

IN THE LICKING COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT NEWARK, OHIO

IN THE MATTER OF:

Docket _____

**ORDER DECLARING A JUDICIAL
EMERGENCY AND MODIFICATION
OF COURT OPERATIONS**

Page _____

JOURNAL ENTRY

WHEREAS the Governor of Ohio and the Director of the Ohio Department of Health have declared a public health emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic;

And, **WHEREAS** the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has advised “organizers (whether groups or individuals) [to] cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 or more [people] throughout the United States;”

And, **WHEREAS** the Licking County Municipal Court seeks to minimize the risks of exposure and infection to its employees and other individuals who either work in or have a need to visit the Newark Municipal Building;

And, **WHEREAS** the Chief Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court has directed all courts in the state of Ohio to take measures to promote the safety and welfare of the communities in which they are located while maintaining necessary court functions,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. Access to the Newark Municipal Building. Attorneys, defendants, witnesses, members of the media, and individuals conducting business with the Clerk of Court shall be granted access to the building. All other persons seeking services from city offices shall be required to contact the department by telephone or electronic mail first. No walk-in services will be available until the Court and City return to normal operations. Assistance provided in person is available in the event of an emergency requiring prompt action and only after an appointment is made in advance.
2. Criminal and Traffic Division. All trials, including jury trials, hearings, revocation proceedings, and arraignments are continued by the Court *sua sponte* to a date to be set with written notification to the parties. For defendants incarcerated at the Licking County Justice Center, the Court will conduct video arraignments on a daily basis. Subject to further action by the Court, incarcerated defendants awaiting trial may request to proceed with a bench trial or change of plea by video conferencing. In light of the public health emergency declared by federal and state officials, speedy trial time is hereby tolled for any matter subject to this order as the Court finds that the delay is reasonable pursuant to R.C. §2945.72(H). In case of grave emergencies, each judge of the Court will have the discretion to conduct court business for that limited purpose.
3. Evictions and Small Claims. Effective March 25, 2020, the Court will not accept new filings for actions in forcible entry and detainer (evictions) or complaints in the Small Claims Division for a temporary period. Court bailiffs will not schedule any set-outs until further notice of the Court. Any writs of restitution issued on or after March 2, 2020 will be valid for 10 days after the lifting of these restrictions. The Court will begin to accept new filings at the earliest possible opportunity.

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4. Civil Division. The Court will continue to accept complaints filed in other civil cases but all hearings, including but not limited to, status and pre-trial conferences, motion hearings, bench and jury trials, judgment debtor exams, and show cause hearings, are continued to a date to be set with written notice to the parties.
5. Hours of Operation. Until further notice, the Court will be open 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Individuals seeking entry to the building will be screened in compliance with existing security policies. Any individual exhibiting signs of infection by the COVID-19 virus will be prohibited from entering the building.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Order shall remain in effect until further action is taken by the Court and that the status of Court operations shall be reassessed every two weeks hereafter or at any time deemed appropriate by the Court.

Judge David N. Stansbury
Administrative/Presiding Judge

Judge B. Matthew George

**IN THE LICKING COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT
NEWARK, OHIO**

Judge
David N. Stansbury
(740) 670-7842

40 W. Main Street
Newark, OH 43055

Judge
B. Matthew George
(74) 670-7852