



TUCK MOODY McLAIN
JUDGE – COUNTY COURT AT LAW
GRIMES COUNTY, TEXAS

COVID 19 EMERGENCY ORDERS
AND COURT CANCELLATIONS

In accordance with Orders of the Supreme Court of Texas and The Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas issued on March 13, 2020, the County Court at Law of Grimes County enters the following emergency orders modifying and suspending certain provisions related to court proceedings.

1. Effective Tuesday March 17, 2020 at 7:00 AM, all criminal ancillary dockets are cancelled through, and till, May 1, 2020. This order specifically cancels criminal dockets on 3/18/20, 4/15/20, 4/23/20 and 4/28/20. Notices for reset dates will be sent by the Court's Coordinator to defendants and counsel via email, when available, or by US Mail when an email address is not available, The Court will hold bond hearings, hearing on Writs of Habeas Corpus, or Art. 17.151 hearings on an as needed basis. In person pleas will only be set upon extraordinary circumstances;
2. Jury trial for April 29 is cancelled;
3. Juvenile dockets are cancelled until May 1, 2020. Specifically, the 4/16/20 Juvenile docket is cancelled. Juvenile settings for detention hearings or imposition of conditions of release will be set on an as need basis;
4. Divorce "prove ups" shall be done by affidavit only. Counsel should efile the decree and necessary documents with signatures of counsel and parties. An affidavit of one or both of the parties setting forth required information for proof must be filed with the decree. Upon receipt of all required documentation, the decree will be signed;
5. Family Law "prove up" settings are cancelled till May 1, 2020;
6. Effective 3/20/20, Probate application must be proved by affidavit. No "in person" testimony will be allowed. The application should be accompanied appropriate affidavits to prove the application. All applications and affidavits must be efiled. Upon receipt of the application, after sufficient notice, the Court will admit the will to probate based on properly filed affidavits;
7. Currently set civil hearing, including family law matters, will remain on the court's docket and will be heard as scheduled as long as:
 - a. No party objects based on possible exposure or diagnosis of COVID 19;

- b. No more than 6 participants, including counsel, parties and witnesses are required. If more than 6 individuals are needed, the hearing will be reset. This does not include court staff;
 - c. No children will be allowed;
 - d. If a continuance is requested based on exposure to COVID 19, diagnosis of COVID 19 or requirement of quarantine for possible exposure to COVID 19, the continuance will be granted;
 - e. If any party, counsel or witness are considered High Risk for infection (over 65 years of age, pre-existing health issues, current respiratory diseases, etc.), the hearing will be reset upon request;
8. No new civil settings will be set for live hearing before May 1, 2020 except on an emergency basis for cases involving children, habeas corpus proceedings, or hearing on application for Protective Order against Family Violence;
 9. Pro se or Self Represented Litigants must file all pleadings via efile. Only upon specific exception granted by the Court, may a pro se or self-represented litigant file a pleading in person;
 10. If a matter can be handled via submission, it should be;
 11. Other matters such as mental health commitments and guardianships will be handled on a case by case basis;

Both the County Clerk and District Clerk have closed their offices to 'walk in' face to face communications. Parties and counsel should use efile to file all pleadings and efile or phone calls for communication.

All communication with the Court should be done via email at ccl@grimescountytexas.gov.

These orders are subject to change without additional notice. Any changes will be immediately posted to the Courts website. Orders may be extended and cases reset as the emergency situation progresses. It is the Court's goal to make sure all staff, counsel and participants are protected and safe from infection while maintaining the necessary functions of the Court.

Signed this the 16th day of March, 2020.



Tuck McLain
Judge Presiding
County Court at Law
Grimes County, Texas