

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS FOR THE 39<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
Franklin County and Fulton County Branches

2020-1129

In Re: 39th Judicial District

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Emergency Judicial Order

57 MM 2020

TIMOTHY S. SPONSELLER  
PROTHONOTARY  
FRANKLIN COUNTY, PA  
JD

2021 APR 21 PM 2:35

PROTHONOTARY  
FRANKLIN COUNTY, PA

Amended Emergency Judicial Order

And now this 21<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2021,

**WHEREAS**, this court entered an Amended Emergency Judicial Order on December 28, 2020, extending the judicial emergency due to the ongoing presence of the Covid-19 virus in the 39<sup>th</sup> Judicial District until April 30, 2021;

**AND WHEREAS**, the undersigned has continued to monitor the status of the virus in the district including the positivity rate, impacts on the local health systems and the distribution of the various vaccines;

**For the foregoing reasons the undersigned President Judge does decree and  
IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

**AND NOW** this 21<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2021,

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that effective May 1, 2021:

- A. The Judicial Emergency shall be extended until July 1, 2021.
- B. Covid-19 screening protocols will be asked and answered at all court facilities for admission and continuances will be granted in cases where the court is advised of Covid-19 exposures of persons having business with the courts.
- C. Masks will be worn in court facilities and, where possible, social distancing will be observed.
- D. There shall be no more limits on the number of persons admitted to the courthouses, court facilities or courtrooms except, as follows:
  - 1. Block scheduling will continue to be utilized by Court Administration in coordination with the Board of Judges and Magisterial District Judges to maintain contact tracing protocols and social distancing when possible, in all court facilities.

ATTEST: TRUE COPY  
  
TIMOTHY S. SPONSELLER PROTHONOTARY

2. Hourly admissions for criminal proceedings at the Common Pleas level and Central Court will be capped at no more than 15 defendants per hour for Miscellaneous Court, Call of the List, Pre-Trial Conferences and Central Court. The actual number per hour will be established by Court Administration, the Board of Judges, and Magisterial District Judges, based upon available court rooms.

3. Support Court will have no more than 15 Defendants/Obligors per hour; Custody & PFA proceedings will have no more than 20 litigants combined (Plaintiff, Defendant or Intervenors) per hour.

E. Any criminal defendants transported from any jail or DOC facility will be managed by the Sheriff so as to not violate any quarantine protocols existing at the facility in place at the time of the incarcerated person's transport. In Franklin County, if resources permit, the court, Sheriff and jail staff will coordinate scheduled proceedings to allow for "Block" processing of inmates who are detained in the Franklin County Jail for in court appearances while maintaining quarantine protocols.

F. ACT may be utilized by any judge/hearing officer or conciliator in any proceeding at their discretion so as to afford access to justice and preserve due process.

G. Alternate facilities will continue to be utilized to afford social distancing for proceedings where possible, especially for jury selections, so as to minimize the possibility of super spreader events and minimize the need for contact tracing in the event of an exposure.

H. Hearing officers and Conciliators shall resume in person proceedings while adhering to the criteria set forth in this order.

I. To the extent possible, persons who are not witnesses or are simply accompanying a litigant are asked to forego entering a court facility to help minimize the number of persons within each facility.

Effective May 1, 2021 all restrictions or limitations previously set forth in any prior Emergency Judicial Order are discontinued and terminated.

Signed:



P.J.

Dated:



Dist:

Board of Judges

Court Administration

Magisterial District Judges

Tim Sponseller, Franklin Co. Prothonotary

Todd Rock, Franklin Co. Clerk of Courts

Linda Miller, Franklin Co. Register and Recorder

Patty Fix, Fulton Co. Prothonotary/Clerk/Register & Recorder

Franklin Co. Sheriff Dane Anthony

Fulton Co. Sheriff Keith Stains

Chief Douglas Wilburne – Franklin Co. Probation/Parole

Chief Richard Ackerman – Franklin Co. Juvenile Probation

Chief Dan Miller – Fulton Co. Adult & Juv. Probation/Parole

Franklin Co. District Attorney, Matt Fogal

Franklin Co. Public Defender, Casey Bogner

Fulton Co. District Attorney Travis Kendall

Fulton Co. Public Defender Phil Harper

Conflict Counsel: S. Kulla, Esq.; E. Weisbrod, Esq.; K. Taccino, Esq.

Franklin & Fulton Co. Commissioners

Masters/Hearing Officers/Conciliators