

26th Judicial Circuit
Russell County, Alabama
Administrative Order 2020-1
Guidelines for Court Operations
Effective March 16, 2020 – April 16, 2020

Pursuant to the Alabama Supreme Court administrative order suspending all in-person court proceedings through April 16, 2020. To protect the citizens of Russell County, Court staff and attorneys, the Judges of Russell County hereby, Order the following restrictions and requirements of all individuals and parties appearing before the Courts. The limitations set forth below are designed to not only protect the citizens from any health concerns but also to protect the rights of our citizens' access to justice in a timely manner.

Therefore, the following are suspended effective March 16, 2020:

District Criminal dockets/hearings
Small Claims dockets/hearings
Traffic dockets/hearing
District Civil dockets/hearings
Jury Trials
Circuit Criminal dockets/hearings
Domestic Relations dockets/hearings
Juvenile dockets/hearings
Child Support dockets/hearings

FILED IN OFFICE
2020 MAR 16 AM 10:49
CIRCUIT/DIST COURT
RUSSELL CO. AL

Exception to the in-person appearance ban may include:

Bond related matters for adult offenders:

Motions for Bond reduction
Motions for bond revocation
Motions to set bond

Protection from Abuse Hearings; Attendees at these hearings are limited to:

Complainant
Complainant's attorney
Defendant
Defense Attorney
Witnesses

Others deemed necessary and preapproved by the judge

Emergency child custody and protection matters (Including Department of Human Resources). Attendees at these hearings are limited to:

Complainant

Complainant's Attorney

Defendant

Defense Counsel

Witnesses

Guardian Ad Litem

Others deemed necessary and preapproved by the judge

Petitions for temporary injunctive relief in which the Court cannot handle via video or phone conferencing.

Emergency protection matters involving elderly or vulnerable persons.

Attendees at these hearings will be limited to:

Complainant

Complainant's attorney

Defendant

Defense Counsel

Witnesses

Guardian Ad Litem

Others deemed necessary and preapproved by the judge

Proceedings related to the COVID-19- public health emergencies.

Emergency proceedings as needed by law enforcement and approved by the Presiding Circuit Judge

Other exceptions as requested by the Presiding Circuit Judge and approved by the State of Alabama Chief Justice.

In addition, the judges, clerk, and court security have met and decided as follows:

The Center for Disease Control has advised people to take precaution considering the COVID-19 virus outbreak and has noted that the best way to prevent this illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Therefore, effective immediately, the following persons shall not enter the Russell County Judicial Center:

Persons who have traveled outside of the United States within the past 14 days.

Persons who reside or have had close contact with someone who has traveled outside the United States in the last 14 days.

Persons who have been asked to self-quarantine by any doctor, hospital, or health agency.

Person who have been diagnosed with, or have had contact with, anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

If you meet the criteria and have business with the Russell County Circuit or District Courts, you should proceed as follows to properly inform the court of your circumstance:

If you are an attorney and you are scheduled to appear, e-file a motion and email the judge's assistant.

If you are represented by an attorney, contact your attorney.

If you are not represented by an attorney, notify the office of the judge before whom you are scheduled to appear. You may use the notification form that is available at Russell.county.gov and the form may be faxed or emailed to the following:

Judge Michael J. Bellamy

Fax: 334-448-8675

Email: connie.marshall@alacourt.gov

Judge David Johnson

Fax: 334-732-2104

Email: ada.strickland@alacourt.gov

Judge Walter L. Gray

Fax: 334-297-1362

Email: ginny.vann@alacourt.gov

Fax: 334-732-2108

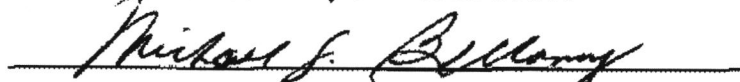
Email: linda.elias@alacourt.gov

The Court Referral Office will be closed for in-person evaluations and monitoring appointments. These will be handled via video and voice conferencing where possible. CRO staff will contact clients about appointments and drug testing.

The Russell County Drug Court/Veteran's Court/Mental Health Courts will be closed for in-person appointments. These will be handled via video and voice conferencing where possible. Drug Court staff will contact clients about appointment and drug testing.

Personal contact with Circuit Clerk staff will be limited. Citizens will be able to drop off court payments in the form of money orders or cashier's check and/or file case-related documents at drop boxes located at the entrance of the Judicial Center. Citizens with questions are directed to visit (www.russell.alacourt.gov) for information regarding court filings in all jurisdictions.

DONE this the 16th day of March 2020.


Hon. Michael J. Bellamy, Presiding Circuit Judge