



Council of Judges  
El Paso County Courthouse

**Please check back for updates; Last updated 6/29/2020, 2:20p.m.**

**THE COURTS ARE NOT CLOSED.**

The Council of Judges of El Paso TX is hosting this collection of instructions from the Courts and related Justice Partners for the purpose of providing consistent, up to date and accurate information to the justice community and to the public during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The policies and guidelines contained in this document are subject to change as directives and circumstances change.

[Orders of the Supreme Court and Texas Court of Appeals](#)

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## GENERAL POLICY OF THE COURTS

In consultation with the Texas Department of State Health Services, the Texas Office of Court Administration, the Texas Supreme Court and the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, the El Paso Council of Judges will implement the following policies.

- **Monday, June 1** is the current target date to begin in-person proceedings at the courthouse. The courts will continue to hear nonessential matters by videoconference or postpone nonessential proceedings until June 1.
- **Monday, July 6** is the target date to begin jury trials, subject to social distancing requirements.
- The courts will continue to hear essential matters through the end of May either by videoconference or in-person if necessary and personal safety guidelines can be followed.
- After June 1 courts may, in keeping with the law and direction from the Texas Supreme Court, continue to utilize videoconferencing to avoid exposure risk and further the effective administration of justice.
- Defendants whose matters are being rescheduled should call their attorneys for information regarding a new court date.
- Witnesses subpoenaed to appear in court during this time frame are also excused until further notice.

### **ATTORNEYS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR NOTIFYING WITNESSES AND PARTIES OF ALL CHANGES.**

- Essential proceedings include, but are not limited to, criminal proceedings related to the potential release/detention of an inmate, CPS removal hearings, temporary restraining orders / temporary injunctions, juvenile detention hearings, enforcement of child support or possession of a child hearings, family violence protective orders, and certain mental health proceedings. Please call the court coordinator to conference on any hearing you may feel is “essential.”
- All persons with flu-like symptoms, cold symptoms, a fever, or a cough, should not enter the courthouse or the jail. Attorneys, clients, witnesses, or others who have such conditions should alert the respective court. All courts will make reasonable accommodations and reschedule matters as needed.
- If you need to set a matter for a bond hearing in a misdemeanor case, please call the court. If the court is not available, please call County Court Administration.
- (915) 546-2093
- Anyone having business with the courts is encouraged to communicate with the respective courts by phone or email.

- Attorneys should continue to work towards a resolution of pending matters through telephonic and email communications.
- Contact information for individual courts may be found at:  
<http://www.epcounty.com/courts/directory.htm>
- If you are unable to contact a particular court, you may contact County Court Administration at 915-546-2093 for matters involving County Courts at Law, County Criminal Courts at Law or County Probate Courts.
- If your case is in a District Court and you are unable to contact the court, please call the Council of Judges at 915-546-2143.
- Case information may be found at:  
<http://casesearch.epcounty.com/PublicAccess/default.aspx>

## Non-Essential Hearings Beginning June 1, 2020 - All District and County Courts

1. Jail inmate and probation plea videoconferencing dockets will continue. Judges may, when necessary, schedule in-person proceedings during the times allotted. These guidelines for the scheduling of court hearings are established to diminish the spread of Covid 19 and comply with the requirement of social distancing by reducing the number of individuals who need to be in the courthouse at any given time.

2. Remote Hearings: COURTS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO CONDUCT AS MANY PROCEEDINGS AS POSSIBLE REMOTELY (such as by teleconferencing, videoconferencing or other means, unless litigants or other court participants are unable to successfully participate in a remote hearing for reasons beyond the court's control.)

3. In Person Proceedings:

In person hearings shall be held in accordance with the following guidelines:

- i. Courts shall only be allowed to conduct in person hearings on their assigned day. The assigned day for in person hearings for each court is set out on the Courthouse Schedule for In Person Hearings attached as Exhibit "A".
- ii. Because in person hearings will be scheduled on an advanced basis:
  1. Attorneys will be required to provide court coordinators (via email) with a list of parties, witnesses and support staff who will attend each in person hearing five days prior to the hearing. Failure to provide this notice will result in cancellation of the hearing. Attorneys are strongly encouraged to discuss these rules with their clients and their families.
  2. Space on each floor and in each court room will be extraordinarily limited as social distancing will be required and strictly enforced. Since space is limited, non-essential individuals may not be able to enter the courtroom.
  3. Courts and attorneys are strongly encouraged to protect vulnerable individuals and

those who live with or take care of vulnerable individuals. Deposition testimony or video testimony is strongly encouraged for vulnerable individuals.

## COURTHOUSE SCHEDULE FOR IN PERSON HEARINGS

Blue X = court does not intend to use

| COURTS                      | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|-----------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|
| <b>3rd Floor</b>            |        |         |           |          |        |
| JUSTICE OF THE PEACE #3     |        | X       |           |          | X      |
| <b>4th Floor</b>            |        |         |           |          |        |
| CRIMINAL DISTRICT CRT. #1   | X      |         |           |          |        |
| PROBATE COURT #2            | X      |         |           |          |        |
| COUNTY CRIM. CRT. AT LAW #3 |        |         |           | X        |        |
| 409TH DISTRICT COURT        |        | X       |           |          |        |
| 448TH DISTRICT COURT        |        |         | X         |          |        |
| <b>6th Floor</b>            |        |         |           |          |        |
| 120TH DISTRICT COURT        | X      | X       |           |          |        |
| 168 DISTRICT COURT          |        |         |           |          | X      |
| 171ST DISTRICT COURT        |        |         | X         | X        |        |
| 327TH DISTRICT COURT        |        |         |           |          | X      |
| 327TH TAX COURT             |        |         |           |          | X      |
| TITLE IV-D ONE COURT        |        |         |           | X        |        |
| TITLE IV-D TWO COURT        |        | X       |           |          |        |
| <b>7th Floor</b>            |        |         |           |          |        |
| 346TH DISTRICT COURT        |        |         |           | X        |        |
| COUNTY CRIM. CRT. AT LAW #1 |        |         | X         |          |        |
| COUNTY CRIM. CRT. AT LAW #2 | X      |         | X         |          |        |
| COUNTY CRIM. CRT. AT LAW #4 |        | X       |           |          |        |
| <b>8th Floor</b>            |        |         |           |          |        |
| COUNTY COURT AT LAW #1      |        |         | X         |          |        |
| COUNTY COURT AT LAW #2      |        |         |           | X        |        |
| COUNTY COURT AT LAW #4      |        |         | X         |          |        |
| COUNTY COURT AT LAW #5      |        | X       |           |          | X      |
| COUNTY COURT AT LAW #7      | X      |         |           |          |        |

