

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA**

**COVID-19
GENERAL ORDER NO. 20-2
March 16, 2020**

This order is being issued in response to the recent outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in the United States, the State of Louisiana and specifically New Orleans, Louisiana. The World Health Organization has declared that COVID-19 qualifies as a global pandemic, having spread across more than 120 countries with more than 3,000 confirmed cases in the United States and 136 (as of this order) in Louisiana. Most of the confirmed cases in Louisiana, including at least three reported deaths, have occurred in New Orleans, where the Eastern District of Louisiana federal courthouse is located.

The President of the United States, Governor of the State of Louisiana, and the Mayor of the City of New Orleans have declared a public health emergency throughout the country, State and the City, respectively in response to the spread of COVID-19; and

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other public health authorities have recommended social distancing as a means of limiting further community spread of COVID-19;

Accordingly, to combat the spread of the disease, given the severity of risks posed to the public, Court staff, and other Court agencies, and considering the public health recommendations from the CDC, the Eastern District of Louisiana hereby issues the following order:

1. All civil and criminal bench and jury trials scheduled to begin on any date from the date of this order until May 1, 2020 are continued to a date to be reset by each presiding judge. Those continuances do not continue any pending deadlines other than the trial dates. Attorneys should contact the presiding judges in their continued cases if they seek to modify such other deadlines.

2. All civil and criminal in-person hearings, proceedings, and conferences scheduled to begin on any date from the date of this order until May 1, 2020 are continued and will be reset by each presiding judge. The parties may seek relief from such continuances by written motion to the presiding judge in exceptional circumstances.
3. For reasons given above and below, all grand jury proceedings in this District are suspended until May 1, 2020, subject to change upon motion from the government and further orders of the Court.
4. With regard to criminal matters, due to the Court's reduced ability to obtain an adequate spectrum of jurors and the effect of the recommendations from the above public health organizations on the ability of counsel and Court staff to be present in the courtroom, the time period of the postponements implemented by this administrative order will be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, as the Court specifically finds that the ends of justice served by ordering the postponements outweigh the best interest of the public and any defendant's right to a speedy trial, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A).
5. Criminal matters before magistrate judges, such as initial appearances, arraignments, detention hearings (and appeals to district judges from detention orders), and the issuance of search warrants, shall continue to take place in the ordinary course. However, counsel shall contact a Criminal Magistrate Judge Case Manager at (504) 589-7750 to determine if video conferencing is available.
6. All events involving the Court or scheduled to be held in the courthouse that are not case-specific, including, but not limited to, continuing legal education courses, public tours, Inns of Court meetings, and naturalization ceremonies conducted by the Court, which are scheduled to occur between March 16, 2020 and May 1, 2020, are hereby cancelled and will be rescheduled when appropriate.
7. Starting March 18, 2020, all attorney admissions will be handled by a motion and Order submitted by U.S. mail to the Clerk of Court, 500 Poydras Street, C-151, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130 or email to ECF-Registration@laed.uscourts.gov. Contact the Clerk of Court for specific information.


The public is encouraged to use online Court resources or contact the Court by telephone.

<http://www.laed.uscourts.gov>.

This order will remain in effect until further order of the Court.

IT IS ORDERED.

New Orleans, Louisiana, this 16th day of March, 2020.


NANNETTE JOLIVETTE BROWN
CHIEF JUDGE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA