

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA  
SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

IN RE: EXTENSION OF  
JUDICIAL EMERGENCY  
THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2021  
MM 2020

No. A.D. 55 - 2020  
Supreme Court Docket No. 44

CLERK OF COURTS  
2020 DEC -4 PM 12:29  
LANCASTER COUNTY, PA

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER**

AND NOW, this 4<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2020, upon consideration of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's May 27, 2020 Order specifically empowering President Judges to continue local declarations of emergency, and consistent with this Court's Orders of March 17, 2020, April 1, 2020, April 24, 2020, May 26, 2020, June 19, 2020, August 14, 2020, and October 19, 2020, it is hereby DECLARED that the Judicial Emergency in the Second Judicial District resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic is extended through **February 28, 2021**, or until further order of this Court, and, while the Courts will be open to conduct all judicial services, the Court facilities will remain closed to the general public not having business with court and court-related offices through February 28, 2021, as set forth in the protocols on the Court's Website.

It is further ORDERED that:

1. All coronavirus related safety precautions, protocols and requirements described in this Court's prior Administrative Orders will continue to remain valid and applicable to Lancaster County Court operations.

2. Criminal jury and nonjury trials may be scheduled at the discretion of each presiding judge as facilities and resources permit, provided such trials can be conducted safely and consistent with prevailing health and safety norms.

3. Statewide rules pertaining to the rule-based right of criminal defendants to a prompt trial continue to be suspended. Any postponement caused by the judicial emergency shall be considered a Court delay and shall constitute excludable time for purposes of the application of Pa.R.Crim.P. No. 600.

4. Civil jury trials scheduled through January 31, 2021, are continued generally. Civil jury trial procedures for 2021 shall be addressed by a separate administrative Order. Civil nonjury trials may be scheduled at the discretion of each presiding judge as facilities and resources permit, provided they can be conducted safely and consistent with prevailing health and safety norms.

5. From the date of this Order through February 28, 2021, all Court business shall be conducted subject to protocols and procedures that limit, as much as possible, all in-person access and proceedings as reasonably modified by the presiding judge in the exercise of that judge's discretion provided all safety measures herein mentioned are employed. Statewide rules that restrict, directly or indirectly, the use of advanced communication technology are hereby suspended.

6. Proceedings requiring in-person appearances may be scheduled at the discretion of the presiding judge and shall be conducted in a manner that employs all safety measures consistent with the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) guidelines.

7. Court filings shall be made by means other than in-person delivery whenever possible. Statewide rules impeding court filings by means other than in-person delivery are hereby suspended.

8. Detailed protocols for the handling of matters in each division of the Court of Common Pleas will be provided on the Court's Website.

9. Court users and the public are requested to conduct any business they have in the Courthouse by telephone, mail, email, or any other advanced communication technology whenever possible to avoid in-person contact with Courthouse personnel.

10. This Administrative Order applies only to those courts, offices, and departments under the jurisdiction of the President Judge, and is not intended to prohibit access to other court-related offices in the Lancaster County Courthouse by those members of the public who are unable to conduct their official business by means other than in person.

11. Individuals permitted access to **all Court departments and Magisterial District Courts** shall be required to adhere to the November 17, 2020 Order of Pennsylvania Secretary of Health, Rachel L. Levine, M.D., which provides in relevant part:

A business . . . must:

1. Require that all people, including their employees, customers, . . . and visitors, wear a face covering and take reasonable steps to enforce the requirement.
2. Mitigate or eliminate employee, . . . visitor, and customer exposure to people who cannot wear or refuse to wear a face covering.
3. Post prominent signs that are visible to all people -- including employees, . . . customers, and visitors -- stating that face coverings are required by the Order of the Secretary of Health.

4. Provide reasonable accommodations to people, including their employees, ... customers, and visitors, who state they have a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that makes it unreasonable for the person to maintain a face covering.

a. Businesses may decline service to individuals who are not wearing a face covering or claiming to have a condition preventing them from wearing a face covering or an alternative to a face covering, so long as they attempt to provide a reasonable accommodation.

b. Accommodations could include an alternative to a face covering, such as use of a face shield or providing service options that do not require a customer to enter the business....

*Updated Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Coverings at § 4 (effective November 18, 2020).*

12. Individuals permitted access to **any Court facility** shall be required to maintain appropriate social distancing of at least six feet, to wear protective face masks or appropriate face coverings in public settings, and to comply with all safety directives provided by the Court or County staff.

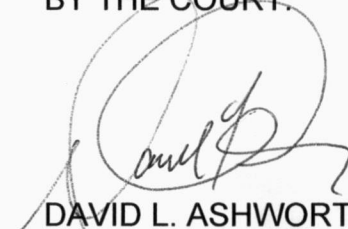
13. For purposes of this Order, Rooms 102 and 104 of the Lancaster County Government Center at 150 North Queen Street, Lancaster, where jury trials will be held, are deemed Court facilities. All provisions regarding Court facilities contained in this and prior Administrative Orders shall apply to Rooms 102 and 104 of the Lancaster County Government Center.

14. The purpose of this Administrative Order is to continue the gradual re-opening of the Lancaster County Court system in a safe, efficient manner while adhering to CDC and DOH guidelines to protect all Court personnel, Court users and the public.

15. The Sheriff of Lancaster County shall assist in implementing this Order.

16. This Administrative Order shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect through February 28, 2021, or until further order of this Court.

BY THE COURT:



DAVID L. ASHWORTH  
PRESIDENT JUDGE

ATTEST:

Mark Karmin - Deputy

Copies to:

- Lancaster County Board of Judges
- Lancaster County Magisterial District Judges
- Lancaster County District Court Administrator
- Lancaster County Adult Probation & Parole Services
- Lancaster County Children and Youth Social Service Agency
- Lancaster County Clerk of Courts
- Lancaster County Clerk of the Orphans' Court
- Lancaster County District Attorney
- Lancaster County Domestic Relations
- Lancaster County Juvenile Probation
- Lancaster County Law Library
- Lancaster County Office of Official Court Reporter
- Lancaster County Prison
- Lancaster County Prothonotary
- Lancaster County Public Defender
- Lancaster County Register of Wills
- Lancaster County Sheriff
- Lancaster County Board of Commissioners
- Lancaster County Solicitor
- Lancaster County Municipal Police Departments
- Pennsylvania State Police