



## **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**

### **District of Minnesota**

John R. Tunheim, Chief Judge

Kate Fogarty, Clerk

Warren E. Burger Federal  
Building and U.S. Courthouse  
316 North Robert Street  
Suite 100  
St. Paul, MN 55101  
(651) 848-1100

Diana E. Murphy U.S.  
Courthouse  
300 South Fourth Street  
Suite 202  
Minneapolis, MN 55415  
(612) 664-5000

Gerald W. Heaney Federal Building  
and U.S. Courthouse and Customhouse  
515 West First Street  
Suite 417  
Duluth, MN 55802  
(218) 529-3500

Edward J. Devitt U.S.  
Courthouse and Federal Building  
118 South Mill Street  
Suite 212  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
(218) 739-5758

June 26, 2020

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **United States District Court for the District of Minnesota COVI-19 Update – Update to civil and criminal proceedings**

Minneapolis, MN – The Court is developing courtroom protocols to ensure the health and safety of all participants as it prepares to resume in-person criminal and civil proceedings. All in-person hearings must be conducted with appropriate safeguards, including social distancing, personal protective equipment, and plexiglass barriers. The following updates to the court operations under the exigent circumstances created by COVID-19 are hereby implemented:

#### **For criminal matters:**

- a. The Court will continue to hold criminal proceedings using videoconferencing, or telephone conferencing if videoconferencing is not reasonably available, when the defendant consents to appearing at the proceeding remotely.
- b. For criminal proceedings where a defendant declines to consent to conducting the proceeding using videoconferencing, or telephone conferencing if videoconferencing is not reasonably available, the Court will begin to hold limited in-person proceedings on July 13, 2020.
- c. The Court is engaged in planning to resume criminal jury and bench trials after July 6, 2020.

#### **For civil matters:**

- a. The Court is engaged in planning to resume civil jury trials after July 6, 2020.
- b. All civil jury trial-specific deadlines may be continued as ordered by the presiding judge.
- c. All civil hearings or bench trials that cannot be conducted using videoconferencing or telephone conferencing will be continued as ordered by the presiding judge.

The Clerk's Office intake desk will reopen on July 6, 2020, for normal business hours of 8:00am to 4:30pm. The Clerk's Office will not accept cash payments; persons needing to make payment may do so by check, money order, or online (where applicable) and filings in civil and criminal cases through electronic case filing system (CM/ECF) and online payments through [www.pay.gov](http://www.pay.gov).

Pursuant to Section 15002(b)(3) of the CARES Act, Chief Judge John R. Tunheim issued General Order #16 extending the authorization for the use of videoconferencing or telephone conferencing for an additional 90 days.

Please review the attached orders for more specific details [https://www.mnd.uscourts.gov/sites/mnd/files/2020-0624\\_COVID19-General-Order-No15.pdf](https://www.mnd.uscourts.gov/sites/mnd/files/2020-0624_COVID19-General-Order-No15.pdf), [https://www.mnd.uscourts.gov/sites/mnd/files/2020-0625\\_COVID19-General-Order-No16.pdf](https://www.mnd.uscourts.gov/sites/mnd/files/2020-0625_COVID19-General-Order-No16.pdf), and [https://www.mnd.uscourts.gov/sites/mnd/files/2020-0626\\_COVID19-General-Order-No17.pdf](https://www.mnd.uscourts.gov/sites/mnd/files/2020-0626_COVID19-General-Order-No17.pdf)].

The Court continues to monitor the most current statements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as all communications disseminated by the Administrative Office of the U. S. Courts (AO), regarding the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The Court is following recommended guidelines from public health officials and preparedness guidance from the AO, including cancelling or postponing all non-essential events and travel, increasing sanitation efforts in all courtrooms and public spaces, and continuing to provide remote working options for staff.

Additional questions can be directed to Media Coordinator, Rebecca Parks at [Rebecca\\_Parks@mnd.uscourts.gov](mailto:Rebecca_Parks@mnd.uscourts.gov).

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