

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI**

**IN RE:**

COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT  
CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY THE OUTBREAK  
OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)

**GENERAL ORDER**

This General Order is being issued in response to the recent outbreak of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) throughout the United States. The United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri has closely monitored the outbreak of COVID-19, including guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”). The CDC’s guidance includes multiple types of mitigation strategies for communities with local COVID-19 transmission, with such strategies generally aimed at reducing or avoiding exposure to infected individuals.

In consideration of the pandemic resulting from the COVID-19 virus and to reduce the congregation of large numbers of people in courthouses, it is hereby ORDERED that:

1. Effective immediately, all civil and criminal (grand and petit) jury selections and jury trials scheduled to commence before any district or magistrate judge in the Western District of Missouri are hereby CONTINUED through March 29, 2020;
2. All trial-specific deadlines in criminal cases are CONTINUED through March 29, 2020. Individual judges may continue trial-specific deadlines in civil cases in the exercise of their discretion;
3. All grand jury proceedings in the Western District of Missouri are hereby CONTINUED through March 29, 2020. Due to the unavailability of a grand jury in this District during the pendency of this General Order, the 30-day time period for filing an indictment is tolled as to each defendant until this General Order terminates. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3161(b);
4. The Court, on its own motion, finds that the ends of justice served by ordering the continuance of all criminal jury trials outweighs each defendant’s right to and the public’s interest in speedy indictment or trial. Therefore, the time period of the

continuances implemented by this General Order will be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A), subject to the entry of an order addressing the same by the presiding judge in each case;

5. All non-emergency criminal and civil hearings are CONTINUED through March 29, 2020. However, individual judges may continue to hold such hearings, conferences, and bench trials in the exercise of their discretion as may be necessary and appropriate to ensure the fairness of the proceedings and to preserve the rights of the parties;
6. Criminal matters before magistrate judges, such as initial appearances, arraignments, detention hearings, and the issuance of warrants, will continue to take place in the ordinary course;
7. This Order does not affect the Court's consideration of criminal or civil motions that can be resolved without oral argument;
8. All bankruptcy hearings and trials through March 29, 2020, will be conducted by telephone or continued based on the circumstances and in the discretion of the judge;
9. Subject to the foregoing, all courthouses and offices in the Western District of Missouri will remain open for business. However, the public is encouraged to follow all applicable public health guidelines and precautions. Electronic filings may still be made through CM/ECF. Please consult the Court's website at <https://www.mow.uscourts.gov/> for current information; and
10. This General Order is effective immediately and will remain in effect through Sunday, March 29, 2020, unless extended by further Order of this Court.

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

DATE: March 16, 2020

/s/ Beth Phillips  
BETH PHILLIPS, CHIEF JUDGE  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT