



Arlington Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
17TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

GEORGE D. VAROUTSOS
CHIEF JUDGE

ROBIN L. ROBB
JUDGE

RONIKKA K. LARTEY
CLERK

Arlington County Justice Center
1425 North Courthouse Road, 4th Floor
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 925, Arlington, Virginia 22216
Telephone: (703) 228-4495

RETIRED JUDGE

ESTHER L. WIGGINS

Policies and Procedures of the Arlington County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court for the Provision of Mission Critical Services
(Revised April 27, 2020)

The Arlington County Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court (the "Court") continues to monitor the outbreak of Covid-19; actions taken by federal, state, and local authorities; and other recent developments; to ensure that its policies and procedures reflect the best evidence currently available about the pandemic. Accordingly, and after considering the liberty and constitutional interests at stake; the health and safety of the parties, attorneys, court personnel, and others necessarily involved in the operation of the Court; and the ability of the Court to safely operate; the Court enacts the following revised policies and procedures. They are effective April 28, 2020 through May 17, 2020 unless amended or rescinded by further Court action.

1. **Court Personnel.** Any Court personnel who have symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or have been exposed to coronavirus shall not report to work but shall promptly report their symptoms to his or her supervisor.
2. **Counsel, Litigants and Witnesses.** Any party, counsel, witness or other person with legitimate court business who is ill (including, without limitation, any such person who has a fever, cough, or shortness of breath); is caring for someone who is ill; has been exposed to the coronavirus; or otherwise at high risk, as defined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) shall notify the Court before appearing for any hearing and request an appropriate accommodation.
3. **Non-Case Related Events.** **The Court's non-case related events (including all driver's license ceremonies, court tours and intern and volunteer programs are suspended.** The Court shall reschedule affected driver's license ceremonies or make alternative arrangements for the distribution of licenses to those affected.
4. **Hearing Attendance.** Only necessary parties (e.g. parties, their counsel, and witnesses) shall be permitted in courtrooms during hearings. **No more than ten persons shall be permitted in any courtroom at any time.** All other persons should stay away from the courthouse. **By agreement of the parties, and where available, matters that are required to be heard under this policy may be conducted by approved audio and visual platforms. Use of recording options on these platforms is prohibited.**

5. Filings. Attorney filed-papers may be submitted to the Court electronically, via email to jdr.4@arlingtonva.us with the original mailed to the Court (with a check for all necessary filing fees) within five days of the submission. The filing attorney shall be billed for any filing fees not submitted with the original papers mailed to the Court.
6. Agreed Orders. Fully endorsed agreed orders may be submitted to the Court electronically, via email to jdr.4@arlingtonva.us with the original delivered to the Court via mail within five days thereafter. The following matters may be submitted as fully endorsed agreed orders: (a) discovery orders, criminal and civil; (b) custody and visitation orders; (c) continuance orders provided that the agreed upon date has been confirmed by the Court/Clerk's Office as a date available to the Court.
7. Emergency Motions. Emergency motions may be filed via email to jdr.4@arlingtonva.us. Emergency motions, for cases in which the relief is necessary to prevent imminent and substantial physical or psychological harm to a child will be heard as usual. **The Court will also hear emergency motions wherein a party (adult/juvenile) is currently detained and there is no agreement that the matter be continued from its presently scheduled trial, preliminary hearing or detention hearing date.** All emergency motions must state, with particularity, the factual basis for claiming that relief must be granted on an emergency basis. Each such motion will be reviewed by a judge before it is docketed.
8. Motions. Any motions for which no date has been currently set will receive a date no sooner than June 15, 2020. Alternatively, the parties can agree that the Court rule solely on the submissions without a hearing.
9. Traffic Cases/Fare Evasion Cases. All traffic hearings and fare evasion hearings scheduled for adjudication will be removed from the docket and will rescheduled. The Clerk of Court shall continue each of those hearings to a date no earlier than June 15, 2020. The Clerk shall make reasonable efforts to continue each case to the applicable officer's available dates. Matters set for *ex parte* closure or dismissal will remain on the Court's docket.
10. Protective Orders. All petitions for preliminary protective orders and adjudication hearings for permanent orders will remain on the docket as scheduled. Motions to amend, modify, extend, or dissolve protective orders (whether arising from a civil filing or criminal case) shall be heard as previously scheduled. Any further motions to amend, modify, extend or dissolve protective orders shall be given priority on the Court's docket and scheduled for a date and time certain. At a full hearing on the petition, the Court will have a liberal continuance policy. Should a continuance be granted the preliminary protective order may be extended pending final adjudication.
11. Criminal Cases. Criminal matters will be heard as follows:
 - a. Matters set for *ex parte* closure or *ex parte* dismissal shall remain on the docket as scheduled.
 - b. Arraignments and Bond Motions (including motions to amend, modify or revoke bond) for in-custody Defendants will be conducted as scheduled via video for both adults and juveniles when possible.
 - c. Out of custody adult and juvenile arraignments previously set for status on April 29, 2020 are hereby suspended. The Clerk of Court shall continue those dates to a date no earlier than June 15, 2020.
 - d. Juvenile Detention Hearings (including detention review hearings, and New Beginnings Review Hearings) shall be heard as scheduled via video where possible and otherwise by telephone.

