

**KITSAP COUNTY DISTRICT COURT
STATE OF WASHINGTON**

IN RE THE KITSAP COUNTY COURTHOUSE AND
THE PANDEMIC OUTBREAK OF THE
CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

No. 2022-08
EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

THIS ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER is being issued in response to the current pandemic outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).¹

From March of 2020 to the present the COVID-19 pandemic stretched the limits of all courts in the State of Washington in responding to constantly changing dynamics of the virus and safe responses to effectively administer court proceedings. By necessity, responses included closing the Court to the public, hearing cases remotely via Zoom Video Conferencing, and closing jury trials, to name just a few solutions. Our Court required us to triage types of cases and make criminal cases and protection orders more of a priority because the safety of the community must be of paramount concern. During this same time frame our Court also suffered some losses of staff due to the pandemic, and normal retention issues. The pandemic has hampered our ability to fill empty staff positions.

Because of the pandemic and resultant staff shortages, civil cases were triaged as the lowest priority and are currently handled as staffing levels allow. While the danger of COVID-19 has lessened, and the risk of harm to our employees and community has decreased, we are still experiencing a direct impact to our ability to handle the volume of cases being heard in our Court. All matters heard in our Court have experienced a backlog and delay as we try to get back to “normal” court proceedings. Most impacted have been the civil cases that have been filed during the COVID-19 pandemic. We currently have a very large backlog of civil cases that need to be addressed immediately. We simply cannot address this backlog without a disruption of other services.

The people of our County deserve to have their civil cases heard in a timely manner. We need to have these cases addressed as soon as is practicable.

Currently, Friday afternoons present an opportunity to address these very real

concerns. There is only one courtroom¹ that routinely operates on Friday afternoons.

Given the significant number civil cases that need to be addressed and given the authority granted by Supreme Court Orders No. 25700-B-602 through No. 25700-B-683 additional immediate action by the Kitsap County District Court is required.

Now, THEREFORE, it is hereby-

ORDERED that effective immediately and until further Order of the Kitsap County District Court -

1. All previous Emergency Administrative Orders remain in full effect.
2. Effective October 7, 2022, through November 25, 2022, the Kitsap County District Court's Clerk's Office, room 106, is closed to in person contact on Fridays at 12:15 PM to 4:30 PM.
3. Communication with the Kitsap County District Court can be made by-
 - A. LiveChat via the District Court website; www.kitsap.gov/dc
 - B. Email at districtcourt@kitsap.gov, and/or
 - C. Telephone at (360) 337-7109 -
4. Persons in need of an emergency court hearing, including emergency protection orders, should call the Kitsap County District Court at (360) 337-7109 to speak with a clerk.
5. Litigants, attorneys and the public are encouraged to visit the Kitsap County District Court's website for updated information - www.kitsap.gov/dc.

¹ Courtroom 105; the in-custody arraignment/pretrial calendar that operates from 1:30 PM.

The Kitsap County District Court remains open and fully operational.

DATED: September 29, 2022

/s/ Signed Electronically

PRESIDING JUDGE CLAIRE A. BRADLEY

[Note – Use of an electronic signature is an acceptable means for any Washington judicial officer or clerk to sign any document requiring a judicial or clerk signature.]