

IN THE TRAVIS COUNTY CIVIL AND FAMILY COURTS

Administrative File No. GN-61-121012

Filed in The District Court
of Travis County, Texas

FIFTH AMENDED EMERGENCY ORDER
REGARDING COVID-19

SEP 19 2022 LJ
At 1:33 P. M.
Velva L. Price, District Clerk

Effective September 19, 2022

1. This Fifth Amended Emergency Order replaces the Fourth Amended Emergency Order Regarding COVID-19, which was effective on March 1, 2021. It is intended to comply with the current Emergency Orders issued by the Supreme Court of Texas¹ and other authorities, and to facilitate the transition of the Travis County Civil and Family Courts from the 92-year-old Heman Marion Sweatt Travis County Courthouse to the new Travis County Civil and Family Courts Facility in early 2023.

This Order and any updated Emergency Orders will be posted on the Travis County Civil Courts website at <https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/courts/civil/civil-courts-covid-19-information>.

2. **Hearings and trials in Civil and Family District Courts shall continue to be scheduled with Court Administration as detailed below. County Court 1 and County Court 2 cases shall be set with the Judicial Aide or Judicial Executive Assistant of either court. While most hearings remain virtual for court participants, jury trials and agreed long-docket settings are being held in person.**
 - a. Non-jury civil and family matters shall be set through Court Administration, either online at <https://www.traviscourtsapplications.org/portal> or by telephone at 512/854-2484, pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Travis County Local Rules, which are posted at https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/images/courts/Docs/local_rules_civildistrict.pdf. In addition to the non-jury settings available in the Local Rules, hearings of three hours or less may be scheduled for 2:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and for 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Thursdays of jury weeks, and 9:00 a.m. on Fridays of any week. Please note that Court Administration will restrict the number of settings on each civil docket based on the number of judges and courtrooms available. Non-jury County Court 1 and County Court 2 civil matters shall be set online at <https://www.traviscourtsapplications.org/portal> or by telephone at CC1 512-854-9241 or CC2 512-854-9242.
 - b. In person jury trials and a limited number of remote jury trials are being held in Civil and Family District Courts during jury weeks. County Court 1 and County Court 2 jury

¹ The Supreme Court of Texas has issued 55 Emergency Orders as of the date of this Order, many of which apply to the Travis County Civil and Family Courts. The emergency orders may be found at <https://www.txcourts.gov/court-coronavirus-information/emergency-orders/>.

² Cases that are specially assigned to particular judges pursuant to Local Rules 2.6 and 10.2 are discussed in paragraph 7 and CPS cases are discussed in paragraphs 14 - 17. Juvenile Court matters are discussed in paragraph 18.

trials are being held in-person, only. In-person and remote hearings and bench trials are being held during jury and non-jury weeks. Most proceedings (other than jury trials) are being held remotely, but for long docket settings, if all counsel and self-represented litigants agree to an in-person setting, they may so indicate on their announcement form, and the court to which the setting is assigned will notify them if an in-person hearing or trial is feasible.

3. Uncontested and agreed non-jury matters, including those requiring testimony, will be handled by requesting written submission consideration directly to the court in which the case is filed. **The twice daily Uncontested Docket remains suspended until further notice. The Duty Judge will NOT be handling uncontested or agreed matters, except when time creates an emergency, so submission is the appropriate manner to handle these matters.** Written submission requests must include any affidavits, declarations, or other necessary supporting records, and should be handled pursuant to the Standing Order for Submission Procedures in Civil and Family Cases, which is posted at: <https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/images/courts/Docs/standing-order-for-submission-procedures.pdf>.
4. **The assigned Duty Judge for each week will handle only emergency matters and orders to appear.** The Duty Judge for each week is posted at <https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/courts/files/dockets/civil-district>. The Thursday morning Continuance Docket, along with Uncontested Docket, will not be held while this Emergency Order remains in effect. Motions for continuance should generally be set on the Central Docket. The Duty Judge should be contacted with any emergency matters, and that judge will determine if a matter qualifies as an emergency, and if so, if an emergency hearing will be held in person or remotely.
5. **Docket call announcements for all civil and family non-jury District Court matters (except for jury trials, which are addressed in paragraph 6) must be received during the announcement period the week before each setting,** including for all family law matters and for hearings on Friday. The form for Civil and Family District Court docket call announcements is posted at https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/images/courts/Docs/docketcall_civilcriminal_district.pdf. The docket call form for County Court 1 and County Court 2 is posted at https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/images/courts/Docs/docket_form_civilcounty.pdf. **Cases in which the required announcements are not made will not be heard as scheduled and must be reset.** On the Friday prior to a scheduled hearing or trial, Civil and Family District Court Administration and Judicial Aides for County Court 1 or County Court 2 will post dockets for the following week with court assignments. Court staff will contact the lawyers and self-represented parties to notify them whether the hearing or trial will be held remotely or in person, and if remote, will notify them of the Zoom meeting IDs and passwords, and to provide links and instructions to upload any documents the parties will seek to introduce into evidence at the hearing or trial, as well as any special procedures for the assigned court. **Additional procedures for the Family Docket can be found at** <https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/courts/files/family-law>.