| COURTS                 | Monday    | Tuesday   | Wednesday | Thursday  | Friday    |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>9th Floor</b>       |           |           |           |           |           |
| 34TH DISTRICT COURT    | X         |           |           |           | X         |
| 243RD DISTRICT COURT   |           | X         |           | X         |           |
| 384TH DISTRICT COURT   |           |           | X         | X         |           |
| 388TH DISTRICT COURT   | X         |           |           |           | X         |
| JURY DUTY COURT        |           |           |           |           |           |
| ASSOC FAMILY CRT. 1    |           |           |           |           |           |
| <b>10th Floor</b>      |           |           |           |           |           |
| 41ST DISTRICT COURT    |           | X         |           | X         |           |
| 205TH DISTRICT COURT   |           |           | X         | X         |           |
| 210TH DISTRICT COURT   |           | X         | X         |           |           |
| COUNTY COURT AT LAW #3 | X         |           |           |           | X         |
| PROTECTIVE ORDER COURT | X         |           |           |           | X         |
| <b>11th Floor</b>      |           |           |           |           |           |
| 65TH DISTRICT COURT    |           | X         | X         |           | X         |
| 383RD DISTRICT COURT   | X         |           |           | X         |           |
| COUNTY COURT AT LAW #6 |           |           |           | X         |           |
| CC6 TAX COURT          |           |           |           | X         |           |
| ASSOC. FAM. COURT 2    | X         |           | X         |           |           |
| ASSOC. FAMILY CRT. 4   |           | X         |           |           | X         |
| <b>12th Floor</b>      |           |           |           |           |           |
| PROBATE COURT #1       |           | X         |           |           |           |
| 8th Court of Appeals   |           |           |           |           |           |
|                        |           |           |           |           |           |
| <b>TOTAL COURTS</b>    | <b>11</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>10</b> |

## CIVIL CASES

### HANDLING NON-ESSENTIAL HEARINGS IN CIVIL CASES

**Goal:** *To continue handling civil matters without in-person hearings and in compliance with the orders of the Texas Supreme Court and Office of Court Administration. Nothing in these procedures should require anyone to violate health and safety recommendations during the national state of emergency involving COVID-19. If any party, lawyer or staff feels that their personal health and safety are at risk because of some procedure outlined below, please contact the court immediately.*

### ALL PROVISIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Nonessential civil proceedings through May 8 will be rescheduled. If attorneys believe that a matter may be resolved telephonically, attorneys should contact the court. Temporary restraining orders and injunctions are considered essential functions.

All civil jury trials set before July 6, 2020 will be re-set.

In order to balance health and welfare concerns with the need for the continued efficient administration of justice, the courts expect all parties and their attorneys to continue working and advancing their cases in compliance with the orders of the Texas Supreme Court. Towards that end, courts with civil dockets remain ready and available to address the needs of parties and attorneys with pending cases. Please email or call the assigned court to request settings and hearings.

Finally, in accordance with the orders of the Texas Supreme Court, all depositions during this COVID-19 pandemic are to be held by videoconference, unless good cause is shown.

## FAMILY COURTS

Until further notice, all family courts will only hear essential hearings which include Department of Family and Protective Services Child Removal hearings, temporary restraining orders, protective orders and, on a case by case basis (decided by the individual judge), enforcement actions or any final matter that would pose a serious financial or dire consequence. As part of the family law courts' efforts to lessen any exposure by the public to any compromising situations, the courts are all working toward having appearances by litigants, witnesses and attorneys occur remotely. Additional information regarding logistics or the platform being utilized by the courts may be obtained from the individual courts.

All uncontested dockets have been cancelled until further notice.

All nonessential hearings are being postponed until after May 8th. As a notice to the public, the Supreme Court may extend or shorten this date, it all depends on how the circumstances of this emergency situation evolve.

Staff from each court will continue to monitor phones and emails to make sure any questions regarding hearings, resettings and protocols are addressed.

We, the judges of the family courts, realize this unfortunate situation has been especially difficult on the families of El Paso and are working to minimize your stress and anxiety in any way we can.

### [County Attorney Instructions for obtaining a Protective Order.](#)

## MAGISTRATE COURTS

June 1: Bond hearings will continue to be conducted remotely via videoconference.

Effective immediately (3/19), automatic bond hearings where the Public Defender is appointed are set at 10:30 a.m. Bond hearings where the private bar is appointed are set at 8:30 a.m. This schedule is effective through April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

All hearings requested by defense counsel before noon will be set at 1:30 p.m. the following day.

IMPORTANT CHANGES IN THE JAIL MAGISTRATE COURT BEGINNING APRIL 4, 2020.

1. On April 4, 2020, the jail magistrate will begin holding 48 hour bond review hearings, 7 days a week. The District Attorney's Office and the Public Defender's Office will be present at these hearings. The Public Defender's attorneys will be appointed for the limited purpose of the 48 hour hearing although a defendant is always free to retain counsel. After the 48 hour hearing,



defendants that qualify for a court appointed counsel and wish to have counsel appointed will have one appointed from the wheel. After the initial bond hearing, a motion to rehear may be requested by the appointed attorney.

2. The 48 hour bond hearings will be conducted by video conference. The jail magistrate court is equipped with Lifesize, video conferencing equipment which allows the court to provide attorneys and staff with remote access to hearings from any computer that has internet access, a camera and microphone. Participants are sent a hyperlink via email that allows them entry into the video conferenced hearing. Initial test runs this past weekend went well and the court anticipates all bond hearings after April 4th will be conducted by video conference.

3. Should it be necessary to conduct in-person bond hearings in the future, the magistrate court will ensure that no more than 10 people are present for any hearing. The magistrate court recently reduced the number of people present at bond hearings by staggering defendants, removing non-essential personnel and reconfiguring the courtroom.

Once these changes are fully implemented only the Judge, detention officer and defendant will be physically present at bond hearings with all other parties participating remotely.

The Judiciary appreciates everyone's cooperation and assistance in making these safety improvements a success.

## INMATE DOCKETS AS OF APRIL 27th, 2020

Starting April 27<sup>th</sup>, felony inmate cases will only be heard by the assigned court. Each district court has been assigned a two hour time slot, once a week, (see dates and times below) in which to hear these cases. The County Courts will continue to hold a central inmate docket. (See dates and times below) All hearings will be heard via videoconference.

