

**In the Circuit Court of Maryland
For Dorchester County**

Administrative Order

2020-02

WHEREAS the World Health Organization has declared the Novel Coronavirus, more particularly identified as COVID-19, a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a highly communicable viral disease which has a death rate ten times higher than seasonal influenza; and

WHEREAS, the Maryland Judicial Council was briefed about COVID-19 by Secretary Robert Neall of the Maryland Department of Health on March 11, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Secretary Neall reported that the only known control measure for COVID-19 is “social distancing”, which means to limit close contact between humans to the extent possible to prevent exposure to the virus; and

WHEREAS, this Court has a duty to protect both court staff and the general public from the spread of COVID-19;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED this 12th day of March, 2020, as follows:

- 1. That the following persons (INCLUDING STAFF) may not enter the Dorchester County Circuit Courthouse without prior permission from either Administrative Judge Brett W. Wilson or Clerk of Court Amy J. Craig:**
 - a. Persons who have been outside the United States in the last 14 days;**

- b. Persons who have been in any part of the United States where COVID-19 is widespread;**
 - c. Persons who reside or have had close contact with someone who has been in the locations set forth in a. and b. above within the last 14 days;**
 - d. Persons who have been asked to self-quarantine by any doctor, hospital, or health agency;**
 - e. Persons who have been diagnosed with, or have had contact with, anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19;**
 - f. Persons who have any symptoms of COVID-19, including fever, cough, shortness of breath, or breathing difficulty; and**
- 2. The Dorchester County Sheriff’s Department deputies shall deny entry into the courthouse to anyone attempting to enter who meet any of the above criteria; and**
- 3. If you are scheduled or required to appear at the Dorchester County Circuit Courthouse and are unable to enter because of the restrictions in this Order, you are directed to proceed as follows:**
 - a. If you are represented by an attorney, please contact your attorney by telephone or email;**
 - b. If you are an attorney and you are scheduled to appear in court before a judge or magistrate, please contact the judge’s chambers by telephone - 410-228-6300; fax - 410-221-5003; or email - missy.gallagher@mdcourts.gov or kyle.grusholt@mdcourts.gov;**
 - c. If you are a self-represented litigant, contact the office of the Clerk of Court by telephone - 410-228-0480; fax - 410-228-1860; or email – amy.craig@mdcourts.gov;**

- d. If you have business with the Clerk of Court, contact the office of the Clerk of Court by telephone - 410-228-0480; fax – 410-228-1860; or email – amy.craig@mdcourts.gov;
 - e. If you have business with the Jury Commissioner, contact the office of the Jury Commissioner by telephone - 410-228-9840; fax – 410-221-0315; or email - Deborah.sturgis@mdcourts.gov;
 - f. If you have business with the Register of Wills, contact the office of the Register of Wills by telephone - 410-228-4181; fax - 410-228-4988; or email – dlewis@registers.maryland.gov; and
- 4. That jury trials are suspended until further notice; and
 - 5. That meetings in the courthouse which involve outside agencies are suspended until further notice; and
 - 6. These restrictions will remain in place until the health emergency has passed and a formal Order rescinding this Order is entered; and
 - 7. This Order may be supplemented or modified as conditions may warrant; and
 - 8. Any violations of this Order may be punishable by contempt proceedings and/or any other sanction permitted by law.

Brett W. Wilson, Administrative
Judge

3.12.20

Date