

Family Court Phase-in May-June

Family Business Court – The current procedure regarding emergency petitions, as outlined in the April 1, 2020 Administrative Order, will remain in effect through May. Beginning in June, matters will be directed to the assigned judge and will be addressed by appointment only, scheduled directly by chambers.

Temporary PFAs/ICCs – The current procedure will remain with two sessions, one at 11:30 and one at 3:00pm through May. Beginning in June, the prior schedule of one session per day will resume, unless it is determined there is a need to address cases more frequently. The judge hearing the petitions will be the assigned Family Business Court Judge for that day. Petitioners will remain in Hearing Room 221 as these hearings will continue by Lifesize until further notice.

PFAs– PFA Court will remain cancelled through the month of May with ICCs being conducted on Mondays and Thursdays. Beginning in June, PFA Court, including ICCs, will resume with parties reporting to the Courthouse. Lists will be limited to 9 cases per session with staggered start times every 20 mins.

Due to the limited time between cases, only withdrawals, continuances, agreements, and simple hearings will be addressed at this time. Complex matters, depending on the circumstances, will either remain suspended until further access is permitted into the Courthouse or may be scheduled for a special listing upon request. Additional PFA Court sessions will be added to each week, to address the backlog.

Attorneys are encouraged to contact their clients as well as the opposing party, if contact information is available, prior to any PFA proceeding. Withdrawals, continuances, and agreements will be entertained by the Court prior to the scheduled PFA hearing date and removed from the schedule if approved. Motions and agreements may be emailed to Annie Flaud (Flauda@co.lancaster.pa.us) in Court Administration. Chambers will schedule a Lifesize meeting if needed.

Custody

Hearings – Commencing June 1, emergencies and other case related matters will be heard by the assigned judge with hearings being held in the Courthouse. Hearings will be limited to one hearing per day per Judge. Only parties shall attend unless the assigned judge approves additional witnesses. Each judge will prioritize their custody cases based on volatility and urgency of the matter.

Custody Conferences – Conferences are currently proceeding by Lifesize. This will remain through May and June.

Divorce

Divorce Hearings/Special Relief – Judge Workman is currently scheduling as needed for telephone/video conferences or hearings. This will remain until further notice.

Divorce Master Conferences/Hearings – Telephonic and pre-trial conferences are currently being conducted by video/telephone and will continue in this manner through May and June. Beginning in June, master hearings will proceed in the Courthouse but will be limited to one case with one divorce master at any given time.

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Support

Support Appeals/Contempts – Support Appeals will remain suspended through May. Hearings are set to begin in June and lists will be minimal (no more than 8 per day) with staggered start times of 9, 10:30, 1:30 and 3pm with two cases scheduled for each start time. Contempt hearings are currently suspended but are tentatively scheduled to start up in July.

Paternity – There will be one session of Paternity hearings scheduled in June. Cases will be listed with 20 minute staggered start times.

Support Conferences - Domestic Relations has been conducting support conferences by telephone since 5/18. Conferences will continue in this manner until further notice.

Additional information can be found on the Domestic Relations Office's website
<https://www.court.co.lancaster.pa.us/139/Domestic-Relations>

Delinquency Hearings - Most proceedings are currently being conducted by video. Beginning in June, the judges will return to their regularly scheduled sessions of two court days every other week. Hearings will remain by video unless there are extenuating circumstances requiring parties to report to the Courthouse. Regular operations are tentatively set to begin in July.

Detention Hearings: Will be held as needed on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 8:00 a.m. before a Court Hearing Officer via Lifesize Video Conferencing.

Adjudication/Dispositions/Consent Decrees- Will be held every Wednesday and Thursday at assigned times before the assigned Juvenile Court Judge for that week. Any family that does not have the means to participate by video will be able to come to the courthouse to participate via Video Conference.

Masks are required for entry into the Courthouse. Only parties shall attend unless the assigned judge approves additional witnesses.