- e. Criminal Trials and Preliminary Hearings for Adults and Juveniles:
 - (i) Out of Custody: Those matters presently set for status on April 29, 2020 are suspended. The Clerk of Court shall continue those cases to a date no earlier than June 15, 2020. Counsel are encouraged to contact the Clerk's office to obtain a mutually agreeable date and to submit an agreed order setting the date. The agreed order shall be submitted within five days of counsel's agreement and confirmation with the Clerk's office that the date is available for the Court.
 - (ii) In Custody: Trials and sentencing hearings in all criminal and delinquency matters previously set for status on April 29, 2020 are suspended. The Clerk of Court shall continue those cases to a date no earlier than June 11, 2020. Counsel are encouraged to contact the Clerk's office to obtain a mutually agreeable date and to submit an agreed order setting the date. The agreed order shall be submitted within five days of counsel's agreement and confirmation with the Clerk's office that the date is available for the Court. **EXCEPT**, that those matters which have been reset since April 20, 2020 remain on the docket as scheduled, unless a further continuance is mutually agreed upon.
- 12. Child Dependency Hearings. These matters continue as scheduled.
- 13. Civil Cases (Custody, Visitation, Child in Need of Supervision/Services).
 - a. Custody and visitation trials currently scheduled through May 31, 2020 are hereby suspended and will be continued to a date certain no earlier than June 11, 2020. Parties with matters scheduled for 2 hours or more are encouraged to contact the Clerk's Office to obtain available dates. **EXCEPT**, that those matters which have been previously rescheduled by the Clerk of Court shall remain on the docket, unless all parties otherwise agree to further continue the matter.
 - b. Custody and visitation advisements/first returns are hereby suspended. The Clerk of Court shall continue each of those matters to a date no earlier than June 15, 2020.
 - c. Child in Need of Supervision/Services cases are hereby suspended and will be continued to a date no earlier than June 15, 2020. **EXCEPT**, in those matters where the child is in a residential program or has been released within thirty days of the hearing date or is expected to be released from such program within thirty days following the hearing date, such matters will be heard as scheduled.
- 14. Child Support Cases.
 - a. Division of Child Support Enforcement Cases:
 - (i) DCSE cases which were previously continued to May 5th and May 7th for status are hereby suspended. The Clerk of Court will continue those matters for a hearing to a date no earlier than June 2, 2020.
 - (ii) DCSE cases presently set for May 19th and May 21st, 2020 are hereby suspended. The Clerk of Court will continue those matters for a hearing to a date no earlier than June 2, 2020.
 - b. Support Matters which do not involve DCSE:
 - (i) Those matters which were previously continued to May 12, 2020 for status are hereby suspended. The Clerk of Court will continue those matters to a non-DCSE date for a hearing no earlier than June 11, 2020.
 - (ii) Any other non-DCSE support matter otherwise scheduled in May 2020 is hereby suspended. The Clerk of Court will continue those matters to a non-DCSE date no earlier than June 11, 2020.

- c. Rule to Show Cause hearings for support obligations, where the respondent is held in custody, shall be heard as scheduled regardless of whether DCSE is involved. All other Rule to Show Cause hearings are suspended. The Clerk of Court will continue those matters to a date certain no earlier than June 11, 2020. All other requests for a rule to show cause not presently scheduled will receive a date no earlier than June 11, 2020.
15. Revised Continuance Policy. Consistent with all other legal requirements, a **liberal continuance policy** is in effect for all matters that are not suspended by these policies and procedures.
16. Modification. These policies are subject to modification as circumstances develop.