

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF CHRISTIAN COUNTY
STATE OF MISSOURI

Re: ORDER CLARIFYING ALL PARENTING PLANS

On March 13, 2020, national and state emergencies were declared following the classification of COVID-19 as a pandemic. In response, on March 16, 2020, the Missouri Supreme Court issued an Order suspending all in-person proceedings, with few exceptions, in the Circuit Courts of Missouri. On March 22, 2020, the Supreme Court issued its Order superseding its March 16, 2020, Order. The March 22, 2020 Order also suspends all in-person proceedings, with few exceptions, in the Circuit Courts of Missouri, now through April 17, 2020, leaving open the option to extend its Order if circumstances deem extension necessary. In addition, all Missouri school districts have temporarily suspended classes. The temporary school closure is scheduled to expire, with students returning to a regular school schedule on April 6, 2020. However, the various school officials have publically announced that, depending on the developing circumstances, the school closure(s) may be extended.


The Court is now aware that based on the unprecedented circumstances caused by the pandemic which has caused schools to close temporarily at this time, previous orders by this Court related to child custody, child visitation, and parenting plans that base visitation around school schedules are now confusing and open to various interpretations of parents based on language used by the school districts to describe the temporary closures. This Order is intended to clarify all custody and visitation schedules in parenting plans and previous Court orders.

For purposes of determining the custody or visitation schedule, the published school calendar from each child's school district shall control in all instances. Custody and visitation shall not be affected by the school's closure that arises from an epidemic or pandemic, including what is currently referred to as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nothing in this Order prevents parties from establishing their own agreement to alter the ordered schedule or from petitioning the court for a modification of prior orders.

This Order is entered and adopted this 23rd day of March, 2020, by all Judges of the 38th Judicial Circuit.

So Ordered:



Laura Johnson, Presiding Circuit Judge, 38th Judicial Circuit

3/23/20