

FILED
U.S. DISTRICT COURT
AUGUSTA DIV.

20 MAR 17 AM 9:01

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA

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IN RE:)
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COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY) Miscellaneous Case No. _____

MC120-004

STANDING ORDER

The Court enters this standing order to address continued court operations in light of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. The Court observes that the President of the United States has declared a National Emergency throughout the nation in response to the spread of the coronavirus; the Governor of the State of Georgia has declared a public health emergency throughout the state in response to the spread of the coronavirus; the World Health Organization has declared coronavirus a pandemic; and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and other public health authorities have advised the taking of precautions to reduce the possibility of exposure to the virus and slow the spread of the disease.

In order to protect public health, including the health of court employees, parties, and court participants, the Court finds it necessary to adjust its operating procedures. To reduce the size of public gatherings, minimize travel, and maximize social distancing, the United States District Court for the Southern District of Georgia hereby orders that it shall remain open for business with the following adjustments to its normal operations:

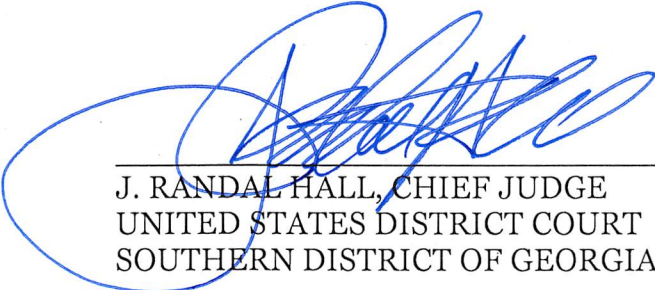
1. Persons falling into one of the following categories shall be denied admittance into any division courthouse in the Southern District of Georgia without obtaining an exception from the Chief Judge:
 - a. Anyone who has been to or been in close contact with anyone who has been to one of the designated Level 3 countries (as now or hereafter designated) within the 14 days immediately preceding attempted access to the courthouse, which countries presently include China, Iran, South Korea, and all European countries;
 - b. Anyone who has been on a cruise within the 14 days immediately preceding attempted access to the courthouse;
 - c. Anyone who has been asked to self-quarantine by any healthcare provider or who lives with someone who has been asked to self-quarantine;
 - d. Anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 (coronavirus) or has had contact with anyone who has been so diagnosed; and
 - e. Anyone who, exhibiting any symptoms of illness, is deemed by the Court or a Court Security Officer as a public health or safety threat.
2. In addition to the individuals specifically restricted from admittance by Paragraph 1, for all proceedings except criminal jury trials, only persons who visit the courthouse on official business shall be admitted, unless otherwise approved by a District Judge.
3. With regard to criminal cases, the Court finds that the right of defendants in criminal cases and the public to a speedier trial during the next 30 days is substantially outweighed by the public interest of protecting the health and safety of the defendants, case participants, court employees, jurors, and the

public. The ends of justice require the following action. Accordingly, the following time period, March 17, 2020 to April 17, 2020, shall be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. §3161(h)(7)(A). Although this order shall permit any jury trials to be continued during this 30 day period, any defendant in a criminal case shall have the right to file a motion for a speedier trial, which shall be considered and decided by the judge assigned to the defendant's case.

To avoid confusion, the Court emphasizes that the following activities shall not be affected by today's order:

1. Criminal matters before Magistrate Judges, such as initial appearances, arraignments, detention hearings, the issuance of search warrants, and traffic court shall continue to take place in the ordinary course.
2. Grand juries shall continue to meet.
3. Individual judges will continue to hold hearings, conferences, and jury or bench trials, unless ordered otherwise by the presiding judge.
4. The Clerk's Office and the United States Probation and Pretrial Services Office shall remain open.

ORDER ENTERED, this 17th day of March, 2020.



J. RANDAL HALL, CHIEF JUDGE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA