



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Orlando Division Court Staff and FLMD Bar,  
Orlando Division

**From:** Roy B. Dalton, Jr., United States District Judge

**Date:** March 18, 2020

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**RE:** Orlando Division Protocol for Proceedings During COVID-19 Directives

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For the health and safety of our employees, litigants, and members of the Bar, the Orlando Division of the Middle District of Florida is implementing the following procedures until the date specified or further notice.

1. All jury trials (criminal and civil) are suspended through June 30, 2020 or until further notice. This is necessary to avoid calling jurors for service and aggregating numbers of people consistent with the advice of the CDC and local health officials.
2. All large gatherings at the Orlando Federal Courthouse have been postponed until further notice. This includes naturalization ceremonies, school programs, CLE programs, and the like.
3. In consultation with the U.S. Attorney, essential grand jury proceedings will be conducted in the jury assembly room to allow for social distancing. The grand jury empanelment scheduled for March 26, 2020 is postponed until further notice.
4. At the direction of Chief Judge Merryday, flyers and signs have been posted at the entrance to the courthouse advising those who are sick, have recently traveled to certain destinations, or have been exposed to the virus that they may not enter the courthouse and providing contact information to advise that their entry has been refused.
5. The U.S. Attorney and the Federal Public Defender offices, Probation, and Pretrial Services are working under teleworking protocols. Motions to continue proceedings should be filed with the appropriate presiding judge. The judicial officers are encouraged to be as generous as is consistent with the proper administration of justice in granting requests for postponement and granting appearances by telephone where possible.
6. Each judicial officer will make his or her own determination about the cancellation of status conferences or other criminal proceedings that do not require the presence of the defendant.
7. Regarding civil cases, the in-person meet and confer requirements are suspended, and these meetings may be conducted by telephone or video without any further need for application to the court.

8. Requests for suspension of deadlines in civil cases or for accommodations to avoid travel should be made with the appropriate presiding judge, and travel for purposes of litigation is discouraged. Use of video and other means of conducting discovery is encouraged.
9. The Pro Se Clinics conducted at the courthouse are suspended until further notice.
10. Chambers staff are encouraged to telework, subject to the direction of the judicial officer. Clerk's office employees should consult their supervisor or the Clerk of Court for direction regarding teleworking or other workplace/scheduling issues.

Thank you all for your cooperation and patience as we work through this unusual circumstance.



  
ROY B. DALTON JR.  
United States District Judge