

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

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

IN THE MATTER OF)	
)	NO. 012522
EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO PUBLIC)	
HEALTH THREAT)	ELEVENTH 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. The Whitman County Health Department has recently reported an unprecedented number of COVID 19 cases. Most recently, 744 actual cases (1488 per 100,000 people) were reported for the dates January 3 through 16, 2022. This places Whitman County beyond the "High Activity" measurement on the "Low Activity" to "High Activity" Spectrum published by the Department of Health.

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 ten separate Emergency Administrative Orders as follows:

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

FILED

JAN 25 2022

**WHITMAN COUNTY DISTRICT
COURT**

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

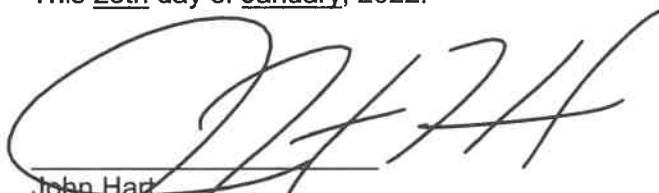
NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED

- 1) Jury trials are suspended, effective immediately until after February 28, 2022. This action is deemed necessary as it is not physically possible to gather prospective jurors, empanel a jury and allow that jury to deliberate, while maintaining the social distancing requirements issued by our Governor and set out by the State Department of Health's "Guidelines for Operations during the COVID -19 Pandemic" issued in June of 2020 regarding the resumption of jury trials.
- 2) Pursuant to the authority granted by the Washington State Supreme Court in paragraph 12 and 23 of Order No. 25700-B-646, the Judge of Whitman County District Court finds that the current rise of cases of COVID -19 is an unavoidable circumstance requiring the suspension of the time for trial rule CrRLJ 3.3(e)(8). Therefore, the time between today's date and the next scheduled court date after February 28, 2022 shall be EXCLUDED when calculating time for trial. Furthermore, all jury trials currently scheduled between today's date through February 28, 2022 are cancelled and shall be reset after February 28, 2022.
- 3) After February 28, 2022, the court may further exclude time under these rules based on individual findings of "unavoidable circumstance" due to COVID-19 or other circumstances. Any future exclusion shall be made by subsequent Order of the court.
- 4) The District Court Clerk's Office in Pullman will remain open for regular business hours.
- 5) All other court operations will continue to proceed with the use of in-person and virtual appearances as described in this court's prior EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS and all previous EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS not inconsistent with this order remain in full effect.

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

IT IS SO ORDERED.

This 25th day of January, 2022.



John Hart
Presiding Judge, Whitman County District