Misdemeanor Inmate Docket: To add an inmate to the misdemeanor inmate docket, please contact County Court Administration at 915-546-2093. If your client wishes to plead guilty, please notify [alechuga@epcounty.com](mailto:alechuga@epcounty.com) and plea papers will be emailed to you along with detailed instructions. A phone call may be requested to review plea papers with an inmate defendant. To schedule a phone call email defendant's name and case number to [alechuga@epcounty.com](mailto:alechuga@epcounty.com). County Court Administration will then contact you with the scheduled date and time of your phone call.

Felony Inmate Dockets: To add an inmate to the docket, please contact the assigned District Court. The Courts directory is online [here](#). If your client wishes to plead guilty and you would like a phone call with your client to review the plea papers, please email the signed plea papers, client's name, cause number(s), and a number where you may be reached to [jailcall@epcounty.com](mailto:jailcall@epcounty.com).

Plea agreements should be worked out prior to requesting a hearing. The District Attorney's office will prepare the written plea agreement and make it available electronically. The plea agreement should specify all non-standard terms.

# INMATE DOCKET CALENDAR

| Monday  | Tuesday  | Wednesday   | Thursday  | Friday  |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| 8:00 to 10:00 <b>243rd</b><br>10:00- 12:00 <u>Misd.</u> | 8:00 to 10:00 <b>409<sup>th</sup></b><br>10:00- 12:00 <u>Misd.</u> | 8:00 to 10:00 <b>384<sup>th</sup></b><br>10:00- 12:00 <u>Misd.</u>    | 8:00 to 10:00 <b>346<sup>th</sup></b><br>10:00- 12:00 <u>Misd.</u>          | 8:00 to 10:00 <b>171<sup>st</sup></b><br>10:00- 12:00 <u>Misd.</u>    |
| 1:00 to 3:00 <b>DCR1</b><br>3:00 to 5:00 <b>Family</b>  | 1:00 to 3:00 <b>41<sup>st</sup></b><br>3:00 to 5:00 <b>210th</b>   | 1:00 to 3:00 <b>120<sup>th</sup></b><br>3:00 to 5:00 <b>384THCOMP</b> | 1:00 to 3:00 <b>205<sup>th</sup></b><br>3:00 to 5:00 <b>34<sup>th</sup></b> | 1:00 to 3:00 <b>168<sup>th</sup></b><br>3:00 to 5:00 <b>384THCOMP</b> |

## May

|                       | Monday                        | Tuesday                       | Wednesday                     | Thursday                      | Friday                        |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Inmate Central Docket |                               |                               |                               |                               | 1<br>10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CCR3 |
| Non-Essentials        | 4<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CCR2  | 5<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CCR3  | 6<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CC1   | 7<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CC4   | 8<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CC7   |
| Inmate Central Docket | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CCR2      | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CCR3      | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CC1       | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CC4       | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CC7       |
| Non-Essentials        | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CCR1        | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CCR4        | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CC2         |                               |                               |
| Non-Essentials        | 11<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CC2  | 12<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CC7  | 13<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CCR1 | 14<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CCR4 | 15<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CC1  |
| Inmate Central Docket | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CC2       | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CC4       | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CCR1      | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CCR4      | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CC1       |
| Non-Essentials        | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CC1         | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CC4         | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CCR2        | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CCR3        |                               |
| Non-Essentials        | 18<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CCR1 | 19<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CCR4 | 20<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CC2  | 21<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CC7  | 22<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CC2  |
| Inmate Central Docket | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CCR1      | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CCR4      | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CC2       | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CC7       | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CC2       |
| Non-Essentials        | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CCR2        | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CCR3        | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CC1         | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CC4         |                               |
| Non-Essentials        | 25 HOLIDAY                    | 26<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CC1  | 27<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CCR1 | 28<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CCR3 | 29<br>8:00 AM - 10:00 AM CC4  |
| Inmate Central Docket |                               | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CC1       | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CCR1      | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CCR3      | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM CC4       |
| Non-Essentials        |                               | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CC7         | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CCR2        | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CCR4        | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CC2         |

# HANDLING NON-ESSENTIAL HEARINGS IN CRIMINAL CASES

## Effective Immediately

Pleas to Probation\* for Defendants Out on Bond:

Once an agreement has been reached, the prosecutor will send plea papers to defense counsel for review and signature with defendant. Signed plea documents should be returned to the court and set for hearing. On the day of the plea hearing, defendant will take his plea from 1015 N. Campbell. The flyer on page 22 should be provided to defendants so that they understand the health and safety protocols in place.

|             | Monday |           | Tuesday |             | Wednesday  |           | Thursday |            | Friday     |           |
|-------------|--------|-----------|---------|-------------|------------|-----------|----------|------------|------------|-----------|
|             | Jail   | Probation | Jail    | Probation   | Jail       | Probation | Jail     | Probation  | Jail       | Probation |
| 8AM - 10AM  | 243rd  | MISD      | 409th   | MISD        | 384th      | MISD      | 346th    | MISD       | 171st      | MISD      |
| 10AM - 12PM | MISD   | 243rd     | MISD    | 409th       | MISD       | 384th     | MISD     | 346th      | MISD       | 171st     |
| 1PM - 3PM   | DCR1   | MISD      | 41st    | 210th /MISD | 120th      | MISD      | 205th    | 34th /MISD | 168th      | MISD      |
| 3PM - 5PM   | Family | DCR1      | 210th   | 41st        | 384th Comp | 120th     | 34th     | 205th      | 384th Comp | 168th     |

## Beginning 4/13/2020

*Goal: To continue handling criminal matters without in-person hearings and in compliance with the orders of the Texas Supreme Court, Court of Criminal Appeals and Office of Court Administration. Nothing in these procedures should require anyone to violate health and safety recommendations during the national state of emergency involving covid-19. If any party, lawyer or staff feels that their personal health and safety are at risk because of some procedure outlined below, please contact the court immediately.*

### **ALL PROVISIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

1. Jury Trials: No jury trial will be set before **July 6**. Parties will be given at least 30 days' notice of a jury trial setting. While we hope the stay home orders will be lifted or loosened prior to this date, it will take some time before community members will feel safe to return to the courthouse.
2. Until further notice, any hearings that are currently set and have not been rescheduled by the respective court will be handled electronically, telephonically or by video conference. Attorneys will not be required to attend any in person hearings until further notice from the Texas Supreme Court, the Court of Criminal Appeals and any applicable Governor's orders.
3. Non-dispositive pre-trial hearings. Courts will begin conducting pretrial hearings on April 20, 2020. Attorneys will be notified electronically regarding the type of hearing and the manner in which the hearing will be conducted. These matters will be handled electronically, telephonically or by video conference. Defendants will not be required to appear, but if they wish to do so, defense counsel should provide a telephone or video conference option for the defendant.

