

IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT OF SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDING JUDGE

COURT OPERATIONS UNDER)
THE EXIGENT)
CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED)
BY COVID-19 AND)
RELATED CORONAVIRUS)
_____)

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
No. 2020 - 15
COVID-19 EMERGENCY LIMITED
COURT OPERATIONS

PURSUANT TO order No. 25700-B-626 of The Supreme Court of Washington and GR 21, as Presiding Judge of the Seattle Municipal Court, in the interest of both public safety and public health during the COVID-19 crisis, given the significant rise in COVID-19 cases in the greater King County area, the “Stay Safe – Stay Healthy” Statewide rollback proclamation by the Washington State Governor Jay Inslee on November 15th which has been further extended to January 2021,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:


1. Suspension of Scheduled In-Person Hearings: Except as otherwise noted in this order, all in-person appearances on out-of-custody matters are hereby suspended effective December 16th until further order of the court. Remote Appearances are required on all out-of-custody criminal matters. If a defendant appears at the Courthouse, the Court will have limited computer access terminals located in the building outside of the courtrooms. If a defendant is unable to use the terminals or a defendant is otherwise unable to appear remotely for their matter, the case may be set over to a specific date or suspended until further order of the court. The future date shall be considered the initial commencement date for purposes of establishing time for trial under CrR 3.3(c)(1) and CrRLJ 3.3(c)(1).
2. Mental Health Court Out-of-Custody Evaluations: Out-of-custody competency evaluations will continue to be done in the courthouse as scheduled, and defendants are required to appear in-person.

3. Contested Infraction Hearings and Impound Hearings: Remote Appearances are required on all contested infraction hearings scheduled in Courtroom 301 until further order of the court. If a defendant appears at the Courthouse or if a defendant is otherwise unable to appear remotely for their matter, the defendant may contest in writing, the case may be set over to a specific date or it may be suspended until further order of the court. The future date shall be considered the initial commencement date for purposes of establishing time for trial under IRLJ 2.6(a).
4. In-custody Matters: All in-custody matters will continue to be scheduled at Courtroom #2 of the King County Jail and in-person as scheduled in the Seattle Justice Center.
5. Motions to Set Aside Default Judgment on Infractions: SMCLIR 3.2(b) is suspended until further order of the Court. The court may consider a request to set aside a default judgment entered upon a defendant's failure to appear or failure to respond as provided in IRLJ3.2(b) and CRLJ60(b). If the request is made while this order is in effect, the court may administratively schedule a hearing to determine “good cause” to set aside the default judgment or a hearing to mitigate or contest the infraction.
6. Default Penalty: During the period of the Court’s closure, the automated default program in the Municipal Court Information System (MCIS) that imposes the default penalty for failure to appear, respond and pay was suspended. The automated program has remained suspended as the court resumed mitigation and contested hearings post-closure. Due to ongoing limitations to the Court’s calendars and difficulties presented by the worsening pandemic, the default program will continue to be suspended until further order of the Court.
7. DNA Collection: The collection of DNA samples on required convictions shall be suspended through February 3rd, 2021. Due to the in-person nature

of DNA collection, the Court finds the suspension of DNA collection until February 3rd is a reasonable period of time under RCW 43.43.754(5)(d). The Court will administratively schedule hearings for the defendant to appear and provide a DNA sample after February 3rd, 2021.

8. The Court may extend the time frames in this order as required by this continuing public health crisis and, if necessary, will do so by further order. This order and other applicable emergency general administrative orders may be deemed part of the record in affected cases for purposes of appeal without the need to file the orders in each case. All orders listed in previous General Administrative Orders not specifically amended in this order hereby stand.
9. Nothing in this order prevents a judicial officer from ordering a person to appear in-person on a specific matter should the Court deem it necessary in the interests of justice or community safety.

DONE this 15th day of December, 2020



Willie Gregory, PRESIDING JUDGE