

Important Information Regarding COVID-19

Current as of 3/19/2020 at 1:00 p.m.

As you know, Governor DeWine has declared a state of emergency in Ohio, and the Director of the Ohio Department of Health is limiting gatherings to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Governor DeWine requested that we take decisions that are not only in our own best interest but are also in the best interest of our community.

TITLE DEPARTMENT

Until further notice, both Clerk of Courts title offices will be CLOSED to the public. Please check this website for any new developments and updates.

- If you need to speak with someone about a title related issue, please call 614-835-2610 or 740-652-7540.
- On March 18, 2020 Governor DeWine closed several BMV locations around the state. Of Ohio's 186 BMV locations and 57 driver exam stations, a handful will remain open to issue and renew commercial driver licenses and perform commercial knowledge exams to ensure that the transportation of necessities necessities such as food, medical supplies, and cleaning supplies is not interrupted.

The Central Ohio locations are:

Deputy Registrar – 4503 Kenny Road, Columbus 43220

Driver Exam Station – 4738 Cemetery Road, Columbus 43026

- Because of these BMV closures, Governor DeWine announced that he will work with the Ohio General Assembly to extend the expiration date of driver's licenses that are up for renewal, and also waiving required late fees and extending deadlines. In the meantime, the Ohio State Highway Patrol will not issue tickets to drivers whose licenses expire while BMV's services are unavailable. Governor DeWine recommended that other law enforcement agencies in Ohio do the same.
- Ohioans can still renew their vehicle registrations by mail or online at www.oplates.com, and BMV is currently working to provide other online service.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

The Hall of Justice will also be CLOSED to the public except for appointment or scheduled activity. Please see below for details.

PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS

Due to the temporary public closure of the Hall of Justice we will not be able to take in person public records requests. To make a public records request, please call the Records Division at 740-652-7358, send an email to ClerkRecords@fairfieldcountyohio.gov or complete the online request form at <https://www.fairfieldcountyclerk.com/Clerk-Public-Records-Requests.html>.

FAIRFIELD COUNTY COMMON PLEAS, GENERAL DIVISION

- The Hall of Justice is closed to the general public. See further details below.
- Civil and Criminal Jury Trials will be continued on the Court's own motion through April 20, 2020.
- Civil and Criminal Pretrials will be converted to phone conferences through April 8, 2020.
- All other criminal hearings for out-of-jail defendants will be continued through April 8, 2020.

- All other criminal hearings for incarcerated defendants will either take place via video or be continued through April 8, 2020, depending on defense counsel preference and availability.
 - This includes plea, sentencing, revocation, judicial release, bond, arraignment, re-sentencing, disposition, probable cause, and initial appearance hearings
- All filing of court documents is required to be done via mail, e-mail, or fax. No in-person filing option will be available to the public through April 8, 2020. Members of the public who are seeking to post bond for a defendant should call the Clerk's Office before visiting in-person for further instruction.
 - Fax Filing: 740-687-0158 (General) or 740-652-7399 (Domestic Relations)
 - E-Mail Filing: clerkfile@fairfieldcountyohio.gov
- Motions to continue will be liberally granted.
- Defendants on Probation and on Bond are to continue reporting as instructed by their Officer.
- The Court will be operating at reduced staffing levels as of March 23, 2020, but will be periodically monitoring their phones and e-mails. Please be patient as they return your inquiries. Staff who continue to work in the building have been encouraged to practice social distancing and be mindful of all interactions with the public.

If you have questions about whether your case has been continued, please contact the respective Judge's Assignment Commissioner, Court Administrator, or Clerk's Office via phone or e-mail.

General Division

- Judge Berens: Misty Conkle, Assignment Commissioner, 740-652-7431
- Judge Trimmer: Kathy Hartman, Assignment Commissioner, 740-652-7427
- Jill Boone, General Division- Court Administrator, 740-652-7424

Clerk of Courts

- Clerk of Courts Office: 740-652-7360 (General) or 740-652-7357 (Domestic Relations)
- Fax Filing: 740-687-0158 (General) or 740-652-7399 (Domestic Relations)
 - E-Mail Filing: clerkfile@fairfieldcountyohio.gov

****Any other questions, can be directed to the general email inbox at ClerkofCourts@fairfieldcountyohio.gov.**

FAIRFIELD COUNTY COMMON PLEAS, DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISION

Civil Protection Order Hearings

The Court will continue to receive and conduct hearings on petitions for Domestic Violence Civil Protection Orders (CPO), and will conduct the full hearings on Civil Protection Orders.

