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ALISON H. SONNTAG

**KITSAP COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
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. 2020-17

**EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
RE: OPEN COURTS**

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

Given the significant number of identified and projected cases of the disease in Washington, the severity of the risk posed to the public, the recommendations of the Health District, Governor Inslee’s “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” Proclamations and the authority granted by Supreme Court Orders 25700-B-602, 25700-B-606, 25700-B-607 and 25700-B-615, the current situation demands immediate action by the Courts.

Governor Inslee has deemed Courts as “essential”. *Stay Home - Stay Healthy Proclamation, 20-25.*

On April 13, 2020, Washington State Supreme Court Chief Justice Stephens issued Order 25700-B-615 captioned “Revised and Extended Order Regarding Court Operations”. This Order states: “Courts should continue to record remote hearings and to make the recording or a transcript part of the record, and should develop protocols for allowing public observation of video or telephonic hearings.”

Order 25700-B-615 provides the following guidance to Courts: “Courts must also consider the open courts doctrine. Hearings occurring by videoconference or telephonic must be available to the public. It is recommended that courts make findings consistent with *State v. Bone-Club*, 128 Wn.2d 254, 906 P.2d 325 (1995) and *The Seattle Times v. Ishikawa*, 97 Wn.2d 30 (1982), in order to hold hearings remotely.”

From the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Kitsap County Courthouse has remained open with regular business hours Monday through Friday. While some offices in the Courthouse have, at various times, not been accessible to the public except by telephone, email or website, courtrooms have been open and accessible. This will continue in the foreseeable future.

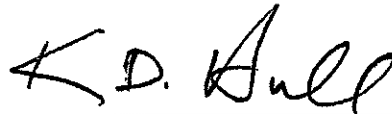
Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Kitsap County Superior Court and Kitsap County District Court have been conducting hearings using telephonic and videoconferencing technology, consistent with Chief Justice Stephens' Orders. When conducting hearings remotely, a designated courtroom has been made available for members of the public to observe the proceedings with the use of a video monitor because the courtroom is open to the public. This will continue in the foreseeable future.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby ORDERED that effective immediately and until further Order of the Court –

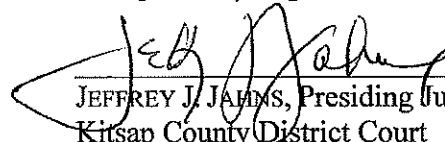
All hearings conducted telephonically or by videoconference shall continue to be made available and accessible to the public with the use of a video monitor in a designated courtroom open to the public posted daily in the Kitsap County Courthouse.

The Kitsap County Courthouse remains open to the public.

DATED – APRIL 14, 2020



KEVIN D. HULL, Presiding Judge
Kitsap County Superior Court



JEFFREY J. JARMS, Presiding Judge
Kitsap County District Court