

**AMENDED
EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN
GREENE COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT
PROBATE DIVISION**

2020 CORONAVIRUS PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

This is the plan for the continued operations of Greene County Probate Court based on potential increases in the severity of the 2020 Coronavirus public health emergency over the coming weeks and months. The Court may make further adjustments to this plan as needed to address unanticipated events that may arise.

LEVEL 1 EMERGENCY

Triggering Event: Public health officials declare a national, state and county public health emergency that directly affects the Court's operations.

Probate Court Operation Adjustments:

- Probate Court Clerk's Office remains open to the public for in-person filings.
- Marriage License Bureau remains open to the public.
- Public announcement to consider mail and fax filings as alternatives to in-person filings and to encourage using online marriage application and scheduling process.
- Persons with pending hearings and trials are given the choice to proceed in person, conduct the proceeding by phone, or continue the proceeding indefinitely.

LEVEL 2 EMERGENCY

Triggering Event: County Commissioners close all non-essential county offices, which does not include the Courts or specifically the courthouse. The courthouse is still open to the public and court security still provided by Sheriff's Department.

Probate Court Operation Adjustments:

- Probate Court Clerk's Office closed for all in-person filings.
- In-person filings may only be made at Probate Court drop box outside of the courthouse entrance. Filings may also be made by mail, fax or email with PDF attachments only (the Court will not open any attachment that is not in PDF format).
- Marriage License Bureau remains open only for scheduled appointments with completed online application. No more than two persons – both applicants – are permitted to enter the courthouse for that appointment. Do not bring children, family or friends. All persons are subject to medical screening before entry.
- All trials and other contested hearings scheduled to begin on or before May 31, 2020 are continued until further order of the Court.
- All uncontested hearings, pretrial conferences or status conferences will proceed as scheduled by free video/telephone conference only. Adoption cases must be by video

conference only, or will have the option to have the Court continue the hearing on the Court's own motion without charge. No proceedings will take place in person until further notice.

- All Judgment Entries and Orders will be issued by the Court only by email, or by regular mail if no email of a recipient is available. Certified Judgment Entries and Orders will be mailed directly to the appropriate party and the attorney, if any.

LEVEL 3 EMERGENCY

Triggering Event: The courthouse remains open to the public, but with more limited services or reduced staffing. Court security still provided by the Sheriff's Department.

Probate Court Operation Adjustments:

- Probate Court Clerk's Office closed to the public for all purposes.
- All filings must be made in the Court's drop box, or by mail, fax or email with PDF attachments only (the Court will not open any attachment that is not in PDF format).
- Only the Judge and designated essential personnel will be required to report to work, on a schedule and rotation determined by the Judge. Other Court personnel must remain available by personal phone or text.
- Marriage License Bureau is closed – the Court will implement its complete online marriage license system, instructions for which will be on the Court's website.
- Participants in all uncontested hearings, pretrial conferences or status conferences, including all adoption cases, will be given the option to proceed as scheduled by video conference only or to have the Court continue the hearing on the Court's own motion without charge. No proceedings will take place in person until further notice.
- The Court will make special arrangements to facilitate processing and hearing of any emergency guardianship or adult protective services cases.
- All Judgment Entries and Orders will be issued by the Court only by email, or by regular mail if no email of a recipient is available. Certified Judgment Entries and Orders will be mailed directly to the appropriate party and the attorney, if any.
- The Court will issue a global order granting an automatic 60-day extension for all filing deadlines that become due on or before May 31, 2020.

LEVEL 4 EMERGENCY

Triggering Event: The courthouse as a whole, or portions of it, may or may not be closed to the public. Access to the courthouse is restricted to essential employees only, as determined by the respective courts. Court security may or may not be provided by the Sheriff's Department.

Probate Court Operation Adjustments:

- The physical location of the Probate Court Clerks' Office is closed for all purposes.
- Marriage License Bureau is closed – the Court will implement its complete online marriage license system, instructions for which will be on the Court's website.
- The Court will implement its remote office procedures, the details of which are confidential for the privacy of Court personnel.

- Instructions will be posted on the Court's website.
- The Court will still be available to answer telephone calls during normal business hours through the Court's usual telephone numbers.
- The Court will still receive and respond to all emails, as normal.
- The Court will contact participants for all hearings, pretrial conferences and status conferences to determine whether they can proceed by video conference, or whether the matter will be continued. Priority will be given to the most urgent matters, as determined by the Judge. No proceedings will take place in person until further notice.
- All Judgment Entries and Orders will be issued by the Court only by email, or by regular mail if no email of a recipient is available. Certified Judgment Entries and Orders will be mailed directly to the appropriate party and the attorney, if any.

LEVEL 5 EMERGENCY

Triggering Event: Any employee of Probate Court is diagnosed as positive for the coronavirus, requiring all Court employees to be quarantined for 14 days.

Probate Court Operation Adjustments:

- All Court operations will follow the same adjustments as stated in Level 4.
- The Court will reassign responsibilities among its court personnel so that remote court operations can continue uninterrupted.

LEVEL 6 EMERGENCY

Triggering Event: All persons are ordered to shelter in place at their personal home.

Probate Court Operation Adjustments:

- All Court operations will follow the same adjustments as stated in Level 4.

LEVEL 7 EMERGENCY

Triggering Event: The Ohio Supreme Court orders that all Courts close.

Probate Court Operation Adjustments:

- The Court is closed for all purposes, including the issuance of marriage licenses.
- All hearings, pretrial conferences and status conferences are continued until further order of the Court.
- The Court may, if necessary and possible, handle emergency cases remotely using its remote office procedures.