

Franklin County Common Pleas & Municipal Court

The Franklin County Common Pleas Court & Municipal Court will remain open to the public. However, to protect the public health, citizens are discouraged from visiting the Franklin County Court Complex for matters that are not essential or time sensitive. The Judges have agreed to continue to a future date all civil and criminal matters, depending upon the specific Court, scheduled for a jury trial, hearing, or disposition during March 16, 2020, through April 10, 2020. The Judges and their staff will conduct as many pre-trial conferences via telecommunication as possible.

Updated March 16, 2020: The Franklin County Municipal Court is open as we continue to deal with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following information concerns the status of the Court's operations:

- Traffic Arraignment Court will not be conducted for at least the next eight weeks.
- 4C Arraignment Court will not be conducted for at least the next eight weeks.
- Eviction hearings will not take place for at least the next eight weeks.
- Small claims cases will not be heard for at least the next eight weeks.
- Cases involving prisoners, objections to garnishment proceedings, and BMV hearings will continue to be heard. Individuals should verify their hearing dates using the case inquiry on the Clerk's website.
- All other scheduled hearings will be rescheduled and a notice of the new court date will be sent to the address the Court has on file.
- Jurors scheduled to report for jury service on March 16th are requested to stay home until or unless you are notified that your services are needed for a particular trial.
- For Common Pleas jurors, **beginning Monday, March 16, 2020**, citizens summoned for Common Pleas jury duty should not report, as jury service is cancelled through April 10, 2020. For Municipal Court jurors, those summoned for **March 16, 2020**, are still required to report for jury duty.

Franklin County Domestic Relations/Juvenile Court

In consultation and agreement with other trial courts in the county, the Domestic Relations and Juvenile Court Judges have decided to postpone all non-essential, non-emergency hearings for the next four weeks (March 16-April 13). Emergency hearings and any hearing deemed time-sensitive by the individual Judge or Magistrate will be held as scheduled. Such hearings include preliminary hearings, ECOs, CPOs, bond hearings, and shelter care hearings.

Franklin County Recorder's Office

The Recorder's office, as of **Monday morning (March 16)**, will be closed to the public. This includes the closing of the records room to all individuals that are not Recorder's office staff. There will be a drop box placed just inside the Recording Services window where documents can be dropped with check payments made out with exact amounts. We will continue to have staff here to

answer phones, respond to emails and work through mail, therefore we are asking you to use those avenues to communicate with us and present documents for recording.

United States District Court, Southern District of Ohio

The Court issued a General Order to postpone trial for the next thirty days. Cases scheduled for trial more than thirty days after the Order are unaffected by the Order. All deadlines created within such trials are also not affected.

Delaware County Common Pleas Court

The judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Delaware County are continuing to hear cases and are issuing decisions without interruption despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 virus. Much court business can be conducted online or by telephone. For example, documents can be filed electronically through the [county's e-filing system](#). Status conferences and pre-trials may be conducted by telephone, depending on the case. Our courts are contacting the parties in advance for any hearings that we hope to conduct by telephone rather than in person. Certainly some court business is still being conducted in person, though, such as jury trials, non-jury trials, and some evidentiary hearings. Applications for marriages licenses at the probate court and requests for passports from the Clerk's office must also be handled in person.

Delaware County Domestic Relations Division

Beginning **Monday, March 16, 2020**, the [Delaware County Domestic Relations Court](#) will be conducting the following by telephone: status conferences, pre-trials, and any other proceedings selected by me or the Magistrate assigned to the case. The Domestic Relations Court will initiate the conference calls to your office number or cell phone if you make the cell number available to the court well in advance. You are expected to be on time and available at the phone number the court has for you. You are expected to be prepared and all rules and expectations apply as though you were at court in person.

Additionally, in an effort to deescalate any situations or confusion that may arise regarding this public health mandate, please inform your clients that this extended spring break DOES NOT extend the spring break period set forth in their parenting time orders. Only the originally scheduled spring break period in the child's school district shall be considered spring break for parenting time orders (unless otherwise specified in the order). All other time periods affected by the closing of school buildings shall be treated as a normal school day pursuant to the parties' parenting time schedule. [More information](#).