6. **Jury trials are subject to special requirements, including docket call announcements three weeks before trial, as explained in TRAVIS COUNTY DISTRICT COURT REMOTE JURY TRIAL PROCEDURES,** posted at <https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/images/courts/Docs/remote-jury-trial-procedures-for-lawyers-and-litigants.pdf>. The Local Administrative District Judge continues to make jury trial assignments based on docket order and individual case composition and need. If the lawyers and self-represented litigants agree to a remote jury trial, it will be remote, pending availability of court and staff, but otherwise jury trials will be in person.
7. Matters assigned under Local Rule 2.6 and Local Rule 10.2 shall remain assigned to their current judges. Parties should contact staff for the assigned judge for those matters.
8. Attorneys and litigants are advised that long docket in-person hearings will be granted for good cause and by agreement, and that the judges may use their discretion, inherent power, and authority under the Texas Supreme Court’s Emergency Orders to change the format, time, and length of hearings.
9. All pleadings must first be filed with the District or County Clerk’s office before requesting a hearing or relief from any court.
10. Notice of Zoom hearings shall follow the format of the Sample Notice of Remote Hearing on the Central Docket. The form is posted at <https://www.traviscountytexas.gov/images/courts/Docs/sample-zoom-hearing-notice.pdf>.
11. Any matter submitted to any district judge may be referred to an associate judge where appropriate, or to any other district judge or county court at law judge. A district judge may refer any matter to a county court at law judge and a county court at law judge may refer any matter to a district judge, as is consistent with the Central Docket and the Local Rules.
12. The email addresses for communications with each court are as follows:

53 rd District Court	53.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
98 th District Court	98.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
126 th District Court	126.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
200 th District Court	200.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
201 st District Court	201.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
250 th District Court	250.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
261 st District Court	261.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
345 th District Court	345.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
353 rd District Court	353.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
419 th District Court	419.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
455 th District Court	455.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
459 th District Court	459.submission@traviscountytexas.gov
County Court at Law 1	CCL1.submissions@traviscountytexas.gov
County Court at Law 2	CCL2.submissions@traviscountytexas.gov

Assoc. Judge Hathcock	TCAJ1.submission@traviscountytx.gov
Assoc. Judge Arth	TCAJ2.submission@traviscountytx.gov
Assoc. Judge de la Llata	TCAJ4.submission@traviscountytx.gov
Assoc. Judge Mathews Rodriguez	LMR.Submissions@traviscountytx.gov

13. Attorneys and litigants should utilize all forms of technology in order to keep their cases moving, especially with regard to discovery, remote depositions, and pre-trial matters. **Continuances and motions to quash will not be granted solely to avoid remote discovery or hearings. A limited number of “Zoom rooms” may be booked in advance at the courthouse,** where computers are available for attorneys, parties, or witnesses who do not have access to necessary technology. Those needing to reserve a Zoom room for a hearing or trial should contact the Judicial Executive Assistant for the court to which a hearing or trial is assigned.
14. For Child Protective Services (CPS) cases, the courts will hold all Show Cause, Chapter 262, Aid to Investigate and statutory review hearings on relevant Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday dockets, remotely by Zoom video conference, until the courts find it is reasonably possible to proceed in-person, considering the circumstances. The courts will notify parties on any cases set to be heard for an in-person hearing.
15. For other contested CPS matters, specifically, matters set on the CPS Monday Short Dockets, these hearings will be held in-person unless otherwise determined by the presiding judge. Decisions to allow a contested CPS matter to be heard remotely will be at the discretion of the judge.
16. For CPS bench trials set on the Central Civil Long Docket, these may proceed remotely if judicially authorized. Decisions to allow a CPS bench trial to be heard remotely will be at the discretion of the presiding judge.
17. Any emergency matters requiring immediate court attention may be submitted to the Presiding CPS Court Judge as follows:

126 th District Court	Hon. Aurora Martinez Jones	AMJ.Submissions@traviscountytx.gov
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18. This Order does not include Juvenile Court matters.
19. Where there are conflicting provisions, this Fifth Amended Emergency Order Regarding COVID-19 supersedes the Travis County Local Rules and any and all Standing Orders.

SIGNED and FILED with District Clerk's and County Clerk's Offices on this 19th day of September, 2022.



MARIA CANTU HEXSEL
Judge, 53rd District Court



JAN SOIFER
Judge, 345th District Court



RHONDA HURLEY
Judge, 98th District Court



MADELEINE CONNOR
Judge, 353rd District Court



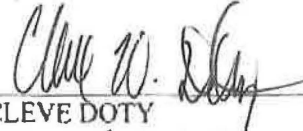
AURORA MARTINEZ JONES
Judge, 126th District Court



CATHERINE A. MAUZY
Judge, 419th District Court



JESSICA MANGRUM
Judge, 200th District Court



CLEVE DOTY
Judge, 455th District Court



AMY CLARK MEACHUM
Judge, 201st District Court



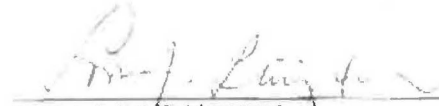
MAYA GUERRA GAMBLE
Judge, 459th District Court



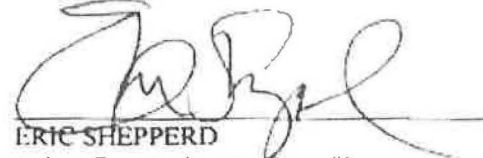
KARIN CRUMP
Judge, 250th District Court



TODD WONG
Judge, County Court at Law #1



LORA J. LIVINGSTON
Judge, 261st District Court



ERIC SHEPPERD
Judge, County Court at Law #2