

20 R 806

Detailed Memo AMENDED on December 11, 2020

FILED

To: Members of the 18<sup>th</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> Judicial District/Bar

2020 DEC 11 P 4:19

From: Honorable John O. Craig, Senior Resident Superior Court Judge  
Honorable Teresa H. Vincent, Chief District Court Judge  
District Attorney Avery Crump  
Public Defender John Nieman  
Clerk of Superior Court Lisa Johnson-Tonkins

GUILFORD CO., C.S.C  
BY 

Chief Justice Cheri Beasley entered an order on December 11, 2020, implementing measures designed to curb the spread of COVID-19 and minimize the risk of exposure caused by crowded sessions of court. Consistent with the Chief Justice’s order, effective Monday, December 14, 2020, superior court and district court proceedings of the 18<sup>th</sup> /24<sup>th</sup> Judicial District will be rescheduled for at least 30 days, with limited exceptions, which appear on the following pages.

The emergency directive of the Chief Justice does not apply to proceedings in which a jury has already been empaneled and it does not prohibit a judge or other judicial officer from exercising in chambers or *ex parte* jurisdiction conferred by law upon that judge or judicial officer, as provided by law. Additionally, the emergency directive *does not extend filing and other deadlines.*

***Court offices in the Guilford County Courthouses and Justice Center will remain open for business.*** However, unless you are required to appear in-person to conduct your business, attorneys and the public are strongly encouraged to use email and telephone to communicate with staff of the Eighteenth Judicial District.

Online court services are available for handling some court business, including citation services, paying your ticket, court payments, signing up for court date notifications and reminders, e-Filing court documents for certain courts and case types, and more.

**Clerk of Superior Court**

- Involuntary Commitments will be conducted as needed, subject to necessary precautions, including, but not limited to video testimony.
- Guardianship Hearings will be conducted as needed, subject to necessary health precautions, as determined by the Clerk of Court
- Maintain normal office hours to for filings unless otherwise notified
- Estate Administration matters will be conducted. However, person to person interactions will be limited if health concerns arise, as determined by the Clerk of Court.
- Estate hearings will be postponed for thirty days unless the parties consent to the matter being heard remotely.
- Special Proceeding hearings will be postponed for thirty days unless the parties consent to conduct a hearing at a remote location.

## Magistrate and Small Claims

- The Greensboro and High Point magistrate offices will operate as normal for Warrants for Arrest, Magistrate's Orders, Criminal Summons, Initial Appearances, Cash Bonds/Property Bonds, Involuntary Commitment Orders, Juvenile Petitions and Secured and Non-Secured Custody Orders.
- All Small Claims in-person court proceedings are suspended. Unless remote hearings are scheduled, pending matters will be continued and rescheduled.
- Magistrates will continue to conduct marriage ceremonies except in the jails.

## District Court

- Maintain normal office hours, unless otherwise notified
- Judges will have office hours and will be available to consider *Ex-Parte* Emergency Custody request(s) and other matters, if appropriate, that may be addressed *ex parte*, such as a Motion to Recall an Order for Arrest.

## Civil Domestic Violence Court

- Courtrooms 2A (GSO- formerly in 2B) and 3A (High Point) will operate as normal handling domestic violence *ex-parte* matters and return hearings (remotely), unless otherwise indicated.

## Civil/Domestic District Courts

- Emergency custody hearings will also be handled in courtroom 2A (formerly 2B) & 3A (Hpt) remotely.
- Civil Courtrooms 2E and 3A (in GSO & Hpt) will be open for remote hearings or assistance with courtroom 2B.
- Special Settings – Please contact the Trial Court Coordinator (Mrs. Stephanie Wallace in Greensboro, NC or Mrs. Pat Dixon in High Point, NC) within ten to fourteen days to schedule remote hearing.

## Criminal/Traffic District Court

- Courtroom 1C & 3C (Criminal Courts in GSO & Hpt.) will be closed and cases will be continued, except as otherwise indicated.
- Courtroom 1D (Traffic Court) will be closed and cases will be continued.
- Remote Traffic Court shall continue as scheduled.
- Courtroom 2C will be operating as normal for First Appearances/Bond Motions and will be available for in-custody probation violations and other misdemeanor criminal jail cases (preferably older cases) on Tuesdays and Thursdays (beginning December 15<sup>th</sup> and December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.). The number of cases will be limited based on the time constraints. Attorneys are required to submit request to the District Attorneys office to calendar misdemeanor criminal jail pleas.

- Courtroom 3C (High Point) will be closed, except on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning December 15<sup>th</sup> and December 17<sup>th</sup> from 9:00-12:30 for in-custody probation violations & misdemeanor criminal jail cases. The number of cases will be limited based on the time constraints. Attorneys are required to submit request to the District Attorney's office to calendar misdemeanor criminal jail pleas.
- First Appearances will be held at 2:00 pm in Greensboro and High Point, NC.

#### **Juvenile Abuse Neglect & Dependency Court/Delinquency Court**

- Courtrooms are open only for felony first appearances, non-secure or secured custody hearings and any other matters to be held remotely as scheduled, to include adjudications, etc. Otherwise, cases will be continued.

#### **Child Support Court**

- In Courtroom 2B (formerly in 2A), jail cases will be addressed daily unless they are addressed on the First Appearance docket. Otherwise, cases will be continued for a minimum of thirty (30) days.

#### **Specialty Courts**

- Specialty Courts (Adult DTC, Mental Health Court and Juvenile DTC) will operate remotely in accordance with the current schedule, unless otherwise notified.

#### **Arbitrations**

- All District Court Arbitrations will be rescheduled for a minimum of thirty (30) days, unless remote hearings are scheduled.

#### **Mediation Program**

- Orientation sessions will be presented online.
- Mediations will be handled remotely.

#### **Judicial Waivers/Hospitalizations**

- Cases will be heard as usual and shall be held remotely if feasible.

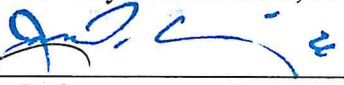
## Superior Court

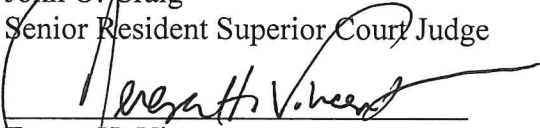
Superior Court Criminal sessions are suspended over the next thirty (30) days, with the exception of the regularly-scheduled weeks of probation violation court. Those hearings will be limited to bond motions, in-custody probation violations, and probation probable cause hearings.

The Guilford County Grand Jury proceedings will be postponed until after Monday, January 14, 2021.

Superior Court Civil trials are suspended until Monday, January 14, 2021. Civil motions may proceed as scheduled via WebEx or other remote video conferencing platforms. Attorneys are to coordinate the video conference details with the trial court coordinators.

This the 11<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2020.

  
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John O. Craig  
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge

  
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Teresa H. Vincent  
Chief District Court Judge, 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District