

**VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY**

**ORDER IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 EMERGENCY COVID-19  
EMERGENCY**

**Pursuant to an Order declaring a Judicial Emergency in response to COVID-19 emergency entered by Donald W. Lemons, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia, on March 16, 2020, and to Executive Order Number Fifty-One (2020) entered by Governor Ralph Northam on March 12, 2020, and by the Governor's announcement of a statewide band on all events over 100 people issued March 15, 2020. The Court orders as follows:**

**That effective from Monday, March 16, 2020 to Monday, April 6, 2020, the Court orders that NON-ESSENTIAL, NON-EMERGENCY court proceedings in the Circuit Court are hereby suspended and all deadlines are hereby tolled and extended, pursuant to Virginia Code §17.1-330(B) for a period of twenty-one repeat days, and the Court shall implement the following measures absent a specific exception as listed below:**

- 1. The Circuit Court Clerk's Office will be closed to the public. Personnel will be available to respond to telephonic, fax and email inquiries and to process recordings and case filings. Recordings and**

**probates may proceed by approval of the Clerk with scheduled appointments according to the Clerk's protocol.**

**2. Continue all civil, traffic and criminal matters, including jury trials, subject to a defendant's right to a speedy trial, with the exception of emergency matters, including but not limited to, quarantine or isolation matters, arraignments, bail/bond hearings and appeals, protective order cases, emergency mental health orders, emergency orders necessary for protection of the elderly or vulnerable persons, emergency child custody or protection cases.**

**3. Courtroom attendance shall be limited to attorneys, parties, and necessary witnesses, security officers, and other necessary persons, as determined by the Trial Judge.**

**4. The Court shall issue summonses in lieu of a *capias* for failure to appear and the Court shall exercise a liberal continuance policy.**

**5. For jury trials that cannot be continued, the Court shall excuse or postpone jury service for jurors who are ill, caring for someone who is ill, or in a high-risk category as defined by the Center For Disease Control (CDC).**

**6. The Court shall require individuals with legitimate court business who are ill, caring for someone who is ill, or is otherwise in a high-risk category as defined by the CDC to call the Clerk's Office to request an appropriate accommodation.**

**7. The Court further orders that individuals who fall into the below categories are not to enter the Court's Building, namely:**

**(a) visited China, Iran, South Korea, any European countries, or any high-risk countries identified by the CDC in the previous fourteen days;**

**(b) travelled domestically within the United States where COVID-19 has sustained widespread community transmission;**

**(c) been asked to quarantine, isolate, or self-monitor by a doctor, hospital, or health agency;**

**(d) been diagnosed with, or have had contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19;**

**(e) a fever, cough, or shortness of breath; or**

**(f) resided with or been in close contact with any person in the above-mentioned categories. Individuals attempting to enter the Court in violation of these protocols may be denied entrance by a bailiff or**

**court staff and may be directed to contact the Clerk's Office by telephonic or other remote means to inform the Clerk of their business before the Court to receive further instructions regarding alternative arrangements for court access.**

**8. Require social distancing throughout the Courthouse, including inside the Courtroom.**

**9. The Court shall use telephonic or video technology, as provided in the Code of Virginia, for all necessary hearings, trials, or other matters, including arraignments.**

**10. This Order does not affect the Court's consideration of matters that may be resolved without in-person proceedings.**

**11. This Order is intended to be interpreted broadly for the protection of the public from the risks associated with COVID-19.**

**This Order shall be effective from March 16, 2020 to April 6, 2020. The Order may be extended for additional periods not to exceed twenty-one repeat calendar days. This Order may be shortened as circumstances dictate.**

**ENTER:**

03/17/2020

**Date**

R. Michael McKenney

**R. Michael McKenney  
Presiding Judge for  
Northumberland County**