

DEAN STANZIONE
DIRECTOR OF COURT ADMINISTRATION



CRYCTAL SPRADLEY
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
904 BROADWAY, SUITE #325
PO Box 10536
LUBBOCK, TEXAS 79408
PHONE 806.775.1360
FAX 806.775.7996

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Effective March 13, 2020, the Lubbock County District and County Courts-at-Law are taking precautions and measures in response to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID – 19). The following precautions are also aligned with the State Office of Court Administration’s “Guidance #1 on Court Procedures” for COVID – 19 dated March 12, 2020 and sent to members of the judiciary:

Court Cancellations

- All child support cases are cancelled through March 31, 2020. If you are a party to a child support case that is set for hearing between now and March 31, 2020, please call the Attorney General’s Office at 1 (800) 252-8014.
- Jury trials scheduled through Friday, April 3rd, are cancelled and will be rescheduled and prioritized by the presiding judge of the court where the case is filed. The courts will monitor the situation and revisit further suspensions of trials at the Friday, April 3rd, Board of Judges meeting.

Court Schedule or Process Changes

- The courts are working to coordinate functionality and facilitate procedures for attorneys to appear telephonically or through videoconferencing for certain dockets or hearings approved by the judge of each individual court. More details will come regarding availability of those processes.
- Plea Negotiation Conferences (PNCs) and other court events not requiring the defendant’s appearance should be completed by telephonic or videoconference communication. In lieu of or following the telephonic or videoconference communication, the attorneys shall submit an electronic notice (email) or Certificate of Conference to the court coordinator on or before the docket day and time.
- The courts will also consider the following hearings essential and will not be delayed:
 - Criminal magistration (15.17s)
 - Judges will conduct all Code of Criminal Procedure, Article 15.17 hearings via videoconferencing for offenders in custody at the Lubbock County Detention Center.
 - CPS removal hearings
 - Temporary restraining orders or injunctions
 - Juvenile detention hearings
 - Family violence protective orders
 - Certain mental health proceedings

- Guilty pleas currently scheduled for in-custody defendants will continue as scheduled.
- Any attorney or party with cold or flu-like symptoms shall contact the court to determine if their appearance is necessary.
- Any documents or pleadings for the court that are not required to be filed through electronic filing (e-filing), should be emailed to the specific court.
- For the week of 3/16 through 3/20, court employees will be permitted to work remotely as approved by their individual judge or supervisor; therefore, please email the individual court if there are questions or issues.

A subsequent Press Release will come next week following the review of additional information from local, state and national resources, and will further detail specific measures the Lubbock County District and County Courts-at-Law will implement in response to these rapidly changing conditions.

###

For questions concerning this release, please contact Dean Stanzione, Director of Court Administration, at dstanzione@lubbockcounty.gov or 806.775.1360.