

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

IN RE: EXTENSION OF : No. A.D. 48-2020
JUDICIAL EMERGENCY :
THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2020 : Supreme Court Docket No. 44 MM 2020

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

AND NOW, this 19th day of October, 2020, upon consideration of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's May 27, 2020 Order specifically empowering President Judges to continue local declarations of emergency, and consistent with this Court's Orders of March 17, 2020, April 1, 2020, April 24, 2020, May 26, 2020, June 19, 2020, and August 14, 2020, it is hereby DECLARED that the Judicial Emergency in the Second Judicial District resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic is extended through **December 31, 2020**, or until further order of this Court, and, while the Courts will be open to conduct all judicial services, the Court facilities will remain closed to the general public not having business with court and court-related offices through December 31, 2020, as set forth in the protocols on the Court's Website.

It is further ORDERED that:

1. All coronavirus related safety precautions, protocols and requirements described in this Court's prior Administrative Orders will continue to remain valid and applicable to Lancaster County Court operations.
2. Criminal jury trials will continue to be held, provided they can be conducted safely and consistent with prevailing health and safety norms at the discretion of each presiding judge as facilities and resources permit. Criminal nonjury trials may be scheduled with the permission of the President Judge.

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CLERK OF COURTS

3. Statewide rules pertaining to the rule-based right of criminal defendants to a prompt trial continue to be suspended. Any postponement caused by the judicial emergency shall be considered a Court delay and shall constitute excludable time for purposes of the application of Pa.R.Crim.P. No. 600.

4. Civil jury trials scheduled through December 2020 consisting of 12 jurors plus alternates are continued generally. Civil jury trials with less than 12 jurors plus alternates may be scheduled at the discretion of the presiding judge as facilities and resources permit. Nonjury trials may be scheduled with permission of the President Judge.

5. From the date of this Order through December 31, 2020, all Court business shall be conducted subject to protocols and procedures that limit, as much as possible, all in-person access and proceedings as reasonably modified by the presiding judge in the exercise of that judge's discretion provided all safety measures herein mentioned are employed. Statewide rules that restrict, directly or indirectly, the use of advanced communication technology are hereby suspended.

6. Proceedings requiring in-person appearances may be scheduled at the discretion of the presiding judge and shall be conducted in a manner that employs all safety measures consistent with the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) guidelines.

7. Court filings shall be made by means other than in-person delivery whenever possible. Statewide rules impeding court filings by means other than in-person delivery are hereby suspended.

8. Detailed protocols for the handling of matters in each division of the Court of Common Pleas will be provided on the Court's Website.

9. Court users and the public are requested to conduct any business they have in the Courthouse by telephone, mail, email, or any other advanced communication technology whenever possible to avoid in-person contact with Courthouse personnel.

10. This Administrative Order applies only to those courts, offices, and departments under the jurisdiction of the President Judge, and is not intended to prohibit access to other court-related offices in the Lancaster County Courthouse by those members of the public who are unable to conduct their official business by means other than in person.

11. Individuals permitted access to any Court facility shall be required to maintain appropriate social distancing of at least six feet, to wear protective face masks or appropriate face coverings in common areas, and to comply with all safety directives provided by the Court or County staff.

12. For purposes of this Order, Rooms 102 and 104 of the Lancaster County Government Center at 150 North Queen Street, Lancaster, where jury trials will be held, are deemed Court facilities. All provisions regarding Court facilities contained in this and prior Administrative Orders shall apply to Rooms 102 and 104 of the Lancaster County Government Center.

13. The purpose of this Administrative Order is to continue the gradual re-opening of the Lancaster County Court system in a safe, efficient manner while adhering to CDC and DOH guidelines to protect all Court personnel, Court users and the public.

14. This Administrative Order shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect through December 31, 2020, or until further order of this Court.

Attest: Mark Karmin
-Deputy.

BY THE COURT:


DAVID L. ASHWORTH
PRESIDENT JUDGE

Copies to: Lancaster County Board of Judges
Lancaster County Magisterial District Judges
Lancaster County District Court Administrator
Lancaster County Clerk of Courts
Lancaster County Clerk of the Orphans' Court
Lancaster County Prothonotary
Lancaster County Register of Wills
Lancaster County Sheriff
Lancaster County District Attorney
Lancaster County Public Defender
Lancaster County Adult Probation & Parole Services
Lancaster County Juvenile Probation
Lancaster County Children and Youth Social Service Agency
Lancaster County Prison
Lancaster County Board of Commissioners
Lancaster County Solicitor