

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LYCOMING COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: :
: MD-20-00006
29th JUDICIAL DISTRICT OPERATIONS :
DURING JUDICIAL EMERGENCY - : ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
SIXTH ORDER :

FILED
LYCOMING COUNTY
2020 AUG - 6 AM 11:26
THOMAS J. HEAL
PROthonARY

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

AND NOW, this 6th day of August 2020, pursuant to Order of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania dated May 27, 2020, and in light of ongoing public health concerns relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, the President Judge of the 29th Judicial District is hereby exercising the powers granted by the Supreme Court and ordering that **the 29th Judicial District emergency declaration is extended through September 18, 2020; and that the following provisions apply through September 18, 2020, (unless a different date is indicated below)** subject to state and federal constitutional requirements and any subsequent order by the Supreme Court:

1. In-person court proceedings and in-person access to proceedings will be limited in order to safeguard the health and safety of court personnel, court users, and members of the public.
2. The following **statewide rules are suspended**:
 - a. Rules that restrict, directly or indirectly, the use of advanced communication technologies¹; and
 - b. Rules pertaining to the rule-based right of criminal defendants to a prompt trial.
3. To the extent possible, the **Courts will decide matters on the papers and conduct proceedings utilizing advanced communication technology** in order to limit in-person contact.
4. **With the exception of jury selection and jury and non-jury trials, inmates will not be transported** from the Lycoming County Prison or Pre-release Center for court proceedings; instead, incarcerated defendants will participate by advanced communication technology unless extenuating circumstances necessitate the presiding judge to authorize transport.
5. It is strongly encouraged that **documents be filed via U.S. mail** with the office of the Lycoming County **Register and Recorder**. The document and filing fee

¹ The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania's "Second Supplemental Order" dated April 1, 2020, defines "advanced communication technology" as including but not limited to systems providing for two-way or simultaneous communication of image and sound; closed-circuit television; telephone and facsimile equipment; and electronic mail.

(check or money order only) must be in a closed envelope addressed to the filing office and a self-addressed, prepaid envelope must be enclosed for the return of a receipt for payment of filing fees and time-stamped copy of the document. If proper payment is not included, the document will be returned to the sender unfiled.

6. It is strongly encouraged that **documents be filed with the Magisterial District Courts via U.S. mail** to the applicable District Court office and **payments for fines/costs/restitution be made via U.S. mail or online at <https://ujportal.pacourts.us/PayOnline.aspx>**.
7. Effective May 18, 2020, the Magisterial District Courts resumed the processing of **evictions for which a judgment for possession was entered by the Court prior to March 27, 2020**.
8. **Safety measures** including but not limited to the following will be implemented with all in-person proceedings until further notice:
 - a. Start times will be staggered and the time between proceedings will be increased in order to minimize person-to-person contact;
 - b. Generally, **only necessary participants will be allowed entry to courtrooms and hearing rooms** in order to minimize person-to-person contact;
 - c. Participants including but not limited to litigants, defendants, attorneys, and witnesses will **wear a facemask and practice social distancing** in all areas of the Courts, including but not limited to courtrooms and waiting areas, unless the presiding judge authorizes otherwise;
 - d. Participants will **utilize the hand sanitizers** located in common areas and in courtrooms and hearing rooms; and
 - e. High-touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected as practicable throughout the day, and all surfaces will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after hours.
9. **All employees and court visitors** including but not limited to contractors and vendors will wear a **facemask and practice social distancing** until further notice.
10. All individuals entering the courthouse will be **temperature screened** and those with a temperature of 100.4 or above will be denied entry. Any individual with a scheduled court event who is denied entry shall contact the respective Court office via telephone as soon as possible for further instruction.
11. Court employees will not attend off-site conferences or trainings until further notice.
12. Court events and meetings will be rescheduled or held via advanced communication technology until further notice.

13. Individuals on supervision will not report to the **Adult Probation Office** until further notice. Adult Probation will supervise individuals in the field or via advanced communication technology. Those individuals under supervision who have questions should contact their assigned probation officer.
14. Juveniles on supervision will report to the **Juvenile Probation Office** only as directed to do so until further notice. Those juveniles under supervision who have questions should contact their assigned probation officer.
15. The **Domestic Relations Office** will take measures to limit the number of individuals reporting to its office until further notice. Those with questions should contact the Domestic Relations Office for additional information.
16. These guidelines are fluid and continually subject to change as additional information becomes available. Questions or concerns should be directed to the Office of the District Court Administrator at 570-327-2330 or to the applicable Magisterial District Court.

By the Court,



Honorable Nancy L. Butts, President Judge

cc: Nancy L. Butts, President Judge
Adrienne J. Stahl, District Court Administrator
Board of Commissioners
Matthew A. McDermott, Director of Administration
Stephanie Tribble, Director of the Domestic Relations Office
Edward McCoy, Chief Adult Probation Officer
Edward Robbins, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer
Tom Heap, Prothonotary/Clerk of Courts
Dave Huffman, Register and Recorder
Ryan C. Gardner, District Attorney
Nicole Spring, Chief Public Defender
Mark Lusk, Sheriff
MDJ Aaron S. Biichle
MDJ Christian D. Frey
MDJ Jon E. Kemp
MDJ Jerry C. Lepley
MDJ William C. Solomon
MDJ Gary A. Whiteman
Lycoming Law Association
North Penn Legal Services
Wise Options
CYS
MHID