

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR  
PASCO AND PINELLAS COUNTIES, FLORIDA**

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2020-008 PA/PI-CIR

**RE: CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC (COVID-19)**

Due to concerns regarding the spread and treatment of the Coronavirus, known as COVID-19, on March 1, 2020, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed executive order 20-51, declaring a public health emergency in the State of Florida. On March 13, 2020, the Florida Supreme Court issued AOSC20-346 amending the Florida Rules of Judicial Administration. Additionally, the Florida Supreme Court has issued Administrative Orders Nos. AOSC20-12 and AOSC20-13 regarding mitigating the impact of the Coronavirus on courts. The Sixth Judicial Circuit has activated its Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP), which contemplates both short term objectives (up to 90 days) and long term objectives (90 days and longer).

In order to provide for continued operations of the Court during an emergency, and in accordance with Article V, section 7, Florida Constitution, Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215, and section 43.26, Florida Statutes,

**IT IS ORDERED:**

1. Mission critical cases will continue to be handled by the Court. Mission critical cases include:
  - a. First appearance hearings pursuant to Rules of Criminal Procedure 3.130.
  - b. Detention hearings pursuant to section 985.255, Fla. Stat.
  - c. Shelter and arraignment hearings pursuant to sections 39.402 and 39.506, Fla. Stat.
  - d. Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) advisory hearings pursuant to section 39.808, Fla. Stat.
  - e. Petitions for Judicial Waiver of Notice under section 390.01114(4), Fla. Stat.
  - f. Ex parte injunctions for dating violence, domestic violence, repeat violence, sexual violence, or stalking pursuant to sections 26.20, 741.30, 784.046, and 784.0485, Fla. Stat.
  - g. Ex parte petitions for Risk Protection Orders (RPO) under Chapter 790, Fla. Stat.
  - h. Issuance of warrants or authorization for wiretaps.
  - i. Any other emergency matter such as involuntary examination orders pursuant to section 394.463, Fla. Stat., emergency medical treatment pursuant to Florida Probate Rule 5.900, or other emergencies requiring immediate action by the Court to prevent harm to persons or property. Emergency matters are not subject to easy definition. As such, the judge must determine if the law or totality of the circumstances require immediate action. In the event the judge decides the matter is not an emergency, he or she will require the matter to be set before the assigned section judge on the regular calendar after regular court operations resume.
  - j. Other time sensitive matters as determined by the judge.

2. Where possible, proceedings in mission critical matters shall be accomplished using electronic means for some or all of the participants, and/or by using social distancing methods. Mission critical matters that require one or of more participants to appear in person shall be conducted in a courtroom.
3. All grand jury proceedings, jury selection proceedings, and criminal and civil jury trials were suspended beginning March 16, 2020 until further order of this Court.
4. All other civil, family, and probate hearings may proceed as long as the hearings may be accomplished via electronic means with the exception of the mass calendars and mediations in small claims pre-trial cases; mass calendars for simplified and uncontested dissolution cases; and all Title IV-D child support cases, which are suspended beginning Monday, March 23, 2020 until further order of this Court.
5. All violence protection return hearings will be suspended beginning Monday, March 23, 2020, until further order of this Court.
6. All delinquency proceedings under Chapter 985, Fla. Stat., and Children In Need of Services/ Families in Need of Services (CINS/FINS) proceedings under Chapter 984, Fla. Stat., except detention hearings, will be suspended beginning Monday, March 23, 2020, until further order of this court.
7. All Dependency proceedings under chapter 39, Fla. Stat., except shelter, arraignment, and advisory hearings, will be suspended beginning Monday, March 23, 2020, until further order of this Court.
8. Problem solving court cases (including but not limited to Drug Court, Veteran's Court, Early Childhood Court, and other specialized calendars) will be suspended beginning Monday, March 23, 2020, until further order of this Court.
9. Juvenile Diversion and Teen Court programs have been suspended and will resume upon further order of this Court.
10. Civil and criminal traffic cases will be suspended beginning Monday, March 23, 2020, until further order of this Court.
11. All ordinance violation cases will be suspended beginning Monday, March 23, 2020, until further notice of this Court.

**DONE AND ORDERED** in Chambers at St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of March 2020.

ORIGINAL SIGNED ON MARCH 17, 2020  
BY ANTHONY RONDOLINO, CHIEF JUDGE

cc: All Judges  
The Honorable Bernie McCabe, State Attorney  
The Honorable Bob Dillinger, Public Defender  
The Honorable Nikki Alvarez-Sowles, Clerk of Court, Pasco County  
The Honorable Ken Burke, Clerk of Court, Pinellas County  
The Honorable Chris Nocco, Sheriff, Pasco County  
The Honorable Bob Gualtieri, Sheriff, Pinellas County  
Gay Inskeep, Trial Courts Administrator  
Ita M. Neymotin, Regional Counsel, Second District  
Ngozi Acholonu, Assistant Regional Counsel  
Kimberly Thompson, Director of Criminal Courts, Pasco County Clerk's Office  
Lillian Simon, Director of Administrative Services for Pasco County  
Paul Sacco, Director, Facility Management, Pinellas County  
Jewel White, County Attorney, Pinellas County  
Dan Biles, County Administrator, Pasco County  
Barry A. Burton, County Administrator, Pinellas County  
Andrew Fossa, Director, Emergency Management, Pasco County  
Cathie Perkins, Director, Emergency Management, Pinellas County  
Michael Cooksey, Director, Pinellas County Department of Justice and Consumer Services  
Chris Dudley, Circuit Administrator, Department of Corrections, Pasco and Pinellas  
Brian Berkowitz, General Counsel, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice  
Javier Enriquez, General Counsel, Department of Children and Families  
Walter Sachs, Regional Managing Director, Department of Children and Families  
Celeste Fernandez, Community Development Administrator, Department of Children and Families  
Law Enforcement Agencies, Pasco and Pinellas Counties  
Salvation Army  
C.A.S.A.  
The Haven of RCS  
Bar Associations, Pasco and Pinellas Counties  
Law Libraries, Pasco and Pinellas Counties