



STATE OF MICHIGAN
EATON COUNTY TRIAL COURTS

56th JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT
EATON COUNTY PROBATE COURT
56A DISTRICT COURT

1045 Independence Blvd.
Charlotte, MI 48813
517-543-7500
www.eatoncounty.org

Hon. Janice K Cunningham
Chief Judge, Circuit Court Judge

Hon. John D. Maurer
Circuit Court Judge

Hon. Thomas K. Byerley
Probate Court Judge

Hon. Julie H. Reincke
District Court Judge

Hon. Julie A. O'Neill
District Court Judge

Amy M. Etzel
Trial Court Administrator

Kathleen M. Brooks
Deputy Trial Court Administrator

March 13, 2020

Dear Eaton County Board of Commissioners,

On behalf of the Eaton County Judiciary, I would like to take this opportunity to provide information on what changes have been implemented recently for the Trial Courts as recent recommendations from the Michigan Supreme Court and State Court Administrative Office have been given on the potential spread of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). Below are the proactive approaches being taken to eliminate large groups coming into the courts and reducing in-person court visits for non-urgent matters.

- Civil Jury Trials and Criminal Jury Trials have been suspended, unless constitutional rights are impacted.
- All group review hearings and staffing for treatment/problem solving courts have been suspended for a period of 30 days. Any violations will be addressed on a case by case basis.
- District Court cases involving persons who are lodged or presenting a risk to public safety will be heard, while the scheduling of non-urgent cases will be suspended.
- The Friend of the Court SMILE program has been suspended through May.
- Friend of the Court Show Cause Hearings have been reduced, addressing only urgent cases as needed.
- Postponement of Friend of the Court investigations on post judgment matters for a period of 30 days, using discretion on cases involving critical issues.
- Case managers/Probation officers will be suspending in-person check-in's and utilizing telephone, email or other means of communicating with clients. Violation matters will be handled as needed.
- A request was made to MDOC for reducing in-person reporting.



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- The Youth Facility has suspended face-to-face family sessions.
- All community-based programming at the Youth Facility has been suspended.
- The Juvenile Court and Youth Facility will utilize public spaces for necessary in-person meetings to limit public exposure to secured areas and offices.
- The Juvenile Court has suspend school and home visits for their probation staff.
- The Eaton County Day Treatment and LINK Programs have been suspended.

Court employees have been encouraged to familiarize themselves with accurate information regarding COVID-19. Reminders have been made for employees to monitor their own health symptoms, to remain at home if they are ill, to sanitize work areas regularly and adhere to handwashing recommendations.

As further developments and recommendations come forth, the Eaton County Judges and administration will continue to monitor our procedures and implement further changes to our court operations if needed. We are committed to the safety of litigants, our court employees and the public who enter our court offices. We desire to maintain service to the public and will be monitoring our court operations as future recommendations are provided during this declared State Emergency.

Sincerely,

Amy M. Etzel
Trial Court Administrator
Eaton County Trial Courts