

GALLIPOLIS MUNICIPAL COURT

518 Second Avenue
Gallipolis, Ohio 45631
740-446-9400

Eric R. Mulford, Judge

Lou Ellen Werry, Clerk

April 30, 2020

*****UPDATED NOTICE*****

The Court lobby will reopen on May 4th at 8:00 a.m. The lobby will close daily at 2:00 p.m. for additional cleaning. No more than 6 people may remain in the lobby at any one time. No person who is ill or maintaining a temperature will be permitted to enter the building.

The Court will resume hearing all scheduled arraignments, as well as final pre-trial/motion hearings and trials, beginning May 11th. Access to the court facility will be limited to the actual participants in a case. No spectators will be permitted. No more than 10 people may remain in the courtroom at any one time.

All civil pre-trials will be conducted by telephone conference. All criminal and traffic initial pre-trials will be conducted off the record or by telephone conference. Some hearings and trials may be conducted by video conferencing. If you are unsure whether you should come to the courtroom, contact your attorney for instructions.

The Court will be very lenient in granting timely written requests for continuances involving persons who are over age 60, who suffer from a serious health condition, or who are ill.

Persons entering the building should use the public restrooms to wash their hands before entering the security screening checkpoint or transacting business with the Court.

The Court encourages everyone to continue to use our website, www.gmcourt.org, to search case records, download forms, and e-file civil pleadings; and to continue submitting court filings by mail to 518 Second Avenue, Gallipolis, Ohio 45631, or by FAX to (740) 441-6028.

Everyone who is scheduled for a payment review hearing, and all persons who need to pay a fine, should make their payment in one of three ways that do not require personally appearing at the court:

- by mailing a check or money order to the Gallipolis Municipal Court, 518 Second Avenue, Gallipolis, Ohio 45631;
- online with a debit or credit card at www.gmcourt.org; or
- by calling Court Solutions at (844) 390-3558.

All intensive reporting probation requirements will gradually resume as appropriate.

The Court will review this order on July 30, 2020 under the Court's authority to do all things necessary to ensure the orderly administration of justice during a public health emergency.

QUESTIONS? (740) 446-9400

IN THE GALLIPOLIS MUNICIPAL COURT, GALLIA COUNTY, OHIO

FILED

APR 30 2020

GALLIPOLIS
MUNICIPAL COURT

IN RE: Temporary Order in Response to the COVID-19
(Coronavirus) Public Health Crisis

Now comes the Court and supplements its Orders filed March 16, 2020 and March 19, 2020 in regard to the current public health situation. The Court finds that the Ohio Supreme Court and the Ohio Judicial Conference have consistently provided the local trial courts with recommendations regarding best practices, and that some recommendations have evolved as circumstances have changed.¹ Any Orders crafted by the Court have been in conformity with best practices and recommendations. The Court's protocols also change as circumstances change.²

Therefore, with the intent to protect the health of the public and employees, to maintain essential functions, to provide the public with access to justice, and to ensure the rights of all individuals subject to the authority of the Court, the Court hereby ORDERS:

¹ The Ohio Supreme Court's *Guidance to Local Courts COVID-19 Public Health Emergency* distributed March 30, 2020 remains valid for the duration of the state of emergency but additional recommendations have been distributed in supplement to that guidance.

² The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington reported that Ohio's coronavirus cases peaked on April 14th, while the Infectious Disease Institute at The Ohio State University (relied on by the Ohio Department of Health) reported that the peak would occur on April 19th. "Is Ohio experiencing the coronavirus peak right now? Here's the data," *Dayton Daily News*, April 15, 2020. In either event, Ohio hit a plateau in the number of cases by April 22nd. "Coronavirus in Ohio: DeWine builds economic case for reopening; health case a work in progress," *The Columbus Dispatch*, April 22, 2020. Further, rural southeast Ohio has not experienced a prevalence of the disease, and initial models have been revised and no longer show Ohio experiencing a surge in numbers of cases. "Holzer addresses COVID-19 testing steps," *Gallipolis Daily Tribune*, April 25, 2020 (reporting only one patient treated in the local hospital known for a fact to be a COVID-19 patient and noting that Gallia and surrounding counties were considered by the State of Ohio to be a low-risk area). Finally, although directives of the Governor of Ohio and the Ohio Department of Health are not binding on the courts, those state entities approved of reopening general office environments on May 4, 2020. governor.ohio.gov/wps.portal/gov/governor/media/news-and-media/covid-19-update-april-27.

1. The Court lobby will reopen on Monday, May 4, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. During the month of May, the lobby will close for additional cleaning daily at 2:00 p.m. During the month of June, the lobby will be open during normal business hours. No more than six (6) people may remain in the lobby at any one time. No person who is ill or who is maintaining a temperature will be permitted to enter the building.
2. The Court will resume holding traffic and all other arraignments, and will resume holding final pre-trial/motion hearings and trials on a daily basis beginning May 11, 2020, with social distancing guidelines observed in the courtroom. No more than ten (10) people should remain in the courtroom at any one time. Access to the courtroom will be limited to the actual participants in a case. No spectators will be permitted. Attorneys may, at their option, appear for any hearing or trial by video conferencing with the agreement of the parties and with prior notice to the Court.
3. The Court Bailiffs and the Gallipolis City Police responsible for the security checkpoint at the entrance to the Justice Center are authorized to restrict access to the courtroom and other areas of the facility. Spectators and any person who displays any symptoms of illness shall not be admitted. Access generally may not be restricted for individual parties to cases, attorneys, law enforcement officers, victims, victim advocates, any subpoenaed witnesses, or the news media, unless such person displays any symptoms of illness. The Court Bailiffs will require all parties to sit at counsel tables during hearings and will not allow any defendants to approach the city solicitor, the courtroom clerk, or the bench.

4. All civil pre-trials and motion hearings will be conducted by telephone. The plaintiff is responsible for initiating the conference call and connecting every other party and the Court to the call.
5. All criminal and traffic initial pre-trials will be conducted off the record or by telephone conference followed by the submission of a scheduling entry signed by the defendant and counsel. The defendant and the defendant's counsel are responsible for ensuring that the defendant signs the scheduling entry and/or has notice of the final pre-trial and trial dates.
6. The Court Administrator and Court Bailiff shall ensure that an adequate supply of gloves, masks, tissues, hand soap, and hand sanitizer remain available for the employees and visitors to the facility. The public, within reason and while ensuring that the public has access to justice, will be required to continue to use the options available by telephone, FAX, mail, and electronic means to transact business with the Court. The Court Administrator remains authorized to temporarily adjust provisions of the Court Personnel Policy Manual to maintain essential functions.
7. The Court will review this temporary Order on July 30, 2020, or upon such earlier date that the Governor of Ohio declares an end to the state of emergency.

Effective Date: May 1, 2020

All of the above So Ordered.



Eric Mulford, Judge

The Clerk is directed to serve a copy of the foregoing upon all members of the Gallia County Bar Association and the Gallipolis Police Department.