

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
FOR THE COUNTY OF SKAGIT

IN THE MATTER OF) ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO COVID-19) NO. 21-1
OUTBREAK)

WHEREAS, an identified public health emergency exists due to the current outbreak of COVID-19 virus, which emergency has been previously identified in this court's Emergency Administrative Orders, No. 20-1 through and including No. 20-9A; and

WHEREAS, Skagit County, Washington State, and the nation in general are currently experiencing a serious surge in transmission of the COVID-19 virus; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of Washington has declared a state of emergency and issued numerous proclamations regarding health and safety measures in response to the pandemic, including his most recent Proclamation 20-25.12, with Skagit County currently listed in Phase 1 due to high risk of transmission and other metrics as determined by the Washington State Department of Health; and

WHEREAS, this court incorporates by reference all of its findings set forth in its previous administrative orders described above and now adopts an order pursuant to the State Supreme Court's Order No. 25700-B-646 to further restrict this court's operations in the interest of public health and safety,

WHEREAS, although courts are exempted from the Governor's directive, nonetheless the court intends to honor the intent of said directive by taking actions to reduce opportunities for transmission of the COVID-19 virus within the court system;

NOW, THEREFORE, PURSUANT TO THE court's authority to administer justice and to ensure the safety of litigants, members of the public, court staff, attorneys, commissioners, and judges;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. **JURY TRIALS.** Jury trial dates for any and all cases with an assigned jury trial date prior to February 19, 2021 are hereby stricken.

2. **CRIMINAL JURY TRIALS.** The court finds that COVID-19 presents a serious danger in congregate settings and that current public health situation is an unavoidable circumstance under CrR 3.3(e)(8) constituting good cause to continue all jury trials in the administration of justice. The time period from November 17, 2020 (per Administrative Orders No. 20-9 and 20-9A) and the close of business on February 19, 2021 shall be excluded for purposes of calculating time for trial. CrR 3.3. Counsel on criminal matters shall provide proposed orders with new dates.
3. **CIVIL JURY TRIALS.** Counsel on non-criminal matters shall re-note said matters for trial assignment.
4. **TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS.** Trials in matters involving petitions for termination of parental rights are suspended pending further order of the court. Further, the court finds that the COVID-19 pandemic is good cause under RCW 13.34.145 (5) (a) not to order DCYF to file a petition to terminate parental rights.
5. **LIMITATION ON CIVIL MATTERS.** Residential unlawful detainer hearings are suspended until April 1, 2021 with the exception of those cases permitted under Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-19.5. (https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/proclamations/proc_20-19.5.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). Any permitted unlawful detainer hearings shall be conducted by video. Similarly motions for orders seeking payment on writs of garnishment involving consumer debt will not be heard until further notice. Any motion not in compliance with these limitations set forth in this order will be stricken.
6. **SUSPENSION OF RULES.** This order modifies or suspends any and all court rules, both Local Court Rules and State Court Rules, which are inconsistent with the terms set forth herein.
7. **CONFLICTING ORDERS.** In the event that this administrative order conflicts in any way with the Washington Supreme Court's orders now or hereafter issued, the Supreme Court's orders shall prevail. To the extent this order may conflict with this court's administrative orders referenced above, this order shall prevail. Otherwise, those prior administrative orders, particularly Administrative Order No. 20-8B, remain effective in accordance with the terms thereof.
8. **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This order becomes effective upon signing and shall remain in effect until modified or terminated by court order.

DATED this 13th day of January, 2021.



Laura M. Riquelme
Presiding Judge