

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF MASON

IN THE MATTER OF) ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO PUBLIC) NO. 22-010
HEALTH THREAT)

WHEREAS:

1. This court has been operating under emergency orders since shortly after the pandemic began, which is now going on three years,
2. The Washington State Supreme Court has adopted emergency orders either ordering shutting down court operations or allowing each court to establish its suspension procedures, the most recent being 25700-B-697,
3. This court has been operating in person hearings for some time with no issues arising of adverse health consequences;
4. While remote access tools are still useful but do not take the place of in-person hearings.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. The Administrative order 22-009 is modified as follows.
2. All criminal cases will continue to be in-person. Hearings where a party was instructed to appear by ZOOM will still be heard over ZOOM unless the defendant appears in court. Any appearances by ZOOM will require the party desiring remote access to make the

request to the court before hand and notify the other party. As a general rule, the motion will need to state an emergent situation, such as extreme distance from the courthouse, illness, or unavoidable scheduling conflicts by attorneys, etc. Absent an objection, the court will rule on those requests ex-parte. If there is an emergency, such as a COVID infection, the request may be made by ZOOM at the time of the hearing.

3. ZOOM shall remain for the public to view proceedings if desired and to provide a means for a person to appear who would have significant difficulty in personally appearing for their hearing either due to their geographical location or illness. Again, permission before hand, absent an emergency is required per paragraph two of this order.

4. The District Court staff, including the judge, shall have the discretion in social distancing and utilizing LL2 for a holding area for excess number of defendants.

5. In custody cases will continue to be heard by video, unless the court orders otherwise. The mask requirements, for those in custody will be as set by the Mason County Jail or any other correctional institution where the defendant is located. Attorneys with clients in custody, shall be required to have the means to log into ZOOM so as to facilitate a private conversation in a breakout room.

6. The protection order/anti-harassment order calendars will also be in-person although parties will still follow instructions in their notice of hearing.

7. The civil motion calendars, including name changes, shall primarily be conducted on ZOOM. Parties and attorneys will have the option of appearing in-person.

8. Small claims cases and civil trials, including impound hearings and dangerous animals, should be done in-person; however, the Court shall have the discretion to allow remote access.

9. Masks are optional, unless the court orders otherwise in a given hearing.

DATED this 2nd day of November, 2022.



JUDGE