UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

IN RE: UPDATED GUIDANCE TO COURT OPERATIONS
UNDER THE EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY
COVID-19

**AMENDED GENERAL
ORDER
No. 15**

WHEREAS, the Court has issued a series of General Orders re: Court Operations Under the Exigent Circumstances Created by COVID-19, which are available on the Court's website at www.mnd.uscourts.gov.

WHEREAS, the President of the United States of America has declared a national emergency in response to COVID-19.

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Minnesota declared a peacetime emergency to coordinate Minnesota's strategy to protect Minnesotans from COVID-19 and has continued to extend the COVID-19 peacetime emergency through the date of this order.

WHEREAS, the public health authorities have advised taking precautions to reduce the possibility of exposure to the virus and slow the spread of disease, including to avoid large gatherings of people.

WHEREAS, the Court has been holding and will continue to hold court proceedings using videoconferencing technology on ZoomGov.
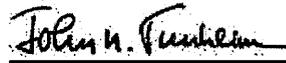
NOW THEREFORE, to reduce courthouse visitors and provide access to public court proceedings during the emergency created by the COVID-19 outbreak, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED,** that:

1. Members of the media and public may attend public court proceedings remotely by audioconference, using the following steps:

   a. Identify the proceeding on the Court's public calendar located at this address: https://www.mnd.uscourts.gov/court-schedules.

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KATE M. FOGARTY

JUDGMENT ENTD
DEPUTY CLERK

b. The instructions to join the audioconference will display on the public calendar entry for each proceeding.

c. Specific instructions for attending court proceedings by audioconference may be found on the Court's website at www.mnd.uscourts.gov/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance.

2. Members of the media who have received credentials from the U.S. District Court, District of Minnesota may request to observe the video of a public criminal court proceeding that is being held on ZoomGov. To request ZoomGov video access to a specific criminal proceeding, complete the request form at https://www.mnd.uscourts.gov/media-information by noon the business day before the proceeding in question.

3. Family and friends of criminal defendants may be permitted to observe the video of a public court criminal proceeding that is being held on ZoomGov. To request ZoomGov video access to a specific proceeding, contact the presiding judge's chambers by noon the business day before the proceeding in question. Please note that due to scheduling challenges, family and friends of criminal defendants will generally not be permitted to observe the video of initial appearances, detention hearings, and arraignments.

4. The presiding judge may also determine that a civil proceeding is of sufficient public interest that members of the media and the public may observe the available video feed of the civil proceeding in a designated room at a U.S. Courthouse, provided that appropriate social distancing and other COVID-19 restrictions are followed by all attendees.

5. Persons granted remote access to proceedings, including audio and video access, are prohibited from photographing, recording, and rebroadcasting any part of the court proceeding. Violation of this prohibition may result in sanctions, including removal of court issued media credentials, restricted entry to future hearings, denial of entry to future hearings, or any other sanctions deemed necessary by the court.

6. This order amends General Order No. 15, that was entered on June 24, 2020. The Clerk is instructed to replace the previously issued General Order 15 with this order on the Court's website.

7. This order will remain in effect until further order of the Court.

Dated in Minneapolis, Minnesota, January 11, 2021 at 4:30 PM.

JOHN R. TUNHEIM
Chief Judge
United States District Court