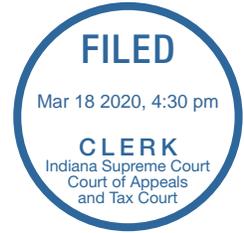


In the  
**Indiana Supreme Court**



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

Supreme Court Case No.  
20S-CB-158

Trial Court Case No.  
41C01-2003-CB-000004

**Order**

The courts of Johnson County *en banc* have petitioned this Court for emergency relief pursuant to Indiana Administrative Rule 17. The petition and amended petition report that a public health emergency has been declared in Indiana concerning the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19); Johnson County has confirmed three cases of COVID-19 as of March 16, 2020; and the Indiana State Department of Health has strongly recommended that non-essential gatherings of 50 people or more be postponed or cancelled. It appears from the petition that this emergency is likely to inhibit litigants' and courts' ability to comply with statutory deadlines and rules of procedure. The Honorable Peter D. Nugent has been appointed as the presiding Judge for this emergency.

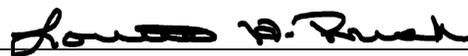
The Court finds that good cause exists for granting emergency relief.

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

1. The Court authorizes the tolling, from the effective date of this order **through April 13, 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 Johnson 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 **April 13, 2020**. The courts of Johnson County are directed to review **no later than March 28, 2020** whether continued suspension is necessary; and if it is not, to resume jury trials **no later than April 13, 2020** to allow adequate notification of the jury pool. If the courts of Johnson County believe continued suspension is necessary, they may petition this Court to extend the suspension.

3. **Through April 13, 2020**, this Court authorizes the Johnson County courts, in their discretion, to continue all hearings they deem non-essential.
4. **Through April 13, 2020**, the courts of Johnson County are authorized, in their discretion and subject to applicable Constitutional limitations, to hold civil hearings via telephonic or video conferencing.
5. **Through April 13, 2020**, the courts of Johnson County are authorized, in their discretion and subject to applicable Constitutional limitations, to conduct criminal hearings involving incarcerated defendants via remote access.
6. **Through April 13, 2020**, the courts of Johnson County are authorized, in their discretion and subject to applicable Constitutional limitations, to limit spectators (other than parties to the litigation and their attorneys) in courtrooms to the extent necessary to provide adequate social distancing.
7. **Through April 13, 2020**, the courts of Johnson County may consider (a) the existence of flu or flu-like symptoms in any attorney, self-represented litigant, or witness expected to testify; or (b) exposure of such individuals to anyone who has or may have COVID-19; to constitute “good cause” to either appear remotely or continue a court setting, to the extent possible without violating statutory or constitutional rights.
8. **Through April 13, 2020**, the courts of Johnson County are authorized to reduce the number of court staff members working and/or to permit working remotely if feasible; provided, however, that the courts shall maintain sufficient operations to process emergency matters.
9. The courts of Johnson County shall file a status update **no later than April 6, 2020** to inform this Court of whether there is an ongoing need for emergency relief.

Done at Indianapolis, Indiana, on 3/18/2020.



---

Loretta H. Rush  
Chief Justice of Indiana