

ORDER REGARDING EMERGENCY TEMPORARY MEASURES

The Crawford County Circuit Court is issuing this order to provide procedures and directions for court proceedings during the next several weeks due to the pandemic of COVID-19. The guidelines are emergency and temporary measures and ONLY effective from March 18, 2020 until May 15, 2020, or until further order of the Court.

The Crawford County Courthouse remains open and any change in status will be reflected in the cases as set forth on the Wisconsin Court system website, www.wicourts.gov. Parties and counsel will be contacted by court staff if there is a change of status in a particular case.

We are monitoring this situation and are committed to open access to our courts and service to the public. However, we must seek to protect the health and safety of the individuals involved in court proceedings and all other persons in the court facilities. This order is intended to ensure the continuous performance of the Court's essential functions and operations and yet seek to mitigate the risk of exposure to our employees, lawyers, litigants, jurors and other participants in court proceedings. These guidelines incorporate use of videoconferencing and teleconferencing to minimize contact, when appropriate; follow social distancing practices; and temporarily suspend some non-essential court functions. For specific information on a particular case, please call the Clerk of Court (608) 326-0209, (608) 326-0211 or Register in Probate/Juvenile Clerk (608) 326-0206 offices.

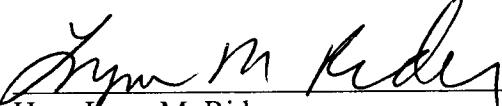
The Crawford County Circuit Court HEREBY ORDERS:

1. All cases currently scheduled will remain on the calendar unless a party or attorney requests a continuance; such requests will be liberally granted.

2. All persons wishing to appear in person may be asked screening questions as established by the Crawford County Health Department and should any of their answers be “yes”, they will be asked not to enter the building, or, if present in the building, they will be asked to leave the building.
3. Any hearing that can be done by phone or video will proceed as scheduled by phone or video.
4. There shall be no jury trials held on or before May 15, 2020, unless statutorily required.
5. Preliminary Hearings, Plea Hearings, and Sentencing Hearings shall be in person, unless the Defendant waives his/her right to be present in person.
6. Criminal and Civil Traffic Court Intake – Any previously filed cases will be heard as scheduled unless a request is made to continue to a later date. Any newly filed cases will be scheduled for a date and time beyond May 15, 2020, unless there are exigent circumstances requiring an earlier hearing.
7. There are no changes being made to the handling of bond hearings; those will continue to be by videoconferencing. Individuals who post bail or are released by the officer without bail shall be ordered to appear after May 15, 2020.
8. Mental commitments and juvenile cases will proceed as usual unless the parties have specifically been notified by court staff of an alternative procedure.
9. Counsel shall communicate with the Court, via the Judicial Assistant, through telephonic or electronic means.
10. All temporary hearings before the Family Court Commissioner may be conducted via telephone, at the discretion of the Family Court Commissioner.
11. Stipulated divorce proceedings may be conducted by telephone provided all necessary documents are filed prior to the court hearing.

12. All small claims parties and counsel may appear via telephone upon request. The appearance by the plaintiff will be waived. In addition, the court will allow defendants to file written answers. All contested small claims matters will be set for trial after May 15, 2020, unless an earlier date is specifically approved by the court.
13. All probate matters that can be completed via telephone may proceed; otherwise, the matter shall be scheduled for a hearing after May 15, 2020.
14. Any document to be used or referenced by the court (i.e.: Martial Settlement Agreement, Financial Disclosures, Certificate of Attendance for parenting class, plea/preliminary hearing waivers or questionnaires, etc.) shall be completed prior to any Court hearing and submitted electronically prior to the court hearing.
15. Cases involving emergency or special circumstances shall be brought to the attention of the court and will be handled at the discretion of the judge considering the needs of the case, the needs of the parties, and the interest of the public.
16. Court facilities shall remain open and the court will continue to accept filings. Litigants are encouraged to file pleadings and other documents electronically when possible. Members of the bar and the public are discouraged from making non-essential visits to court facilities.

Dated this 18th day of March, 2020.



Hon. Lynn M. Rider
Crawford County Circuit Court