

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR
THE 3RD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ALABAMA**

Administrative Order #2020-5

May 27, 2020

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER RE: COVID-19

Pursuant to the Supreme Court's Orders of March 13, 2020, April 30, 2020 and May 13, 2020 and after conferring with the District Judges, Municipal Judges, Probate Judges, Circuit Clerks, Sheriffs, County Commission Administrators, and District Attorney of the 3rd Circuit, in an abundance of caution, effective immediately through **Sunday, June 7, 2020**, no in-person hearings shall be held in any court in the 3rd Judicial Circuit excepting emergency hearings outlined in the Supreme Court's Order of March 13, 2020.

Except as specifically directed by a circuit or district judge, courthouse security officers are directed to exclude any individual(s) not employed by the Court system or District Attorney's office from admission to the second floor of the Bullock County, Clayton and Eufaula Courthouses during the period identified above. Circuit Clerk drop boxes will be placed at the main entrances for intake of filings and payments as previously designated by each Circuit Clerk.

All of the above-listed officials are deeply concerned about the health and well-being of the citizens of this circuit, courthouse employees, inmates and law enforcement. The alarming lack of significant testing and contact tracing, as well as the continued rise of the infection rate in both Bullock and Barbour and neighboring counties indicates that our citizens are at grave risk of contracting the virus in public places. Therefore, officials will continue to monitor the infection rate, contact tracing and testing in the Circuit. Unless and until the infection rate declines while contact tracing and testing increase, in-person hearings are suspended.

Prior to June 7, 2020, the Barbour County Commission and the Bullock County Commission are advised to appoint an advisory committee to include Department heads and submit a written re-opening plan that will protect all who enter each courthouse. This plan should include, but is not limited to: temperature checks, personal protection equipment for employees and the public, health inquiries, sign-in sheets for all who enter, scheduled comprehensive disinfecting, social distancing procedures, safe ingress and egress procedures for the 2nd floors of each courthouse, and increased security to monitor implementation of procedures.

Any and all receipts for COVID-19 expenditures shall be maintained in detail for possible reimbursements for all courthouse related Departments.

DONE AND ORDERED this 27th day of May, 2020.

**/s/Burt Smithart, Presiding Circuit Judge
Third Judicial Circuit of Alabama**