

**NOTICE CLARIFYING TEMPORARY MEASURES  
FOR COURTHOUSE OPERATIONS  
IN 8<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
REGARDING COVID-19 PUBLIC EMERGENCY**

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The 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District of Wisconsin is issuing this general Notice, as described below, to provide direction and procedure as it relates to circuit court operations in the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District in response to the recent outbreak of COVID-19, and the various orders and notices that have previously been entered by judges in this district and the Wisconsin Supreme Court. This general Notice seeks to clarify the courthouse operations for the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, in light of those various orders and notices.

Consistent with the Wisconsin Supreme Court orders regarding COVID-19 issued on March 22, 2020, and in an effort to clarify the various orders and to encourage citizens to stay at home pursuant to the “Safer at Home Order” issued by the Governor of Wisconsin, and based upon an agreement by the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District courts:

The following hearings are defined as essential to maintain the critical day-to-day operations of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District courts, and are the only hearings that may be conducted during this period, unless an exception has been granted by the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Chief Judge. The following hearings shall be conducted as remote hearings, utilizing available technologies, including email, teleconferencing, and video conferencing, including Zoom, in lieu of in person courtroom appearances:

**Regarding criminal matters, for in-custody defendants:**

Initial appearances, including Riverside hearings;  
Bail/bond review hearings;  
Preliminary hearings;  
Sentencing after revocation hearings;  
Sentencing hearings;  
Competency hearings; and  
Treatment court proceedings, including staffing and hearings.

**Regarding juvenile proceedings:**

Hearings on JV and JC cases with time limits; and  
Termination of Parental Rights hearings with time limits.

**Regarding family law proceedings:**

Restraining order hearings;  
Temporary order hearings if placement is at issue under Wis. Stat. §767.225(am));  
Enforcement of physical placement orders under Wis. Stat. §767.471(5)); and  
Relocation motions under Wis. Stat. §767.481(2).

**Regarding guardianship and mental health proceedings:**

Mental Commitments with time limits; and  
Guardianship cases with time limits.

Consistent with the Wisconsin Supreme Court order regarding the suspension of in-person hearings through April 30, 2020, if a remote hearing cannot be held remotely, by various video or teleconferencing options, despite best efforts, the above listed essential and critical hearings may be heard in person.

In addition, consistent with the Wisconsin Supreme Court order, the Chief Judge for the 8th Judicial District will consider any other exceptions on a case-by-case basis at the request of the judge presiding over the matter. Such request can be made by either email or telephone.

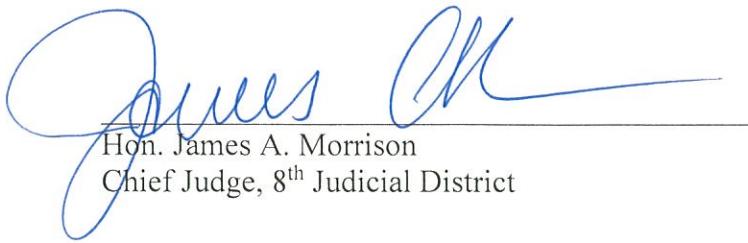
Consistent with the Wisconsin Supreme Court order regarding the continuance of all civil and criminal jury trials, all civil and criminal jury trials scheduled to begin before May 22, 2020, are continued and will be rescheduled by the judge presiding over the matter to a date after May 22, 2020, subject to the procedures outlined by the Wisconsin Supreme Court for seeking an exception to their order.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District courts HEREBY FURTHER FIND THAT, for criminal cases, the period of any continuance or adjournment entered as a result of the Wisconsin Supreme Court order, or as a result of following the directive of the Director of State Courts, shall be determined to be good cause and therefore excluded from calculations pursuant to Section 971.10, Wisconsin Statutes, because the courts hereby find that the ends of justice served by taking the action to continue or adjourn the case outweigh the best interest of the public and the defendant in a speedy trial, given the need to protect the health and safety of defendants, counsel, witnesses, jurors, court staff, other court personnel and the public.

Nothing in this Notice shall be deemed to be in contradiction to or inconsistent with the orders of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. This Notice is merely intended to provide clarification and further direction, stating the agreement of the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District judges.

These provisions are due to the COVID-19 emergency and are temporary in nature, effective from the date of this order until April 30, 2020, or upon further order; however, the provisions regarding adjournment of jury trials is effective, consistent with the Wisconsin Supreme Court order, until May 22, 2020.

Dated this 27 day of March, 2020.



Hon. James A. Morrison  
Chief Judge, 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial District