



**Shaun Carpenter, Judge
220th Judicial District Court
Bosque, Comanche & Hamilton Counties
State of Texas**

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March 13, 2020

RE: COVID-19

Dear Court Personnel and Counsel:

The Office of Court Administration has provided updated recommendations regarding the continuation of court proceedings during emergency events. This letter is to specifically address the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and operations of the 220th District Court over the next few weeks. We will update everyone as we learn more.

At this time, the 220th District Court docket will operate as normal.

The Open Courts provision of the Constitution requires that the public have access to proceedings. In recognition of this right, I request that non-participants limit their attendance and all participants take the following actions to protect themselves and others.

1. Any person (attorneys, clients, witnesses, etc.) with COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms, a fever, or who are coughing or sneezing, must alert the court in advance. Attorneys that are aware of clients, witnesses, or others having such conditions must alert the court. The Court will make reasonable accommodations and reschedule appearances and hearings as needed.
2. Proceedings that are not essential, or statutorily required, may be rescheduled to a date after April 1, 2020. Essential proceedings include, but are not limited to: criminal magistration proceedings, CPS removal hearings, temporary restraining orders/injunctions, juvenile detention hearing, family violence protective orders, certain mental health proceedings, and/or certain motions to proceed/revoke.
3. Arraignments are scheduled during the last week of March. If applicable, please submit signed waivers of arraignment as quickly as possible.
4. April 1, 2020 is the Hamilton County Plea Deadline Docket. Attorneys are to communicate with the District Attorney's Office and their clients. If you can reach an agreement, please submit your signed "plea and reset agreement" before March 27, 2020.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has provided the following personal prevention tips.

1. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
3. Stay home when you are sick.
4. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue (or into your arm if a tissue is not available), then throw the tissue in the trash.
5. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a household cleaning spray or wipe. A list of recommended products can be found at <https://www.americanchemistry.com/novel-coronavirus-fighting-product-list.pdf>.
6. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

You will be updated regarding any changes to the Court's docket as quickly as possible. Thank you for your professionalism and cooperation.

Sincerely,

/s/ Shaun Carpenter

Shaun Carpenter
220th District Judge