Trials, Full Hearings, Final Hearings, Dissolution Hearings, Uncontested Divorce Hearings, and other Evidentiary Hearings

Through April 10, 2020, all trials, full hearings, final hearings, dissolution hearings, uncontested divorce hearings, and other evidentiary hearings (except Civil Protection Order hearings), scheduled to take place at DR Court or with Magistrate Jackson at the Child Support Enforcement Agency will be continued by the Court for a later date.

Pretrial hearings, Settlement Conferences, Status Conferences, and Guardian ad Litem Conferences

Through April 10, 2020, all pretrial hearings, settlement conferences, status conferences and guardian ad litem conferences will be conducted by phone if possible. No Court appearance is necessary. If the judge or magistrate determines that the pretrial issues cannot adequately be addressed by telephone, then the judge or magistrate will continue the conference for a later date.

Filings with the Clerk of Courts

All filing of court documents is required to be done via mail, e-mail, or fax. Except for new Petitions for Civil Protection Orders, no in-person filing options will be available to the public through April 7, 2020. Payment of filing fees will still be required in order for documents to be filed. For questions, the Clerk's office can be reached at 740-652-7357 (Domestic Relations) and 740-652-7360 (General Division).

- o Fax Filing: 740-652-7399 (Domestic Relations) 740-687-0158 (General Division)
- o E-Mail Filing: clerkefile@fairfieldcountyohio.gov

Spring Break

The expanded spring break under the Governor's order is in response to a health threat and does not expand spring break as ordered in the parenting time orders. The originally scheduled spring break for 2020 in the residential parent's school district calendar is the spring break to follow unless the parenting time order specifies another designated week for spring break. After the originally scheduled spring break, the parties shall follow the regular parenting time schedule in the parenting time order, or risk contempt.

If you have questions about whether your case has been continued, please contact the respective Assignment Commissioner via phone or email.

Domestic Relations Division

Judge Smith: Lori Lovas, Court Administrator, 740-652-7444

Magistrate Miller: Kaycee Ball, Assignment Commissioner, 740-652-7446

Magistrate McGill: Kendra Gundelfinger, Assignment Commissioner, 740-652-7443

Magistrate Jackson: Lori Lovas, Court Administrator, 740-652-7444

Clerk of Courts

Clerk of Courts Office: 740-652-7360 (General) or 740-652-7357 (Domestic Relations)

- o Fax Filing: 740-687-0158 (General) or 740-652-7399 (Domestic Relations)
- o E-Mail Filing: clerkefile@fairfieldcountyohio.gov

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COURT OF APPEALS

Notice Regarding Oral Arguments

- The Fifth District Court of Appeals has closely monitored the guidance from national, state, and local health officials and Governor Mike DeWine regarding the Coronavirus Disease commonly known as COVID-19. Governor DeWine and health officials have established guidelines and measures to combat the spread of the virus. In line with the orders and guidelines, the Court will take measures necessary to protect the public, attorneys, and our staff.

- In keeping with the goal of limited interactions among people, the Fifth District Court of Appeals is requesting parties waive the oral arguments for the cases currently scheduled in March and April. For those parties who wish to proceed with oral arguments the Court will continue those cases for an oral argument at a later date. The affected parties are being individually contacted by the court.
- The Fifth District Court of Appeals remains open for business. The case schedule for May and beyond will be assessed based upon the evolving situation. The Court will continue its regular functioning while remaining focused on the health and safety of the public, attorneys, staff, and judges.

Filing of Briefs

- The Court has decided not to depart from application of Local Rule 2, concerning electronic filing of briefs. The Court will continue to follow Local Rule 2 and require all briefs to be either mailed or filed in person. Pursuant to that Rule, briefs may not be filed by fax or email.

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