 16th Judicial Circuit Court typically hears jury trials at the Kansas City Courthouse and the Eastern Jackson County Courthouse. Each courthouse presents different challenges and limitations that impact the ability to resume jury trials, including but not limited to the on-going construction at the Kansas City Courthouse; and

WHEREAS, the Presiding Judge of the Court has the administrative authority over dockets of the Court and the administrative and discretionary authority regarding the manner in which any hearings are conducted in the Court.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED, effective immediately and continuing through Friday, July 31, 2020, unless modified or extended in a subsequent Administrative Order, as follows:

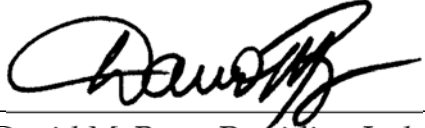
1. The Court Administrator is Ordered and authorized to suspend the impaneling of all jurors. All jury trials scheduled through August 2, 2020 are hereby continued and will be rescheduled to a later date by the judicial officer presiding over said case. At this time, jury trials commencing August 3, 2020 will proceed as scheduled.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that to the extent the directives and declarations set forth in this Administrative Order differ with the Court's prior Administrative Orders, this Administrative Order controls as to the specific terms set forth herein.

THIS ORDER MAY BE AMENDED AS CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

June 5, 2020
Date



David M. Byrn, Presiding Judge

Certificate of Service

This is to certify that a copy of the foregoing was emailed to the following on June 5, 2020.

16th Circuit Court Judiciary and Staff
Frank White, County Executive
Troy Schulte, County Administrator
Darryl Forte, Sheriff
Theresa Galvin, Legislative Chair
Mary A. Marquez, Court Administrator
Jean Peters-Baker, Prosecutor
Ruth Petsch, District Defender