



FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISHES OF: ACADIA, LAFAYETTE, VERMILION

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**15TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT'S FIFTH SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY ORDER RELATIVE TO COVID-19
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PARISHES OF ACADIA, LAFAYETTE AND VERMILION**

In light of the COVID-19 public health emergency, the state of emergency declaration issued by Governor John Bel Edwards on March 13, 2020, the additional measures contained in his Proclamation JBE 2020-30 issued on March 16, 2020, and his Proclamation 33 JBE 2020-30 issued on March 22, 2020 closing all state offices and ordering persons to remain at home except in emergencies and his additional Order of March 30, 2020 extending his previous orders until at least April 30, 2020 and his order of April 27, 2020 extending his previous order until May 15, 2020, the Orders of the Louisiana Supreme Court of April 6, 2020, April 22, 2020 and April 29, 2020; the emergency declarations issued by Lafayette Mayor President Josh Guillory on March 15, 2020 and March 16, 2020 which ordered the minimization of access to certain public buildings in Lafayette Parish and his extension of those orders to such time as the Governor rescinds his emergency declaration; the Fifteenth Judicial District Court extends and supplements its Emergency Orders Relative to COVID-19 issued on March 15, 2020, March 19, 2020 and March 23, 2020, March 31, 2020 and April 8, 2020 and issues the following additional Order for the Parishes of Acadia, Vermilion and Lafayette:

COURTHOUSE ACCESS

In Lafayette and Vermilion parishes, the courthouses shall be closed to the public except to provide services in the following categories:

- Civil domestic protective orders under title 46:2131 (Domestic violence), 46:2181(Post-Separation family violence) and 9:361(Sexual abuse)
- Emergency child custody matters pursuant to La. C.C.P. Article 3945
- Proceedings for children removed from their home by emergency court order
- Emergency interdiction/commitment matters

In Lafayette and Vermilion Parishes, persons seeking civil domestic protective orders under Title 46:2131(Domestic Violence), 46:2181(Post Separation Family Violence) and 9:361(Sexual Abuse) and emergency child custody matters pursuant to La. C.C.P. Article 3945 shall make application for such between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM at the appropriate courthouse.

In Acadia parish, the Clerk of Court's office will accept between the hours of 8:30 AM and 4:00 PM filings for:

- Civil domestic protective orders under title 46:2131 (Domestic violence), 46:2181(Post-Separation family violence) and 9:361(Sexual abuse)
- Emergency child custody matters pursuant to La. C.C.P. Article 3945
- Proceedings for children removed from their home by emergency court order
- Emergency interdiction/commitment matters

The Clerk of Court of Acadia Parish will accept in person filings in other matters from the public using the following procedure:

- Only people with direct business with the Acadia clerk of court will be admitted. No companions allowed.
- Those seeking admission to the Acadia clerk of court's office must wear a face mask or covering.
- A limited number of individuals will be allowed in at any one time, so people will be screened at the entrance to the courthouse before they are admitted.
- The clerk of court reserves the right to refuse in person filing at any time if he deems it advisable for the health and safety of his employees and to require filings be left in the Clerk drop box outside of the Acadia courthouse.

CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

Adult criminal 72 hour hearings, bond reductions, including Gwen's Law hearings and arraignments for incarcerated individuals will be conducted via telephone or video conference, as well as any other proceeding authorized by code of Criminal Procedure Article 562.

Juvenile bond hearings and initial appearances will be conducted via telephone or video conference.

Anyone who has missed a criminal court date due to the COVID-19 stay at home order between March 16, 2020 and May 15, 2020 will be required to appear for service of a new court date in accordance with the schedule to be posted on the 15th JDC website, www.15thjdc.org as soon as the Stage One reopening is announced by the governing authority.

CIVIL PROCEEDINGS

All civil hearings, including Motions for Summary Judgment are to be conducted by video or telephone conference, unless show good cause can be shown otherwise. Communications will be sent from each judge's office concerning scheduling of video conferences. If you do not receive communication, contact the presiding judge's office. Rules regarding video conferencing are posted on the court's website, www.15thjdc.org. This video procedure in civil hearings is expected to continue beyond the end of the stay at home order.

CHILD IN NEED OF CARE PROCEEDINGS

Child in Need of Care cases will proceed via Zoom conference and, in special circumstances, may proceed by emergency in-person hearing.

GENERAL RULES

Any member of the public allowed entry into the courthouse in Acadia, Vermilion or Lafayette Parish shall wear a mask or other face covering which shall completely cover the mouth and face.

Individuals may continue to contact a judge's office with whom they have business by telephone or email only.

As per orders of the Louisiana Supreme Court, all jury trials, criminal or civil, scheduled to commence prior to June 30, 2020 will be continued and reset.

All matters set forth in all previous orders regarding special fixings, as well as all orders which are not in conflict with this Order, shall remain in effect. This Order shall be effective through 12 A.M. on May 16, 2020.

Issued on April 30, 2020 at Lafayette, Louisiana.



MARILYN C. CASTLE
Chief Judge, 15th Judicial District Court