

GARFIELD HTS MUNI CT
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**IN THE GARFIELD HEIGHTS MUNICIPAL COURT
CUYAHOGA COUNTY, OHIO**

JE'NINE A. NICKERSON
CLERK OF COURT

IN RE:)
)
Continuity of Operations During the COVID-19 Public)
Health Emergency)

ORDER

In response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Garfield Heights Municipal Court is modifying its operation for the protection of all court users and employees. Therefore, the Garfield Heights Municipal Court is modifying its schedule and daily operations in order to protect the public while maintaining essential court functions and protecting the rights of all individuals subject to the authority of the Court.

Therefore, it is hereby ordered:

1. **Courthouse Closing:** Effective March 20, 2020 at 4:00 pm and until further Order of the Court, no persons shall be admitted into the courthouse which constitutes the second floor of 5555 Turney Road, Garfield Heights, Ohio, except court employees or other persons designated by the Clerk of Court or Presiding Judge. All courthouse entrances shall remain locked at all times.
2. **Service of Writs, Summons, Etc.:** All bailiff services are suspended until further order of the Court. Execution of all Writs is canceled and Alias Writs will be issued at no additional cost to the parties when bailiff service is resumed.
3. **Remote Appearances:** All appearances by court users, including probation and fine hearings, shall be by digital means as designated by each judge on a case-by-case basis. Said digital means may include, but not be limited to, telephone, Facetime, Skype, JAVS digital recording system, email or text.
4. **In-Person Appearances:** At the sole discretion of each judge, in-person appearances may be required on a case-by-case basis.
5. **Criminal and Traffic Arraignments:**
 - a. All criminal and traffic arraignments shall be by remote appearance as described in Paragraph 2 above.
 - b. Each defendant shall be required to notify the Court of his/her residence address, email address, telephone number and text number. The defendant may provide this information to the Court through email@ghmc.org, fax at 216-475-3087 or to a live operator at 216-475-1900.
 - c. Upon the filing of a new criminal or traffic case, the Clerk of Court shall immediately notify the defendant of the requirement to provide the information set forth in Paragraph 4 (c) above and of the time, date and manner of remote appearance.
6. **Arrest Warrants:** If the Court has issued a warrant for your arrest or your license is suspended by the Court, you may pay \$200.00 on-line 24-hours per day at ghmc.org or by calling the Clerk of Court at 216-475-1900. You must also email your full name, the last 4

digits of your social security number or birth date, mailing address, text number and email address to email@ghmc.org, fax at 216-475-3087 or to a live operator at 216-475-1900. The warrant will be recalled and the Court will schedule your matter for a remote appearance when all information is received and the fee is paid

7. **Litigant Contact Information in Civil Cases:** Each party shall be required to notify the Court of his/her residence address, email address, telephone number and text number. The party may notify the Court through email@ghmc.org, fax at 216-475-3087 or to a live operator at 216-475-1900.
8. **On-Line Access:** Even though the courthouse is closed to the public, any person may continue to file new cases or file documents in pending cases on-line. The Clerk of Court operates an on-line filing system at www.ghmc.org for all court users, whether or not they are attorneys, which operates 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and 365 days per year.
9. **Email Access:** For court users who are not able to file on-line, the Clerk has established a central email address at email@ghmc.org to which any person may address any issue related to court business 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. Responses shall be issued to any emails Monday through Friday between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm.
10. **Telephonic Access:** The Clerk of Court shall continue to be available by telephone at 216-475-1900 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday.
11. **US Mail:** The Court will continue to receive and process documents delivered by the US Mail.
12. **Online Payments:** The Clerk of Court accepts online payments at www.ghmc.org. Payment of waivable tickets, filing fees, fines, court costs, and restitution may be paid on-line 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and 365 days per year.
13. **Telephonic Payments:** All payments referred to above may be made through the 24- hour call center at 877-341-9588 or 216-475-1900 Option 3.
14. **Speedy Trial:** Upon the Court's own motion, all cases in which the defendant demanded a speedy trial are hereby continued for thirty (30) days pursuant to O.R.C. 2945.72(H). In light of the current public health emergency, the Court finds that such a continuance is not only reasonable, but also necessary to protect public health.
15. **"Just Cause" for Continuances:** This public health emergency may be considered "just cause" for continuances deemed necessary by the Court on a case-by-case basis.
16. **Priority of Filings and Communications:** In anticipation of reduction in staff, filings and other communications with the Court shall be processed and considered in the following order:
 - a. All criminal matters, felony or misdemeanor, involving violence or threat of violence or harm to persons;
 - b. All matters related to incarcerated defendants;
 - c. All matters related to other felony, misdemeanor and traffic matters;
 - d. Pending garnishment orders;
 - e. Driving privileges;
 - f. All forcible entry and detainer actions;
 - g. All other civil actions.

17. The Court is continuously assessing the situation to determine if additional action is necessary and shall amend this Order as needed.

18. This Temporary Order shall remain in effect until further order of the Court.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



JUDGE DEBORAH J. NICASTRO