

In the Indiana Supreme Court

In the Matter of the Petition of the
Courts of Putnam County for
Administrative Rule 17 Emergency Relief.

Supreme Court Case No.
20S-CB-191



Order

The Courts of Putnam County *en banc* have petitioned this Court for emergency relief pursuant to Indiana Administrative Rule 17. The petition states that because of 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19), a State emergency has been declared; that the Governor has recommended that limiting non-essential gatherings to no more than 50 people and the Center for Disease Control has recommended limiting non-essential gatherings to no more than ten people; and that the Putnam County schools have closed through at least April 6, 2020. It appears that this emergency will inhibit litigants' and courts' ability to comply with statutory deadlines and rules of procedure. The Honorable Matthew L. Headley has been appointed as the presiding Judge for this emergency.

The Court finds that good cause exists for granting emergency relief.

Being duly advised, the Court GRANTS the petition, DECLARES pursuant to Indiana Administrative Rule 17 that an emergency exists in Putnam County, and APPROVES the plan as submitted. The Court further ORDERS as follows to ensure the orderly and fair administration of justice during this emergency, effective **March 18, 2020**:

1. The Court authorizes the tolling, from the effective date of this order **through May 1, 2020** of all laws, rules, and procedures setting time limits for speedy trials in criminal and juvenile proceedings, public health, and mental health matters; all judgments, support, and other orders; and in all other civil and criminal matters before the Courts of Putnam County. Further, no interest shall be due or charged during this tolled period.
2. This Court authorizes immediate suspension of all criminal and civil jury trials, including those with a "fast and speedy" setting requested, through **May 1, 2020**. The Courts of Putnam County are directed to review **no later than April 17, 2020** whether continued suspension is necessary; and if it is not, to resume jury trials **no later than May 1, 2020** to allow adequate notification of the jury pool. If the Courts of Putnam County believe continued suspension is necessary, they may petition this Court to extend the suspension.

3. **Through May 1, 2020**, the courts of Putnam County are authorized to continue all non-essential hearings in their discretion, to the extent consistent with the parties' constitutional rights.
4. The Courts of Putnam County shall file a status update **no later than April 27, 2020** to inform this Court of whether there is an ongoing need for emergency relief.

Done at Indianapolis, Indiana, on 3/19/2020.



Loretta H. Rush
Chief Justice of Indiana