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## EMERGENCY TEMPORARY ORDER REGARDING PHYSICAL ACCESS TO COURTHOUSE FACILITIES

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In light of the COVID-19 emergency, the Grant County Circuit Court finds that it is necessary to restrict physical access to courthouse facilities in order to reduce chances of the spread of infection.

This order is made with the intention to restrict only physical access to courthouse facilities. Fundamental access to the courts should not be impacted by this Order. In order to best effect these goals, the court makes the following orders:

- A Notice in the form attached shall be posted at the sole public entrance to the courthouse in a manner that it must be walked past in order to enter.
- At all times feasible, the Court Security Officer shall be posted in the vicinity of the sign to assist courthouse entrants. The essential duties of the officer at the post shall be:
  - To ensure that every entrant reads and understands the information on the sign.
  - To answer any questions about access.
  - To give directions to those having symptoms or other concerns about their health.
  - To instruct those not admitted about available accommodations to permit them to obtain and complete paperwork, obtain a continuance of their court appearance, appear by alternate non-personal means, etc.
  - Act as liaison between entrants and court staff to coordinate and communicate accommodations.
  - Encourage entrants and persons exiting to handwash and/or sanitize upon entry and exit.
  - The court security officer shall minimize personal contact and hand-to-hand exchange of papers and documents. The officer shall endeavor to maintain a safe distance while communicating with entrants.
- The general policy regarding access during the emergency shall be as follows:
  - The Circuit Judges shall advise court staff and the court security officer of the court's intention regarding hearings scheduled for the day. That is, the Judge shall advise whether the hearing will be permitted to be in person or

shall be by phone, in writing, or other non-personal manner of appearance.

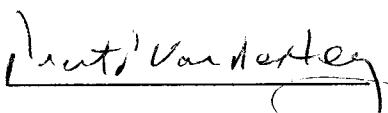
- Persons arriving with a scheduled court appearance shall be advised by the court security officer if their personal appearance is not necessary. The person will receive instructions how to proceed. Appearance may be by written form (such as a written not-guilty to a traffic citation or a written denial of a small claims suit). If a phone appearance is authorized, the person will be provided the correct phone number to dial for their hearing. The person will be directed to make the phone appearance from home or some other location outside the courthouse. If an appearance is authorized by Zoom or other video conferencing technology, the person will be provided instructions for use of the technology if available to them.
- The court shall accommodate these logistical challenges through flexibility in scheduling, timelines, etc. Only mandatory timelines and/or timelines operating to the specific prejudice of a party or claim will be strictly enforced.
- Persons arriving to file claims or other paperwork shall be admitted to do so unless they acknowledge symptoms or are otherwise unwilling to enter the courthouse due to susceptibility or general health concern. Those not admitted will be instructed on alternate means to file paperwork such as electronic filing or delayed filing. If immediate filing is necessary and the person cannot or does not wish to be admitted, the appropriate filing paperwork will be acquired from the appropriate office and given to the person. The person shall complete their paperwork at home or other non-courthouse setting and return it to the court security officer who will deliver it to the appropriate filing agent and communicate instructions to the litigant from that point.

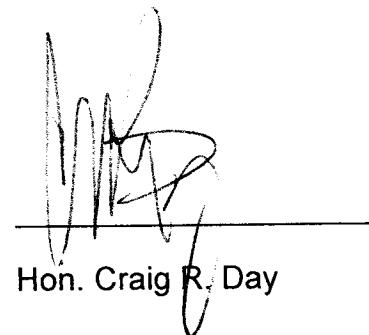
- Within the requirements of procedural law and recognizing the need for temporary emergency measures, the court shall maintain maximum flexibility in permitting continuances, non-personal appearances, delayed filings, and other adjustments to minimize exposure to the public, litigants, attorneys, and courthouse staff during the emergency.
  - Specific adjustments shall be as follows:
    - No new criminal intake shall be scheduled prior to April 27, 2020 unless the accused is in custody.
    - No new child support intake shall be scheduled prior to April 27, 2020.
    - Intake matters scheduled as of March 17, 2020 shall remain as scheduled unless specifically continued. Phone, written, and video appearance will be liberally authorized.

- Intake for traffic and forfeiture citations shall continue but law enforcement officers have been instructed to advise defendants to present any not-guilty pleas by other than personal appearance at the intake date.
- Small claims returns will continue, but those wishing to contest shall do so in writing. Trials will not be scheduled absent immediate need shown for cause.
- Orders To Produce for inmates from the Wisconsin Prison System are hereby canceled until further order of the court.
- Warrants of Commitment for failure to pay fines, forfeitures, and child support shall not be enforced by arrest until further order of the court.
- Jury trials shall not be scheduled before April 27, 2020.
- All other matters shall be addressed on a case-by-case basis to assure the administration of necessary justice while minimizing personal contact and exposure.
- Those with matters requiring imminent attention will be immediately admitted, or if not admitted, accommodated in a manner to provide access to the relief sought from the Grant County Circuit Court System.

This order shall remain in effect until terminated by further order of the court.

Dated this 18<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.

  
Hon. Robert P. VanDeHey

  
Hon. Craig R. Day

# NOTICE

The courthouse remains a public building. However, during the COVID-19 emergency, access to the building will be restricted. Access to courts is not restricted.

Personal court appearances will be limited. If you can appear by phone or in writing, that will be the manner of your court appearance. Please contact the appropriate office by phone immediately to arrange how you may appear.

**Clerk of Court: 608-723-2752**

**Register in Probate: 608-723-2697**

**Judge VanDeHey's Office: 608-723-7826**

**Judge Day's Office: 608-723-6576**

**District Attorney: 608-723-4237**

**Child Support Agency: 608-723-4823**

**Corporation Counsel: 608-723-1651**

**Treatment Court: 608-723-1738**

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms (**COUGH, FEVER, SHORTNESS OF BREATH**), entry will not be permitted and you will be provided accommodations to conduct your court business.

**WE URGE YOU TO WASH YOUR HANDS UPON  
ENTRY AND BEFORE EXITING THE  
COURTHOUSE.**