

IN THE 24<sup>th</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT OF MISSOURI  
MADISON, STE. GENEVIEVE, ST. FRANCOIS AND  
WASHINGTON COUNTIES  
STATE OF MISSOURI

**Administrative Order**

**In Re: St. Francois County Phase Zero Reversion November 12, 2020**

WHEREAS, the existence and spread of the COVID-19 has resulted in the declaration of a world-wide pandemic; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative to take steps to protect the health and safety of all employees of the 24<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, all judicial officers and all attorneys and parties who have essential court hearings or other necessary business in this Judicial Circuit while also balancing the rights of all said individuals and parties to litigation; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate and necessary to take quick action to reduce the possibility of exposure to COVID-19 and to reduce the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the unprecedented circumstances existing at this time warrant this administrative action; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 virus spreads between people who are in close contact with one another through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes; and

WHEREAS, a large gathering of individuals without necessary mitigation for the spread of infection may pose a risk of the spread of infectious disease; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Court to employ all reasonable and prudent measures to help protect the general public, litigants, lawyers and employees from the spread of COVID-19 creating this emergency; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of Missouri on August 1, 2020 ordered revised operational directives to help Missouri Courts begin easing COVID-19 restrictions on in-person proceedings.

WHEREAS, a presiding judge may evaluate the Gateway Criteria for local conditions with respect to COVID-19 and, if the local conditions worsen, may order a move to a lower Operating Phase under the operational directives laid out by the Missouri Supreme Court;

WHEREAS, Phase Zero specifically requires a court suspend all in-person proceedings with certain enumerated exceptions at the discretion of the Presiding Judge and the judge presiding in the matter;

WHEREAS, the Presiding Judge of the 24<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit has conferred with the judges of St. Francois County, local public health officials and public health departments, and has been advised that the local conditions with respect to COVID-19 require St. Francois County to revert to Phase Zero of the Supreme Court of Missouri's Revised Operational Directives.

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED:**

Effective November 12, 2020 all courts operating in the St. Francois County Courthouse shall revert to Phase Zero of the Supreme Court of Missouri's Operational Directives.

All in-person proceedings are hereby suspended with the following exceptions, at the discretion of the Presiding Judge and the judge presiding in the matter:

- Proceedings necessary to protect the constitutional rights of criminal defendants, including the right to a speedy trial, and the rights afforded under section 544.676.3;
- Proceedings pursuant to chapters 210 and 211 pertaining to juvenile delinquency and abuse, neglect, and termination of parental rights;
- Proceedings pursuant to chapter 453 pertaining to adoption;
- Proceedings in which civil or criminal jury trials are already in progress as of March 16, 2020;
- Proceedings pursuant to chapter 455 pertaining to orders of protection;
- Proceedings related to emergency child custody orders;
- Proceedings related to petitions for temporary restraining orders or other forms of temporary injunctive relief;
- Proceedings related to emergency mental health orders;
- Proceedings pursuant to Chapter 475 for emergency guardianship or conservatorship;
- Proceedings directly related to the COVID-19 public health emergency;

Masks are required to enter the Courthouse and shall be worn at all times.

Social distancing is required of court staff, attorneys, parties and witnesses in all areas of the courthouse.

Individuals entering the courthouse will be subject to screening for symptoms of COVID-19 including temperature checks. Those with a temperature over 100 degrees may be prohibited from entering the courthouse.

Extra cleaning and disinfecting will occur throughout each day and hand sanitizer will be made available.

All court staff and judicial employees shall adhere to the guidelines as laid out above with respect to the measures necessary to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for the public, court staff, attorneys and any other individuals doing business before the Courts of the 24<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit.

This order shall remain in full force and effect for no less than fourteen days, at which time the presiding judge may evaluate the Gateway Criteria after conference with local health officials to determine whether a move to Phase One of the Missouri Supreme Court's Operational Directives is appropriate.

So Ordered this 12 day of Nov, 2020:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wendy Wexler Horn', written over a horizontal line.

Wendy Wexler Horn, Presiding Judge

EXHIBIT A

Notice to the Supreme Court of Missouri of Higher/Lower Operating Phase

I, Wendy Horn, (presiding judge or chief judge) of  
Circuit 24 notify the Supreme Court of Missouri that the following will  
move to Operating Phase 0 on the 12 day of Nov, 2020.

Mark all that apply:

☐ Entire Judicial Circuit/Appellate District; or

☒ County/Counties of St. Francois within the Circuit;

and/or

☒ Municipal Division(s) of Leadaverton within the Circuit.

Dated: 11-12-20

Wendy Horn  
(Presiding Judge or Chief Judge)