4. In a court's discretion, non-evidentiary motions may be handled by submission. Upon notice of the filing of such motion, the court will provide notice of a submission date. Opposing counsel may file any responsive pleading prior to the submission date as instructed by the court.
5. Arraignments. Waivers of arraignment will be accepted by all courts. Courts will send waiver forms to defense counsel and waivers signed by the defendants must be returned to the court electronically within 30 days of receipt. Failure to timely return the waiver to the court may result in a bond forfeiture at the court's discretion.
6. Admonishment, Review or Probation Status hearings: Depending on the circumstances, some of these matters may be handled telephonically or electronically.
7. "Non-essential" plea hearings include pleas by defendants who are not in custody and pleas to jail/prison time. To the extent that these hearings can be conducted without violating the stay at home orders, these hearings will be conducted by video conference. Attorneys may request such settings beginning April 20, 2020. Fingerprints will be obtained in the jail, if the defendant is in custody, or if the defendant is not in custody, the booking fingerprints will be made of record in the hearing and affixed to the judgment.
8. The courts intend to handle contested evidentiary hearings beginning on June 1, 2020. If health and safety restrictions have been lifted, these hearings will be held in open court with live witnesses. If health and safety restrictions do not permit, these hearings will be conducted via video conference. If this becomes necessary, additional guidance on the manner in which these hearings will be conducted will be provided. Attorneys are encouraged to become familiar with Zoom as this is the platform the courts intend to use.

## PROBATE COURTS

### COVID-19 Coronavirus Guidelines for El Paso County Probate Courts

Over the last few days the Probate Courts have received a series of emails from OCA, the Texas Supreme Court and the Presiding Judges of our region and the Statutory Probate Courts. We have been ordered to cancel all jury trials and all nonessential matters immediately. For purposes of probate court proceedings the term "essential matters" has been defined to include the following: mental health hearings, temporary guardianships (when needed), temporary administrations, and guardianships. As a result of this directive, the El Paso County Statutory Probate Courts will not cancel nonessential hearings, but will effective immediately, begin to conduct hearings as follows:

1. Beginning Monday, March 16, 2020, hearing to probate a will, establish an administration (dependent or independent) declare heirship, set up a temporary administration, temporary guardianship or permanent guardianship shall be conducted telephonically under the following guidelines:

- For probates and heirships the applicant's attorney, applicant and witnesses shall gather at the office of the applicant's attorney. The court will call the office as soon as we are done with the prior hearing. Where an attorney ad litem is involved the court will conference the ad litem into the telephonic hearing from the ad litem's office;
- In guardianships all parties including the proposed Ward and ad litem will gather at the applicant's attorney's office. With respect to waiving a proposed Ward's appearance, special care should be given to elderly proposed Wards and proposed Wards with compromised immune systems;
- All orders for hearings must be emailed to Ruben Sandoval at [rsandoval@epcounty.com](mailto:rsandoval@epcounty.com) prior to the hearing for Probate Court No. 1 and Bea Castillo at [bcastillo@epcounty.com](mailto:bcastillo@epcounty.com) for Probate Court No. 2. The proof of death and oath shall be executed before a notary after the hearing is concluded and e-filed;
- After the order, proof of death, oath and bond (if applicable) are filed a runner can be sent to the county clerk's office to pick up letters.

2. Until further notice both courts shall remain staffed. All orders that do not require a hearing can be emailed for signature to either [gllopez@epcounty.com](mailto:gllopez@epcounty.com) or [jstrelitz@epcounty.com](mailto:jstrelitz@epcounty.com) in Probate Court No. 1 and [bcastillo@epcounty.com](mailto:bcastillo@epcounty.com) or [mamartinez@epcounty.com](mailto:mamartinez@epcounty.com) in Probate Court No. 2.

3. Both courts will also be available to sign TROs.

4. If a particular case requires a contested hearing the Courts will deal with these cases on a case by case basis. You should contact the court at least a week prior to your hearing to discuss issues associated with contested hearings.

5. This may seem obvious, but if you, a witness, or client is sick, do not bring them to the court under any circumstances.

Please keep in mind that this is a fluid situation. OCA and the Supreme Court will probably continue to send out revised guidelines as COVID-19 progresses. The Probate Courts will probably revise these guidelines as well. Presently all protocols are scheduled to be re-evaluated on April 1, 2020.

Thank you for your cooperation.

