

Delaware County Probate/Juvenile Court
Coronavirus Planning Efforts:

- What? The WHO has declared Covid-19 to be a pandemic, meaning that a new virus is spreading in multiple places throughout the world.
- Why? Any time a novel virus spreads, it spreads quickly and can overwhelm health systems, not just because of its severity, but also because no one has any immunity to it, and so lots of people get sick at once.
- How? How can we help? We can try to slow the spread of the illness so that everyone doesn't get sick at once and the medical system can keep up.

Immediate Steps:

1. **Social Distancing:** Droplets of virus are spread when someone coughs, sneezes, or even just exhales. They are most likely to travel three feet, but can travel up to six feet. We will *immediately institute a policy of social distancing*. Interact with the public from several feet *behind* counters, reduce face-to-face interactions where possible, stop shaking hands and other close personal contact.
2. **Personal Hygiene:** Frequent hand-washing, sanitizing, and disinfecting will begin immediately. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer after all interactions with the public. Hand sanitizer is in short supply, soap is not. It takes only 90 seconds or so to go to the bathroom and wash your hands. County cleaning personnel will immediately begin to circulate during the day wiping doorknobs, elevator buttons, countertops and other public surfaces; as will court community service crews.
3. **Reduced Contact:** Probation visits, Intake checks, even mediations should occur by telephone wherever possible. Non-testimonial hearings such as status conferences and pre-trials will shift to telephonic participation. Change of plea hearings, dispositions, trials, adoption hearings, guardianship establishments, etc., will continue to be held in person, again utilizing social distancing policies. Travel and conference participation will be evaluated on a case by case basis.
4. **Reduced Traffic:** A memo will go to the bar association today or tomorrow and a press release to the public soon after outlining these changes, and reminding everyone that documents are online, e-filing is easy, mail can be sent or scanned, we're available by phone, etc. Video conferencing is also an option.

5. Sick Leave: **STAY HOME IF YOU ARE ILL.** This cannot be stressed enough. This illness is twice as contagious as influenza. One attendee at a conference in Massachusetts infected 70 other people. If you have a fever, stay home. If you have a bad cough or shortness of breath, stay home. Seek medical advice and return only when cleared to do so. You will not be penalized for using sick leave. You will not be punished for staying home to take care of a sick loved one. If you care for a sick loved one and have been told to self-isolate, then do so. Remember the availability of the web-based medical service through our insurance. Donated sick leave will be an option in extreme cases. It bears repeating: **STAY HOME IF YOU ARE ILL.**

6. Closures: If the county is ordered to cease business for a time by the local board of health, the state board of health, the County Commissioners, or the Governor, we will treat the closure the same as a snow day and you *will be paid* for time that we are ordered to close.

This situation is extremely fluid and rapidly evolving. These policies are subject to change at any time. If schools close, we will evaluate how to help employees who have child care issues. If you have school-aged children or children in daycare, begin to think *now* about what arrangements you will make if their school or day care closes, as those kinds of closures are very likely in the coming weeks.