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COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
TUSCARAWAS COUNTY, OHIO

2020 MAR 17 AM 11:54

JEANNE M. STEPHEN  
CLERK OF COURTS

In the Court of Common Pleas,  
General Trial Division  
Tuscarawas County, Ohio

Case number: 2020 SP 01 0001

**Temporary Orders in Response to the  
COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Public Health Crisis**

The Judges of the General Trial Division of the Tuscarawas County Court of Common Pleas make the following Findings of Fact:

1. On March 9, 2020 Ohio Governor Mike DeWine issued Executive Order 2020-01D Declaring a State of Emergency in response to the growing COVID-19 public health crisis.
2. On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 to be a global pandemic requiring urgent and aggressive action to control the spread of the virus.
3. On March 14, 2020 a community transfer positive case of COVID-19 in the State of Ohio was confirmed in Tuscarawas County.


Based upon these Findings of Fact, the General Trial Division of the Court of Common Pleas has developed a continuum of flexible responses should the public health crisis escalate. The continuum of responses is intended to protect public health, to maintain essential court functions, and to continue to protect the rights of all individuals subject to the authority of the Court.

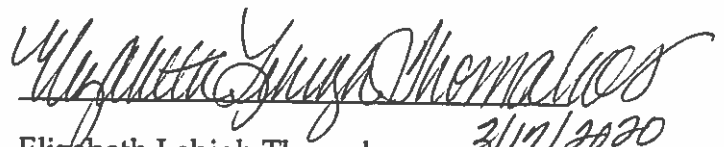
**Given the severity of the health risk to the public and Governor's Declaration, it is ordered effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020, as follows:**

1. The court will be closed to public access but will maintain mission-essential court operations and functions subject to further orders of the Court.

2. All civil and criminal trials, mediation conferences, all non-essential hearings, probation officer-offender meetings, and treatment sessions are suspended until April 6, 2020.
3. This order does not affect the Court's consideration of civil and criminal motions that can be resolved without oral hearings. The Court will continue to hold criminal pretrials by telephone and select criminal hearings where the defendant is appearing by video from the jail.
4. The Court will maintain common sense procedures in dealings with the members of the bar and the public such as social distancing as appropriate and conducting our business remotely, such as telephone conferences/hearings, etc., when practical to reduce personal contact.
5. The Court will work with security staff to screen and identify sick individuals who will be entering the courthouse and take appropriate actions to ensure a healthy environment.
6. The Local Rules of Practice may be temporarily modified to allow Court flexibility, within Constitutional limits, in response to the public health emergency.
7. The Court's security policies may be temporarily modified or supplemented to protect public health while maintaining essential court functions.
8. The Court's employee personnel manual provisions may be temporarily modified to maintain essential court operations and functions.
9. The Court authorizes the use of audiovisual devices and technologies for all actions and proceedings.
10. The Clerk of Court accepts fax filings to 330-343-4682 and emailed filings to [clerkfiling@co.tuscarawas.oh.us](mailto:clerkfiling@co.tuscarawas.oh.us). These will be accepted notwithstanding the published rule regarding court cost deposits. The Clerk will also accept dropped off documents at the Tuscarawas County Treasurer's drive through window. Questions for the Clerk are directed to 330-365-3243.

11. Public access to court records remains open. All inquiries should be directed to the Clerk of Court.
12. The public health emergency may be considered to be a finding of good cause for continuances deemed necessary by assigned Judges on a case-by-case basis.
13. When the public health emergency subsides the court shall enter an order declaring an end to the emergency and resumption of normal operations.
14. The Court will have the lawful authority, within constitutional limits, to do and direct to be done all things necessary to ensure the orderly and efficient administration of justice for the duration of the declared public health emergency.

  
Edward Emmett O'Farrell *3/17/2020*  
Administrative Judge

  
Elizabeth Lehigh Thomakos *3/17/2020*  
Presiding Judge

CC: Clerk of Court, Judge Linda Kate, Tuscarawas County Sheriff, Prosecutor, Public Defender, CSEA, Tuscarawas County Job and Family Services, Bar Association, COMPASS, Inc., Local Media