## OPEN COURT YOUTUBE CHANNELS

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 34th District Court               | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSatpkF0ICbAtuMuvfZCcbg">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSatpkF0ICbAtuMuvfZCcbg</a>  |
| 41st District Court               | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW8rnmeEpsLxIVFD-5JUzqg">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW8rnmeEpsLxIVFD-5JUzqg</a>  |
| 65th District Court               | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCR4J6Bj5UIF56T_rmN0L0AA">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCR4J6Bj5UIF56T_rmN0L0AA</a>  |
| 120th District Court              | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrbXCxfFn1ZytkKpXBUc8lw">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrbXCxfFn1ZytkKpXBUc8lw</a>  |
| 168th District Court              | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzBFHzfuCYhLn_w2UZca2LA">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzBFHzfuCYhLn_w2UZca2LA</a>  |
| 171 st District Court             | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkbLSDnwq3daSe3k9wEcKhQ/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkbLSDnwq3daSe3k9wEcKhQ/live</a>  |
| 205th District Court              | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiscJkMq3RZusaOlQVFgizA/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiscJkMq3RZusaOlQVFgizA/live</a>  |
| 210th District Court              | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwLvPhVNyYl6wgCCAep9bTA/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwLvPhVNyYl6wgCCAep9bTA/live</a>  |
| 243rd District Court              | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbUunttTaOeHim0E3CynyVA/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbUunttTaOeHim0E3CynyVA/live</a>  |
| 327th District Court              | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3B3dbXoVe6anGt8dkjXgjlw/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3B3dbXoVe6anGt8dkjXgjlw/live</a>  |
| 346th District Court              | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmDaeh8_fXiRfQhKl-VTU4w/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmDaeh8_fXiRfQhKl-VTU4w/live</a>  |
| 383rd District Court/Assoc. Ct. 2 | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC67GUlg4cTbxPhVxesMuldw/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC67GUlg4cTbxPhVxesMuldw/live</a>  |
| 384th District Court              | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCawBW6e9T5MDs0Xp7bw0c4A/">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCawBW6e9T5MDs0Xp7bw0c4A/</a>  |
| 388th District Court              | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCBSXkZb2_d3jxONZdwoiTw">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCBSXkZb2_d3jxONZdwoiTw</a>  |
| 388th District Court/Assoc. Ct. 1 | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCReaQa02UbLeNWEcJjQNHrA/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCReaQa02UbLeNWEcJjQNHrA/live</a>  |
| 409th District Court              | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpBoxQgR41gpuzoMrPcCatQ/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpBoxQgR41gpuzoMrPcCatQ/live</a>  |
| County Court at Law 1             | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UClICd_ftLsQpZzX4F7507sw">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UClICd_ftLsQpZzX4F7507sw</a>  |
| County Court at Law 2             | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEc16jm5zGR2TngFUs6jgQg">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEc16jm5zGR2TngFUs6jgQg</a>  |
| County Court at Law 4             | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaZE2O8hQoB14629b1unpUg">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaZE2O8hQoB14629b1unpUg</a>  |
| County Court at Law 5             | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCV9vesAnysG-YnhLT0ays6A/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCV9vesAnysG-YnhLT0ays6A/live</a>  |
| County Court a Law 6              | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgY5ERwidGBWx4esgsuaUkQ">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgY5ERwidGBWx4esgsuaUkQ</a>  |
| County Court at Law 7             | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUFo9qOWHtJLGE6miCMzEVA/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUFo9qOWHtJLGE6miCMzEVA/live</a>  |
| County Criminal Court at Law #2   | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGHsUqF1M3hqV061qWFaz_w/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGHsUqF1M3hqV061qWFaz_w/live</a>  |
| County Criminal Court at Law 1    | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWw7VBeELIEvOP17I6k10aA/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWw7VBeELIEvOP17I6k10aA/live</a>  |
| Criminal District Court #1        | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZ9RVOBIGiOx9QYiaASYhDA?">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZ9RVOBIGiOx9QYiaASYhDA?</a>  |
| El Paso IV-D Court                | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj-b9_mRRHF-VzFAZ2VsN_g/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj-b9_mRRHF-VzFAZ2VsN_g/live</a>  |
| Probate Court #1                  | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbyNhOhN5RX9LiPmbeADrHg">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbyNhOhN5RX9LiPmbeADrHg</a>  |
| Probate Court #2                  | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCb-mj4H49Xd3vktXL1Pd6pA">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCb-mj4H49Xd3vktXL1Pd6pA</a>  |
| El Paso IV-D Court (J. Gonzalez)  | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj-b9_mRRHF-VzFAZ2VsN_g">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj-b9_mRRHF-VzFAZ2VsN_g</a><br><a href="https://www.facebook.com/judgephyllis.martinezgonzalez.50">https://www.facebook.com/judgephyllis.martinezgonzalez.50</a> |
| Sr. Judge Alcala                  | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyx6qeE2UWrQsKfr6vUEa5Q/live">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyx6qeE2UWrQsKfr6vUEa5Q/live</a>  |
| Sr. Judge Rivera                  | <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCg_CdLke0LxqZsim39NMnrQ">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCg_CdLke0LxqZsim39NMnrQ</a>  |

## JUSTICES OF THE PEACE FIRST AND SECOND STANDING ORDERS



### FIRST STANDING ORDER REGARDING CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) MITIGATION AND ALL JUSTICES OF THE PEACE IN EL PASO COUNTY (Order No. 01)

This Order is being issued in response to the recent outbreak of novel coronavirus in the United States and the State of Texas. The World Health Organization has declared that COVID 19 qualifies as a global pandemic, having spread across more than 120 countries with more than 4,000 confirmed cases in the United States. El Paso County has been closely monitoring the outbreak of novel coronavirus (which causes the disease designated as COVID- 19), including careful monitoring of the developing guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC"). The CDC has described the outbreak in the United States as a "rapidly evolving situation and is providing continuously updated guidance as to the appropriate community response to COVID-1 9 as conditions worsen. The CDC's guidance includes multiple types of mitigation strategies generally aimed at reducing or avoiding exposure to infected individuals

THEREFORE, given the severity of the risk of the spread of COVID-19, and taking into consideration matters of public health, while reducing the size of public gatherings, the Justices of the Peace Courts of El Paso County ORDER:

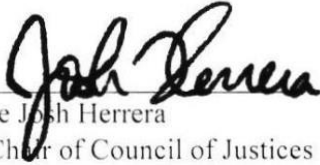
1. All civil and criminal bench and jury trials scheduled to begin on any date from now through April 16, 2020, are continued, to a date to be reset by each Court. Each Court will contact litigants regarding a reset date as soon as practicable for the Court, with the interest of everyone's health in mind;
2. Court Dockets scheduled to begin on any date from now through April 16, 2020, are continued, to a date be reset by each Court. Each Court will contact litigants regarding a reset date as soon as practicable for the Court;
3. Court Dockets on any date from now through April 16, 2020 will be limited to only "essential court proceedings." Essential court proceedings shall be limited to writs of re-entry, writs of retrieval, writs of restoration, magistration of defendants in custody of defendants in custody and of fugitives from justice (in or out of custody), and repair and remedy cases that materially affect the physical health or safety of a tenant;
4. Each Court will remain open during regular business hours (subject to further review), continue to accept filings, service constituents, and review all matters filed by submission.

Because the current situation remains fluid and evolving, the Court may modify and/or extend the terms of this Order. Otherwise, this Order will remain in effect through April 16, 2020, and then will expire.



Furthermore, if a party or an attorney is exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms, including fever, coughing or sneezing, or if one believes he or she may have been exposed to COVID-19, the Courts encourage those involved to make arrangements with each Court telephonically or electronically.

