

To: All Members of the Bar and General Public  
From: Judge Beigel  
Re: **Temporary Changes in Probate & Juvenile Court Operations**  
Date: March 17, 2020

Attention Members of the Bar and General Public:

In light of recent mandates by Governor Dewine and in an effort to do our part in “social distancing” while maintaining court operations, the **Probate & Juvenile Division** of the Shelby County Common Pleas is implementing the following changes, *effective immediately and continuing until further notice*:

- The Probate and Juvenile Clerks offices will not take in-person filings, including, but not limited to, original complaints, pleadings, writs, petitions, proposed orders, certification and document requests, etc. All filings with the Probate or Juvenile Clerk’s offices are to be made by **U.S. MAIL, FACSIMILE, OR EMAIL**. The originals of all fax or email filings or must be available for inspection at any time by the Court or opposing counsel/party. Failure to maintain the original for later filing or inspection may result in the filed copy being stricken from the record.

When the filing of original documents are required (ex: Last Will and Testaments, Birth Certificates, etc.) they may be mailed to the Court, along with any applicable fee. If there are any concerns regarding the mailing of the original, an Attorney may submit a copy along with a signed certification by the Attorney that the original is in the Attorney’s possession and will be available for later filing and inspection once these procedures are no longer in place.

The following exceptions apply to Court access:

- Persons of the general public applying for juvenile civil protection orders or filing a mental illness affidavit.
- Title searchers who need access to the Probate Clerk’s area for their purposes.
- Attorneys who need to pick up their mail located in the Probate Clerk’s office for the next 7 days. Thereafter the Clerk will not be using those mail slots.
- Parents, custodians and/or guardians and children who scheduled and required to be present at hearings.
- Required participants in abuse, neglect and dependency matters for scheduled hearings.
- Law enforcement requests for search warrants.
- Parties applying for a marriage license who have fully completed their application online through Probate Court’s website, and who need to appear at the Clerk’s Office to complete the process of providing proof of ID and, if applicable, their prior divorce/dissolution and paying the \$76 cash fee. The Court will not be performing marriage ceremonies until further order.

- Any other exception permitted by the Court on a case-by-case basis. Please call the Juvenile or Probate Clerk's office for questions.
- Unless otherwise requested, all return mailings from the Court shall use the same method by which the filings were delivered to the Court. For instance, if the filings are faxed to the Court file stamped and processed copies will be faxed back to the party filing, when required (with the exception of documents requiring a court seal and/or certification).
- During this time, all required monetary payments or deposits, including original filings and any other payments, are to be paid by check or money order and delivered to the Court by the US Mail to Post Office Box 4187, Sidney, Ohio 45365. Cases requiring filing fees will not be completed for processing until payment is received. The Court may consider exceptions to this, upon request, in the event of an emergency.
- **All U.S. Mailings, Federal Express or similar services** should be addressed to the Probate Court or Juvenile Court and mailed to Post Office Box 4187, Sidney, Ohio 45365.
- **All fax filings** should be sent to 937-498-7260 and should include a cover letter identifying whether it is for the Probate or Juvenile Court. During this time, all fees normally charged for *fax filing* are waived. (This does not affect all other costs). During this time, there will be no page restrictions for *fax filing* (all other page restrictions, if any, continue to apply).
- **All e-mail filings** should be sent to [juvenileprobate@shelbycoprobate.org](mailto:juvenileprobate@shelbycoprobate.org) and should include a cover letter identifying whether it is for the Probate or Juvenile Court.
- Attorneys and the public are reminded that records are available on our Court websites. If there is a request for a certified records those request can be made by the correspondence methods described.
- Unless otherwise ordered or requested, all pre-trials in the Probate and Juvenile Courts shall be conducted by phone between the attorneys at the scheduled times with a written report of the pretrial to be submitted to the Court with 24 hours of the pretrial. The Court will establish further procedures based on particular case circumstances and types of cases. The Court will participate in a pre-trial upon timely request.
- Please contact the Court prior to any currently scheduled hearing for any case specific concerns.

\*\* These changes in practice are subject to change at any time. Thank you for your assistance and patience as we strive to navigate these difficult and unfamiliar waters.

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
PROBATE & JUVENILE DIVISION  
SHELBY COUNTY, OHIO**

2020 ADM 00001

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PROBATE DIVISION  
SHELBY COUNTY, OHIO  
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**TEMPORARY ORDER IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19  
(CORONAVIRUS) PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS**

The undersigned Common Pleas Judge of the Shelby County Probate and Juvenile Court makes 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 13, 2020 the Board of the Shelby County Commissioners determined it necessary to issue an urgent Shelby County Employee Coronavirus Policy to address the emergency situation.

Based upon these Findings of Fact, the Probate & Juvenile Court has developed a continuum of flexible responses in case the public health crisis escalates. 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.

**THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:**

1. The Local Rules of the Court may be temporarily adapted by the Court to allow flexibility, within Constitutional limits, in response to the public health emergency.
2. The security policies of the Court may be temporarily amended or supplemented by the Court to protect public health while maintaining essential court functions.
3. The Employee Handbook provisions of the Court may be temporarily adjusted by the Court to maintain essential Court operations and functions.
4. The Court is authorized to use audiovisual devices and technologies for all actions and proceedings in the Court.
5. The public health emergency may be considered to be a finding of good cause for continuances deemed necessary by the Judge and Magistrate on a case-by-case basis.
6. 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.
4. This temporary order shall remain in effect as long as the Executive Order 2020-01D "Declaring a State of Emergency" in response to the growing COVID-19 public health crisis, or any continuation or other declaration of state emergency in regard to this public health crisis, remains in effect.

  
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HON. JEFFREY J. BEIGEL  
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE  
PROBATE & JUVENILE COURT

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