

SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISHES OF EAST CARROLL, MADISON AND TENSAS
CRIMINAL, CIVIL AND JUVENILE COURT OPERATIONS

VIA ZOOM AND IN PERSON PROCEEDINGS

At the discretion of the court and in consideration of the recent surge of the Coronavirus and to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus and slow the spread of the disease while balancing the need to protect the constitutional rights and public safety of the citizens of this state and the Sixth Judicial District by maintaining access to Louisiana courts and acting in accordance with the Louisiana Supreme Court Order dated May 15, 2020, Governor John Bel Edwards's renewal of the State of Emergency for COVID-19 and extension and modification of emergency provisions in Proclamation Numbers 58 JBE 2020 and 59 JBE 2020 and in consideration of ongoing public health recommendations to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus and slowing the spread of the disease while balancing the need to protect the constitutional rights and public safety of the citizens of this state and the Sixth Judicial District by maintaining access to Louisiana courts,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. **PRIOR ORDERS:** All prior orders of this court will remain in place except as expressly modified herein.
2. **CRIMINAL MATTERS:**
 - At the Judge's discretion, adult criminal 72-hour hearings, bond reductions, Gwen's Law Hearings and any matter permitted by the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 562 involving incarcerated individuals will be conducted virtually through Zoom. The Court will reconsider the in-person appearance of incarcerated individuals when the Department of Corrections lifts its transportation ban.
 - **Arraignments of incarcerated individuals** - All arraignments of incarcerated individuals are to be held via Zoom whether or not they are accepting a plea. As previously stated in this court's August 31, 2020 order, the District Attorney will establish a system whereby defense attorneys are notified at least one week in advance of a plea offer to be made at the Zoom arraignment. Within three days of the scheduled arraignment, the defense lawyer will then notify the District Attorney when the client wishes to accept the plea. The District Attorney will then place the individual on the docket and provide the written plea offers to the Judge within two days of arraignment. The District Attorney will also provide the necessary paperwork to the jail or detention center.

- **Pre-trial Conferences of incarcerated individuals** – If a plea is not offered at arraignment or the defendant does not accept the offered plea at arraignment, the defense attorney and District Attorney will communicate regarding a possible plea and when the client wishes to accept the plea. The same procedure as stated above will be followed.

- **AFTER THEIR ARRAIGNMENT, INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS WILL NO LONGER BE PLACED ON THE DOCKET UNLESS THEY ARE ACCEPTING A PLEA OR HAVE A SCHEDULED HEARING.**

- **Arraignment and pre-trial conferences of non-incarcerated individuals** – non-incarcerated individuals will follow the same system listed above for incarcerated individuals with the exception that they will appear in person.

3. **CIVIL MATTERS:** Civil hearings may be conducted virtually or in person, at the discretion of the judge. Any attorney wishing to attend by Zoom must fax a letter to the judge's office of the particular division in which the civil matter is pending. Any civil matters involving incarcerated individuals must be conducted virtually using Zoom. Children will not be allowed at civil hearings unless expressly authorized by the judge.

4. **CINC, JUVENILE AND NON-SUPPORT MATTERS:** Child in Need of Care proceedings will continue to be conducted virtually via Zoom, and at the discretion of the judge. The District Attorney, court appointed attorney and DCFS will continue to work together to provide Zoom access for all parents involved in the hearings. The Court encourages the parents' appointed attorney to have his client present with him during the proceedings.

All persons noticed to appear in other juvenile and non-support matters, must appear in-person unless instructed otherwise.

5. **GENERAL MATTERS:**

ZOOM –

- All parties entering the Zoom conference must have named their screen in such a way that their name and agency they represent is easily understood.
- The presence of anyone without consent of the court, or any recording of the video conference by unauthorized persons may be considered contempt of court.
- Proper court attire is required for Zoom court.
- All parties must be stationary and not moving about while on Zoom.
- All parties must observe proper decorum while present in Zoom court.
- Use of cell phones to make calls or text while on Zoom is prohibited.
- Those present on Zoom will be fully present and engaged.
- No one should be talking on an office or cell phone while on Zoom or conducting other business during Zoom court.

- Attorneys may stop their video when their cases are not before the court; otherwise, the camera should remain on. All non-attorney court workers' audio is to remain on mute and their video is to be turned off unless addressed by the court.
- The Zoom Docket must allow the defense attorneys time to return to their offices or an office located outside of the courtroom. The internet in our courtrooms is not strong enough to support multiple Zoom connections.

IN PERSON –

- Masks will be required for all entering the courtroom, whether vaccinated or not.
- Children will only be allowed in the courtroom with the Judge's permission.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED THAT the foregoing order shall remain in place until it is otherwise modified or dissolved by subsequent order.

THUS DONE AND SIGNED at Tallulah, this 3rd day of September, 2021.



HONORABLE LAURIE R. BRISTER
CHIEF JUDGE, DIVISION B



HONORABLE ANGELA L. CLAXTON
JUDGE, DIVISION A

SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISHES OF EAST CARROLL, MADISON AND TENSAS

IN RE: REVISED STANDING ORDER FOR FILED: _____
IN-COURT PROTOCOLS DURING
COVID-19 PANDEMIC _____

CLERK OF COURT

IN-COURT PROTOCOLS STANDING ORDER

The Court, mindful of the need to protect court staff and members of the public from unnecessary risk of exposure during the COVID-19 outbreak, issues the following standing order concerning the conduct of In-Court proceedings:

IT IS ORDERED that the following protocols are adopted:

1. The public will enter the courthouse at the entrance designated by each sheriff of his particular parish. All court personnel will enter by a separate entrance.
2. Individuals who are visibly ill will not be allowed to enter the courthouse.
3. All persons entering the courthouse and the courtroom shall wear a mask or face covering which covers the nose and mouth. This applies to all persons, whether vaccinated or not. Masks will be provided to those who do not have a mask, while supplies last.
4. Hand sanitizers will be provided at the main entrance to the courthouse as well as in the courtroom.
5. Bailiffs along with District Attorney Investigators will designate areas for those waiting to get into court and will assist in monitoring those areas.
6. Persons who are of the general public shall not come past the bar into the counsel table area unless instructed to do so by the Judge. These individuals must speak from the microphone at the podium provided.
7. All court personnel including attorneys must arrive to court by 9:00 a.m.

THUS DONE AND SIGNED at Tallulah, this 3rd day of September, 2021.



HONORABLE LAURIE R. BRISTER
CHIEF JUDGE, DIVISION B



HONORABLE ANGELA L. CLAXTON
JUDGE, DIVISION A