**SIGNED, ENTERED AND ORDERED this 18<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.**



Judge Josh Herrera  
Co-Chair of Council of Justices  
Justices of the Peace in El Paso County, TX

**Judge Robert Pearson**  
J.P. Precinct One  
424 Executive Ste 100  
El Paso, TX 79902  
(915) 534-3917

**Judge Bryan J. Haggerty**  
J.P. Precinct Two  
4641 Cohen, Ste. A  
El Paso, TX 79936  
(915) 751-7575

**Judge Josh Herrera**  
J.P. Precinct Three  
500 E. San Antonio, Rm 308  
El Paso, TX 79901  
(915) 546-2170

**Judge Rebecca Bustamante**  
J.P. Precinct Four  
2350 George Dieter Ste. 8  
El Paso, TX 79936  
(915) 538-1600

**Judge John Chatman**  
J.P. Precinct Five  
9521 Socorro Rd. St. B#2  
El Paso, TX 79927  
(915) 859-3744

**Judge Ruben Lujan**  
J.P. Precinct Six  
190 San Elizario Rd.  
Clint, TX 79836  
(915) 851-2019

**Judge Enedina Serna**  
J.P. Precinct Six-Two  
14608 Greg  
El Paso, TX 79938  
(915) 855-3062

**Judge Stephanie Fietze**  
J.P. Precinct Seven  
435 Vinton Rd.  
El Paso, TX 79821  
(915) 886-2599





SECOND STANDING ORDER REGARDING CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)  
MITIGATION AND ALL JUSTICES OF THE PEACE IN EL PASO COUNTY (Order No. 02)

Due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), and by the authority granted by law and by the any EMERGENCY ORDER by and of THE SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS REGARDING THE COVID-19 STATE OF DISASTER by and of the Supreme Court of Texas and the Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas, the eight Justices of the Peace in El Paso County ("Justices of the Peace") issue the following order based on our previous order (Order No. 1) to protect the community, limit exposure, and provide for an efficient judicial system:

1. This order amends paragraph 1 of the FIRST STANDING ORDER REGARDING CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) MITIGATION AND ALL JUSTICES OF THE PEACE IN EL PASO COUNTY (hereinafter referred to as "Order No.1").
  - a. All civil and criminal bench trials scheduled to begin from April 16, 2020 through May 18, 2020 shall be continued to a date to be reset by each Court. Each Court will contact litigants regarding a reset date as soon as practicable for the Court.
2. Any deadline for the filing or service of any civil case is tolled from March 13, 2020, until June 1, 2020, unless extended by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. This does not include deadlines for perfecting appeal or for other appellate proceedings, requests for relief from which should be directed to the Court involved and should be generously granted.
3. This order amends paragraph 3 ("essential court proceedings") of Order No. 1 to include imminent threat eviction proceedings.
  - a. An eviction case may proceed as an essential court proceeding only if the plaintiff files a "Sworn Complaint for Forcible Detainer for Threat to Person or For Cause"; and,
  - b. The Court determines that the facts and grounds for eviction stated in the Complaint, under oath with personal knowledge, taken as true, show that the actions of the tenant, or the tenant's household members or guests, pose an

imminent threat of (i) physical harm to the plaintiff, the plaintiff's employees, or other tenants, or (ii) criminal activity; and

- c. The Court signs an order stating procedures for the case to proceed.
4. A writ of possession on a residential or commercial property may issue; however, a hearing will not be held until after May 8, 2020.
5. New filings may be accepted, but the time period in Texas Rule of Civil Procedure 510.4(a)(10) is suspended, and issuance and service of citation may not occur until after April 30, 2020.
6. No warrants based on failing to appear or for violating a promise to appear to a Justice Court for a traffic C citation, cite-and-release charge, or a summons will be issued until June 15, 2020.
7. In order to alleviate the threat of COVID-19 in County Jails, the Justices of the Peace temporarily suspend active warrants for all misdemeanor Class C offenses from their courts, until May 18, 2020. All the requirements and conditions of the warrants previously signed by the Justices of the Peace remain in effect but are suspended during this state of emergency. For the effective suspension, the El Paso County Sheriff's Office, El Paso County Constables, and all other law enforcement agencies are directed to relate this order to all law enforcement officers requesting confirmation of warrants, so that they are aware not to bring Class C defendants to jail.

Therefore, all warrants for misdemeanor Class C offenses from the Justices of the Peace are temporarily suspended until May 18, 2020. For the duration of the suspension, the El Paso County Sheriff's Office is ordered to not accept a defendant who solely has a Class C misdemeanor warrant from the El Paso County Justices of the Peace.

8. The Constables of El Paso County are authorized that they may not serve Justice Court papers if it is in their best discretion based on the public's health and deputy constable's safety through May 18, 2020. Failure to serve papers based on this order shall not be considered by any Court with regard to statute of limitations or diligent service analysis. The Constables of El Paso County must continue to service Justice Court documents with regard to essential court proceedings in all instances.
9. Each Justice Court is authorized to limit building access to comply with any recommendations and orders from the El Paso County Judge, County Commissioners and/or any county public health officials regarding limiting the number of people in a public space or room, but not limited to screening whether a person's business with the Justice Court falls into essential court business and limiting the hours a Justice Court is open to the public. If a Justice Court limits the hours it is open to the public, notice of such limitations shall be posted on the Justice Court's official website and/or at its main entrance.

10. This order does not diminish the Justice of the Peace's ability to continue to issue judgments, orders, and ruling by submission if already authorized by law to do so for non-eviction cases.

This order is in effect immediately.

The time periods in this order may be extended in a subsequent order if required.

Signed: April 14, 2020



*Josh Herrera*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge Josh Herrera

On behalf of the Justices of the Peace in El Paso County, TX

Hon. Robert Pearson  
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1  
El Paso County, Texas

Hon. Josh Herrera  
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 3  
El Paso County, Texas

Hon. John Chatman  
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 5  
El Paso County, Texas

Hon. Enedina "Nina" Serna  
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 6-2  
El Paso County, Texas

Hon. Brian Haggerty  
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2  
El Paso County, Texas

Hon. Rebecca Bustamante  
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 4  
El Paso County, Texas

Hon. Ruben Lujan  
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 6-1  
El Paso County, Texas

Hon. Stephanie Fietze  
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 7  
El Paso County, Texas

# ADULT PROBATION - COMMUNITY SUPERVISION AND CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT

As the Department continues to monitor the local, national and worldwide incidence of COVID-19, we are **updating** our current workplace policies.

Office Visits are suspended at least until April 1, 2020:

- CSCD employees will report to their assigned duty stations but will not see clients.
- Field Visits have been temporarily suspended until further notice.

This is a rapidly evolving situation and information will be updated as it becomes available. Any questions may be directed to CSCD Administration.