Licking County Common Pleas Court

The Court remains open to the public and will continue to provide all essential services. However, Judge Branstool has agreed to continue, to a future date, all civil and criminal matters scheduled for a jury trial, pretrial conference, evidentiary, or dispositional hearing during the period between **Tuesday, March 17, 2020** through **Friday, April 3, 2020**. Orders rescheduling these events will be issued in each case. Case by case exceptions to continuances may apply. Other matters commonly handled by phone conference such as status conferences and scheduling conferences will remain as scheduled.

Licking County Domestic Relations Division

At the present time, we are still conducting business as usual and all scheduled hearings will proceed. If, however, an attorney, a litigant, or an essential witness is ill, has a fever or other symptoms of possible infection, please call the Court prior to coming to Court. The Court will consider a continuance of a hearing on a case-by-case basis, and even if the continuance request is made last minute. This is a rapidly developing situation, and the above policy is subject to change. More information.

Franklin County Probate Court

IN THE PROBATE COURT OF FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO ROBERT G. MONTGOMERY, JUDGE SPECIAL NOTICE RE: COVID-19 As a result of the COVID-19 virus emergency, our filing process will change temporarily. The probate court will remain open to the public and provide all essential services. However, to protect public health, citizens are discouraged from visiting the Franklin County Court complex for matters that are not essential or time sensitive. Beginning immediately, you should file your documents by mail or you can drop them off at the court in the 22nd floor lobby. The court's mailing address is: Franklin County, Ohio Probate Court 373 S. High Street, 22nd Floor Columbus, Ohio 43215-6311 The court will provide drop boxes for your convenience. The court will not be providing same day service on your filings during this period. Please note that the court can only accept payment by money order or attorney's check at this time. Payment by cash or credit card is not available until further notice, except in the marriage department. The duty magistrate desk will be closed until further notice. Please drop off or mail all documents requiring approval before filing per the process outlined above. Court personnel are currently reviewing the hearing docket for the next several weeks. You will be notified if your case is being continued to a later date. Please contact the court's main phone number at 614-525-3894 to obtain information and availability for the Resource Center. At present, the marriage department will still be operating per normal to issue marriage licenses. Applicants must complete the online application before visiting the marriage department, which can be found on the marriage department section of the website. At this time, however, **ONLY** the applicants will be permitted into the marriage department. Applicants who have previously been married should obtain their most recent certified divorce/dissolution decree from the court in which it was granted before

visiting the marriage department. A drop-off box is available to submit marriage license returns. Applicants who have completed their ceremony and returned their license for recording are encouraged to visit the website to order certified marriage abstracts online. Applicants may still use cash or credit card in the marriage department for transactions. Thank you for your assistance and understanding as we continue to serve the public during this difficult time.

Union County

Similar to Franklin County

Pickaway County

Below is information regarding Common Pleas, Probate and Juvenile Court operation procedures in Pickaway County.

Date: March 16, 2020

This brief Memorandum is to update Bar members on the status of court hearings, please be advised of the following. Tomorrow afternoon, the county officials will be meeting to discuss and learn more about county government operations for the immediate future. Until further direction is given at that meeting, please have your office contact the court to determine the status of any hearing.

Please note that Probate and Juvenile cases previously scheduled for the next three weeks have been cancelled. In addition, at this time, anyone wishing to file pleadings with Probate court should do so at the Juvenile Court window. Your pleadings will be received, and you will be notified when they have been processed and can be retrieved. Please do not wait at the window for your copies as staff levels have been reduced and Judge Long indicates that an immediate retrieval is impossible at this time.

Rest assured that we are mandated that the courts must remain open regardless of restriction of access to the building. Chief Justice O'Connor has stressed the importance of arranging for alternative methods to continue to provide judicial services. Both Judges are committed to ensuring this to our citizens.