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**IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON  
IN AND FOR WHITMAN COUNTY**

IN THE MATTER OF	)	
	)	NO. 111920
EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO PUBLIC	)	
HEALTH THREAT	)	FOURTH EMERGENCY
(Coronavirus –COVID-19)	)	ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
	)	
	)	

WHEREAS, On February 29, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency due to the public health crisis posed by the spread of the coronavirus (COVID 19). This state of emergency continues to the present day, and is expected to exist going forward. On November 15, 2020, Governor Inslee announced a doubling of coronavirus transmission rates has occurred in the past two weeks in Washington State, further endangering public safety. Effective November 16, 2020, indoor social gatherings are banned for non-family members until December 14, 2020.

WHEREAS, the State Supreme Court of Washington has previously authorized the Presiding Judge of the District and Municipal Courts to suspend court rules as necessary to promote the public safety while keeping the courts as open as possible, and this Court has enacted Emergency Administrative Orders as follows:

- FIRST EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER No.031720
- SECOND EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER No.050520
- THIRD EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER No.061520

1 WHEREAS, the latest public health numbers in Washington State and in particular Whitman  
2 County show that there is danger in having indoor gatherings of any size, and

3 WHEREAS, this court has taken steps to ensure continued access to justice while protecting  
4 the public safety and health,

5 NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED

- 6 1) Jury trials are suspended, effective immediately until after December 14, 2020. This  
7 action is deemed necessary as it is not physically possible to gather prospective jurors,  
8 empanel a jury and allow that jury to deliberate, while maintaining the social distancing  
9 requirements issued by our Governor and set out by the State Department of Health.  
10 2) Pursuant to the authority granted by the Washington State Supreme Court in paragraph  
11 12 and 23 of Order No. 25700-B-646, the Judge of Whitman County District Court finds  
12 that the current rise of cases of COVID -19 is an unavoidable circumstance requiring the  
13 suspension of the time for trial rule CrRLJ 3.3(e) (3). Therefore, the time between  
14 November 16, 2020 and the next scheduled court date after December 14, 2020 shall be  
15 EXCLUDED when calculating time for trial. Furthermore, all jury trials currently  
16 scheduled between today's date and December 14, 2020 are cancelled and shall be rest  
17 after December 14, 2020.  
18 3) After December 14, 2020, the court may further exclude time under these rules based on  
19 individual findings of "unavoidable circumstance" due to COVID-19 or other  
20 circumstances. Any future exclusion shall be made by subsequent Order of the court.  
21 4) The District Court Clerk's Office in Colfax and in Pullman will remain open for regular  
22 business hours.  
23 5) All other court operations will continue to proceed with the use of in-person and virtual  
24 appearances as described in this court's THIRD EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE  
25 ORDER No. 061520.

18 This order may be modified consistent with the Court's continual assessment of the needs of  
19 the community as well as the recommendations of public health officials. Further, this order  
20 incorporates by reference all previous orders issued by the Washington State Supreme  
21 Court as well as this court in reference to the COVID-19 pandemic. All orders shall be  
22 posted at the Whitman County District Court Clerk's Office and online with the Washington  
23 State Administrative Office of the Courts website and at [www.whitmancounty.org](http://www.whitmancounty.org) on the  
24 District Court page.

26 IT IS SO ORDERED.

This 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2020.

27   
28 John Hart  
Presiding Judge, Whitman County District