**Please read attached documents for further information.**

**El Paso County CSCD is committed to the wellbeing of our employees, their families, and the community we serve.**

- If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.
- Employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms (i.e. Cough, shortness of breath, and fever) upon arrival to work or become sick during the day will be sent home immediately and required to use accrued sick leave if available.
- Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness consistent with COVID - 19 are requested to stay home and not come to work until they are free of fever and required to use accrued sick leave if available. Employees should notify their chain of command for further instructions from CSCD Administration.
- If no sick leave is available under either of these scenarios, then the Department will determine whether other leave or unpaid leave is available, according to Department policies.
- If a client reports to the office showing symptoms of contagion, then the client shall be sent home and provided with a new report date at least 30 days in the future. Clients who call to report that they are sick shall also be given a report date at least 30 days in the future. This information must be documented in Odyssey and will be documented as an **office visit**.

As this disease is considered highly contagious, please stay home if you feel sick with symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

We are continuing to monitor the situation and will provide guidance and updates as necessary.

The following links also contain updates and useful information about COVID-19:

US Center for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

Texas Health and Human Services: <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/health/coronavirus-covid-19>

Texas Department of State Health Services <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>

# EL PASO COUNTY COUNCIL OF JUDGES



## Virtual Plea Process

### EL PASO COUNTY CSCD

Professional Development Center

1015 N. Campbell St.

El Paso TX 79902

(See map below)

Please abide by the following guidelines and precautions listed below before appearing for plea:

- All persons with flu-like symptoms, cold symptoms, fever, and cough should not enter the facility.
- All persons entering facility must continue to still wear a mask or face covering, must pass a health screening, and must continue to follow social distancing and hygiene practices.
- Attorneys, clients, or others who have such conditions should alert the respective court. All courts will make reasonable accommodations and reschedule matters as needed.
- If you are unable to contact a particular court, you may contact County Court Administration at 915-546-2093 for matters involving County Courts at Law, County Criminal Courts at Law or County Probate Courts.
- If your case is in a District Court and you are unable to contact the court, please call the Council of Judges at 915-546-2143.
- Case information may be found at:  
<http://casesearch.epcountytv.com/PublicAccess/default.aspx>

#### Location:

#### EL PASO COUNTY CSCD

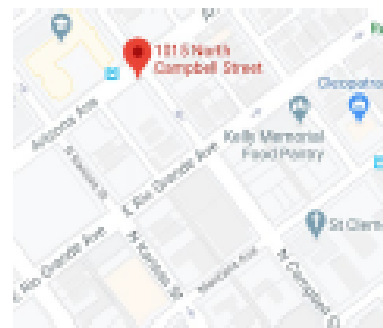
Professional Development Center

N. Campbell St.

El Paso TX 79902

#### Requirements:

- Valid Form of Identification
- No Companions (i.e. child, spouse, or friends)



\*\*\*Free Parking (limited)

## PRE-TRIAL SUPERVISION (CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATION)

Criminal Justice Coordination will temporarily move to mandatory telephone/email reporting for all pre-trial supervision, eliminating high volume traffic at Supervision Offices. An exception to this temporary resolve will be defendants without access to the internet or telephone capabilities.

In-office Breathalyzer and Urinalyses Testing is suspended until further notice.

Satellite booking in the Courthouse is closed until further notice.

Notifications of Violations to the Courts will remain unchanged.

## JUVENILE

In response to the Covid-19 epidemic, the Office of Court Administration in Austin has asked that the judiciary cancel or reset any non-essential court hearings to avoid people coming to the Courthouse or JPD.

Juvenile detention hearings are considered essential and will continue as usual.

The following are non-essential hearing which, if set in the next 30 days (March 16-April 17), will be reset.

Jury trials (children who are about to age out will be specially set in early May)

Non-jury trials (unless child is about to age out)

Dispositions (unless child is about to age out or is pending out of home placement)

Review hearings

Contempts

Status hearings

Restitution hearings

Pre-trials (unless child is about to age out)

Everything that is not a detention hearing and hasn't been mentioned above.

If there is a question about whether a child is about to age out, please reach out to the court to clarify if the judge feels that it needs to be heard.

Those wheel lawyers set for the upcoming weeks leading up to April 17 will be assigned different weeks during the year.

## COUNTY CLERK

Due to the risk of exposure to COVID-19, it has become necessary for the County Clerk to reduce its workforce this month or until further notice.

The County Clerk's Office will remain operational to the public and court system through electronic means only. You may record your property records and Foreclosures electronically or by mail.

Birth and death certificates may be requested through Vital Chek, [vitalchek.com](http://vitalchek.com) [[vitalchek.com](http://vitalchek.com)].

Any questions please reach out to our office via email, [countyclerk@epcounty.com](mailto:countyclerk@epcounty.com).

## DISTRICT CLERK, PASSPORTS

The District Clerk Passport Division will be closed effective Monday, March 23, 2020 until further notice. Customers that need to travel out of the country on an emergency, please contact the El Paso Passport Agency at:

El Paso Passport Agency  
Anson Mills Building  
303 N. Oregon St.  
El Paso, TX 79901

877-487-2778 or TDD/TTY 888-874-7793

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/get-fast/passport-agencies/el-paso.html>

# INDIVIDUAL COURT INSTRUCTIONS

## 41<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT COURT

THESE DETAILS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS MANDATES TO THE JUDICIARY, COUNTY OPERATIONAL POLICY AND ADVICE FROM LOCAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS DEVELOP.

### Effective June 14 –

1. ZOOM, email and telephone communication will be our primary method of handling our cases.
2. The 41st will be staffed daily by the Bailiff, and periodically during the week by one other member of the court staff who are otherwise teleworking.
3. Hearings involving jail inmates SHALL be conducted via ZOOM with the inmate. The jail will not be transporting individuals to the courthouse unless determined to be essential by the court.
4. The Court will start having a LIMITED NUMBER of in-person hearings, likely later this month.
  - a. The 41st will be allowed to have in-person hearings ONLY ON TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS.
  - b. Litigants on a case must AGREE to request the in-person hearing. The request must be made via email advising the court why the in-person hearing is ESSENTIAL (cannot be conducted on ZOOM). The court will schedule the hearing in its discretion given the information provided. The Texas Supreme Court has required that the trial court note on the case docket the reasons why the in-person hearing was essential.
  - c. The litigants must provide the court a list of parties, witnesses, and support staff who will attend five (5) days prior to the hearing. No more than 12 people will be allowed in the courtroom, INCLUSIVE OF THE NECESSARY COURT PERSONNEL. Failure to provide this notice will result in cancellation or postponement of the hearing.
  - d. All health protective measures must be adhered to: Social distancing of 6 feet, masks at all times, washed hands in advance. Hearings will be scheduled to ensure there is no overlap by attendees.
  - e. ATTORNEYS must inform litigants, their staff and other interested persons of the court's requirements for in-person hearings.
  - f. The ATTORNEYS are strongly encouraged to protect vulnerable individuals and those who live or take care of vulnerable individuals. Deposition testimony or video testimony is strongly encouraged for vulnerable individuals. If requested, the court will make reasonable accommodations to assist vulnerable individuals with participating in court proceedings.
  - g. The courtroom will be cleaned after hearing, and more thoroughly cleaned at the end of the day.
5. Doors will remain closed to courthouse traffic, unless people have an appointment or setting (in which case they would be directed to the courtroom and may not enter chambers.) If you need assistance, please contact the court via telephone (915) 546-2149 or via email with the court coordinator UBarron@epcounty.com.



