

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2020-24 RE: COURT OPERATIONS UNDER COVID-19 ADVISORY**

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Since early this year, our country, our state and our judicial district have struggled in the face of the unrelenting Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Virtually every segment of our society had been impacted by this terrible disease. Across our nation, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacted a heavy toll on businesses in the private sector and governmental entities. Colorado's courts are not insulated from the impact of this virus and have necessarily adjusted our operations to provide the essential governmental services we are constitutionally required to provide, while striking a balance between fulfilling our responsibilities and promoting public safety. While it has not always been easy, we have successfully managed to accomplish much of our essential work under these trying circumstances. Despite our collective best efforts, the COVID-19 pandemic has persisted and both in the 7th Judicial District and entire State of Colorado a "second wave" is occurring. Specifically, the data from the Colorado Department of Health and Environment suggests that in our district the number of known positive cases has increased nearly 5% between October 29, 2020 and November 2, 2020.

On March 16, 2020 Chief Justice Coats of the Colorado Supreme Court issued an order modifying court operations in response to concerns related to Novel Coronavirus ("COVID-19") pandemic. This order suspended all jury calls, excepting those with constitutional speedy trial deadlines, and limiting proceedings to only those deemed essential to matters of public safety and wellbeing. On July 6, 2020 we resumed jury trials, with the approval of the Chief Justice based on our protocols and input from each local public health authority.

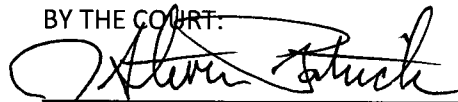
Notwithstanding these substantial modifications to public health guidelines and local executive orders, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to pose a serious threat to the health and safety of persons participating in jury trials in the 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial District courthouses. The decision to suspend the summoning of jurors to our courts is not one undertaken lightly. The right to a jury trial in criminal cases is fundamental and guaranteed by the United States and Colorado Constitutions, and it has been of paramount importance to the judges in this district to resume and conduct trials in criminal and civil cases only when we believed it was safe to do so. However, due to the ongoing public health issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is inappropriate at this time for the courts of the 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial District to continue hearing jury trials.

Pursuant to the authority granted in the Chief Justice Directive 95-01 and Chief Justice Order dated July 24, 2020, it is hereby ORDERED as follows:

The Courts of the 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial District (District Court and County Court) hereby suspend the summoning of jurors for jury trials set through December 31, 2020. No person will be summoned to report for jury service in this district before January 4, 2021. This order is subject to review and revision in accordance with prevailing public health guidelines from the CDPHE.

Dated and effective this the 3rd day of November, 2020.

BY THE COURT:



J. Steven Patrick  
Chief Judge

XC: 7<sup>th</sup> JD Judges  
7<sup>th</sup> JD Clerks of Court  
*7<sup>th</sup> JD District Attorney*  
*Office of the Public Defender*  
*Jury Commissioner*