

Member of the Criminal Brown Bag group,

In these uncertain times I just wanted to connect with you to give you an update on what we have been doing since the courthouse has been closed to the public.

Each of the judges have been working 2 days a week to handle emergency or essential matters. We have been taking guilty pleas and doing bail motions for those who are incarcerated. Since I feel comfortable with the ZOOM platform, I have been talking with all my Mental Health, Veterans Court and Drug and DUI court groups.

My days for the rest of the month are April 13 and 15, 20 and 22, 29 and May 1. You will be receiving an email from me if your clients appear on an upcoming Arraignment or guilty plea list before me sometime through the rest of this month. As an attorney or two have reached out to see if non-incarcerated clients could dispose of cases before the rush once the Courts open back up to the public, I wanted to let you know that I will definitely be willing to accommodate.

We have made a link to the guilty plea colloquy available to all on the Courts webpage. Since we are still not allowing the public into the courthouse, you would complete the colloquy with your client and then scan or fax it to my office with a copy to the DA'S office. In my courtroom, I will be setting up a ZOOM meeting and Rhonda will email you the link so that you can participate with your client. In these times of physical distancing, I have no problem if you and your client are not together. I prefer to see your client so if they could click on the link and join the meeting with video and audio, I would greatly appreciate it.

Please always remember that if you wish to have a matter scheduled before me you must reach out to Court Administration to schedule these matters. We will not be seeing anyone in the courtroom for a plea, ARD or other disposition. If your matter may be disposed of by an order, please feel free to scan or fax it to me with any supporting material and we will take care of that as well.

These are still uncertain times. I appreciate the work that you all have been trying to do despite the difficult circumstances presented by the restrictions ordered by our Supreme Court. I believe that by offering this opportunity to you to dispose of your cases in this manner does fully comply with those orders.

So, in the words of our DOH Secretary, stay calm, stay home (if you can) and please stay safe.

Sincerely,

Honorable Nancy L. Butts, P. J.