6. Chambers Office – (Court coordinator area)- will be restricted to ATTORNEYS ONLY. Only ONE PERSON AT A TIME will be allowed into the chambers office. NOTICES WILL BE POSTED.

7. The side door facing the courtroom (in front of court coordinator's desk) will be CLOSED and used for COURT PERSONNEL ONLY. People need to use the door outside of the bailiff's office.

8. Pursuant to the latest Texas Supreme Court order, jury trials will not be held until after August 1, 2020. The Council of Judges will be attempting a limited master trial docket to resume trials in a safe and productive way. Details will be provided as they develop.

## 65<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT COURT

Pursuant to Judge Gutierrez's direction, all non-essential proceedings currently set from March 16th through April 17th will be reset to a date after April 20th.

Non-essential hearings include modifications, adoptions, review of compliance hearings and motions. All hearings that are statutorily mandated (262s, status, permanency, and final hearings) will remain as set. The County Attorney's office will assist in circulating orders prior to the hearings for any possible agreements.

All attorneys must reach out to their clients in order to set up appointments to discuss the proposed orders ahead of the scheduled date. Make arrangements to discuss in person or via telephone the proposed orders with your clients that are incarcerated and/or in Mexico. All jail and bridge transport will cease until further orders from the court.

If an agreement is not reached ahead of the date, the hearing will be held as scheduled.

The finals set next week March 16th-March 20th remain as set. The court has looked over the cases and the finals will be held as scheduled. The court will review week by week the finals coming up to determine if they can be reset after April 17th depending on the dismissal deadline.

The mediations currently set will remain on the docket. No other mediations will be set until after April 20th.

If an emergency occurs, please notify the court, and the judge will evaluate whether it can wait or whether it needs to be heard.

## Notice from the 171st Judicial District Court and Judge Bonnie Rangel

All hearings in April are cancelled. The Court will be working remotely during this time dealing with emergency matters only. Richard Salazar will be answering the phones during normal business hours.

Attorneys please send emails regarding emergency hearings and settings to Rebecca Gonzalez at [rgonzalez@epcounty.com](mailto:rgonzalez@epcounty.com) If an emergency hearing is needed in April, the hearing will held via GoToMeeting, a video conference app/website that can be accessed via phone, tablet or PC. A link for your hearing will be sent to you via email. Please follow the instructions entailed in that email. The link can be forwarded to your client in order to access the hearing from their home, since we have been ordered to "Shelter in Place".

All of the above is subject to change depending on the directives given to this Court. We appreciate your patience during this difficult time.

Judge Bonnie Rangel, 171st Judicial District Court

## 210<sup>th</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT AND HEARING REQUESTS

ATTORNEYS: All motions requiring a hearing, must be efiled and emailed to the Court to set a hearing. Time sensitive issues or requests for remote hearing(s) should be included in the email. A file stamped copy to the Court is REQUIRED and you may forward that, as well as your request for hearing, to:

[saAguirre@epcounty.com](mailto:saAguirre@epcounty.com) and [alyperez@epcounty.com](mailto:alyperez@epcounty.com).

### Notice from El Paso Statutory Probate Court No. 1

UPDATED COVID 19 Coronavirus Guidelines for El Paso County Probate Court No. 1:

Dear All: This is intended as an update to the previous COVID 19 Coronavirus Guidelines for El Paso County Probate Courts previously sent to you in March of 2020. Until adopted by Probate Court No. 2, they are only intended to apply to Probate Court No. 1:

1. As you are aware Probate Court No. 1 has been conducting uncontested and nonessential hearings by video conference using the GotoMeeting App. This appears to be working very well. Probate Court No. 1 will continue to use this method until notified otherwise:
  - a. For probates, administrations, heirships and guardianships (that are not contested) the Court will continue to send the attorneys in each case a link via email. It is the responsibility of the attorney to share this link with their clients and witnesses. Beginning Monday, May 4, 2020 the hearings will also be streamed live on Youtube in accordance with directives from OCA.
  - b. Given the difficulty meeting with Wards, attorney ad litem should continue to attempt to use technology to meet with their clients prior to the hearing. Attorney ad litem are encouraged to waive their client's presence at hearings.
  - c. Please continue to email all orders for hearings to Gloria Lopez at [gllopez@epcounty.com](mailto:gllopez@epcounty.com) prior to the hearing for Probate Court No. 1. The proof of death and oath shall be executed before a notary after the hearing is concluded and e-filed. Please allow some time before e-filing so that the order can be filed first. Alternatively, the judge can administer the oath at the video conference and the client can sign the proof of death, which can then also be emailed to [Gllopez@epcounty.com](mailto:Gllopez@epcounty.com) for signature by the judge and filing.
  - d. After the order, proof of death, oath and bond (if applicable) are filed you may contact the County Clerk's office to obtain letters.
2. Until further notice all orders that do not require a hearing can be emailed for signature to either [gllopez@epcounty.com](mailto:gllopez@epcounty.com) or [jstrelitz@epcounty.com](mailto:jstrelitz@epcounty.com) In Probate Court No. 1.
3. The Court will also be available to sign TROs.
4. If a particular case requires a contested hearing the Court will deal with these cases on a case by case basis. You should contact the court at least a week prior to your hearing to discuss issues associated with contested hearings.
5. This may seem obvious, but if you, a witness, or client is sick, do not bring them to the court under any circumstances.

Please keep in mind that this is a fluid situation. OCA and the Supreme Court will probably continue to send out revised guidelines as COVID 19 progresses. The Probate Courts will probably revise these guidelines as well. Presently all protocols are scheduled to be re-evaluated on a periodic basis. Thank you for your cooperation.

# DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S MISDEMEANOR ROSTER

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