



CIRCUIT COURT
FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

HONORABLE JAMES H. DANIEL
Circuit Judge

NASSAU COUNTY COURTHOUSE
Robert M. Foster Justice Center

March 19, 2020

TO: The Honorable Mark H. Mahon, Chief Judge, Fourth Judicial Circuit
The Honorable Steven M. Fahlgren, Circuit Court Judge
The Honorable Wesley R. Poole, County Court Judge
The Honorable John A. Crawford, Clerk of Court
Capt. Paula J. DeLuca, Nassau County Jail/Courthouse
Sgt. Ken Davis, Nassau County Courthouse Bailiff
Nassau County Bar Association

FROM: The Honorable James H. Daniel, Administrative Judge

RE: Restrictions on Access to Nassau County Courthouses

Please find attached Administrative Order No: 2020-3.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, FOURTH JUDICIAL
CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR NASSAU COUNTY FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO: 2020-3

**RE: RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO ROBERT M. FOSTER JUSTICE CENTER
AND HISTORIC COURTHOUSE IN FERNANDINA BEACH**

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 virus (coronavirus) is now considered by the World Health Organization to be a global pandemic;

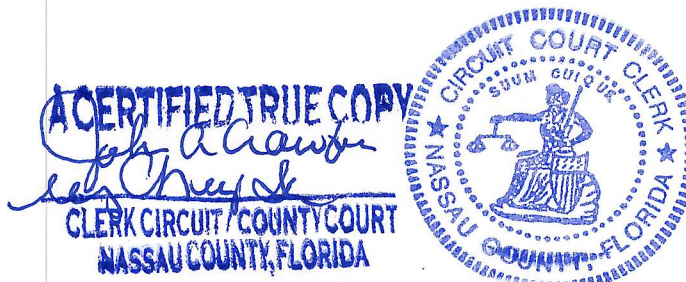
WHEREAS, the COVID-19 virus is highly contagious with no current vaccine to limit its spread and no known medication to eliminate or reduce the virus in the bodies of those infected;

WHEREAS, to date, over 6000 people nationwide have confirmed cases of the COVID-19 virus and the virus has caused the death of over 100 people;

WHEREAS, the state and federal governments have enacted numerous restrictions on daily activities, work, and travel, in addition to issuing detailed recommendations in an effort to limit the general public's exposure to the COVID-19 virus;

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a recommendation that events and meetings should be limited to no more than ten (10) people and that individuals should practice "social spacing" by keeping a separation distance of no less than six (6) feet;

WHEREAS, the emergency related to the COVID-19 virus pandemic has disrupted all but essential operations of the statewide court system and Fourth Judicial Circuit, including the suspension of jury trials, grand jury proceedings, and all non-emergency civil and family proceedings;



WHEREAS, the Fourth Circuit, in accordance with statewide and nationwide policies adopted by both private employers and government agencies, has encouraged all but essential personnel to work from home and has quarantined those employees who have traveled outside of the country, traveled on long airline flights through airports, or have weakened immune systems;

WHEREAS, the health and safety of employees working at both the Robert M. Foster Justice Center and the Historic Courthouse in Fernandina (hereafter collectively "Nassau County Courthouses"), and those citizens that must utilize courthouse services provided by the Fourth Judicial Circuit, the Clerk of the Court, the State Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, the Property Appraiser's office, Tax Collector's Office, and the county court probation office, is of utmost importance;

WHEREAS, the more members of the general public that have access to the Nassau County Courthouses, the more it will necessarily increase the chance of exposing courthouse employees and other members of the general public to the COVID-19 virus;

WHEREAS, the Chief Judge of the Fourth Judicial Circuit has delegated authority to the Administrative Judge for Nassau County to establish temporary procedures;

NOW THEREFORE, by the authority vested in the undersigned, **IT IS ORDERED**:

1. Access to the Nassau County Courthouses shall be restricted in the manner more fully described in this order until Monday, March 30, 2020, in accordance with the suspension of activities as outlined by the AOSC20-13 and AOSC20-15 issued by the Florida Supreme Court.

2. No member of the general public shall enter the Nassau County Courthouses unless the following circumstances apply:

A. Required in-person attendance at a scheduled court proceeding that has not been postponed, continued, or otherwise required to be conducted telephonically and/or by video conference as a result of a separate administrative order;

- B. Filing a petition for an injunction for protection against domestic violence, repeat violence, dating violence, sexual violence, or stalking;
 - C. Filing a petition to establish an emergency guardianship (pro se filing only);
 - D. Filing an emergency motion for a pick-up order or other emergency motion in a family law case where the issue is related to timesharing, parental responsibility, visitation, or the safety of any minor child (pro se filing only);
 - E. Filing a petition or request seeking a Risk Protection Order;
 - F. Filing a motion for temporary custody of a minor child by an extended family member under Chapter 751, Florida Statutes (pro se filing only);
 - G. Filing a petition for involuntary assessment, examination, and/or stabilization under the Baker Act (mental health) and the Marchman Act (substance abuse);
 - H. Tenant deposits into the court registry following service of eviction notice or pleadings (pro se tenants only);
 - I. Filing petition for writ of habeas corpus (only if filed by friend, wife, husband, parent, or guardian of detained person).
 - J. Obtaining a marriage license;
 - K. Filing an emergency motion to stay a writ of possession or writ of execution (pro se).
3. All other functions provided at the Nassau County Courthouses are deemed non-essential and may be accomplished through alternative methods.
4. Those members of the general public needing access to the following services provided by the Clerk of the Courts shall do so in the manner described in this section:
- A. Certified Copies: Telephone requests with documents returned by mail;
 - B. Notices of Commencement: By mail or facsimile request;
 - C. Real Estate Closing Documents: e-recording system;
 - D. Records Review: Clerk of Courts website at nassauclerk.com or contact Clerk's Public Information Specialist at 904-548-4664.
5. Tax Deed Sales shall be postponed until further order of the court.

6. Probation services through Clear View Transformations shall be conducted by telephone only.

7. Defendants who are out of custody and represented by the Public Defender's Office are restricted from meeting with counsel in person at the Nassau County Courthouses.

8. Defendants who are in custody and represented by the Public Defender's Office may only be transported to the Nassau County Courthouses pursuant to specific authorization by the presiding judge over the felony circuit court division or the county court judge.

9. Private attorneys may enter the Nassau County Courthouses under the following circumstances:

A. Required in-person attendance at a scheduled court proceeding that has not been postponed, continued, or otherwise required to be conducted telephonically and/or by video conference as a result of a separate administrative order;

B. Filing emergency motions and petitions that cannot otherwise be electronically filed;

C. Express authorization by a sitting circuit or county court judge in Nassau County.

10. This order does not affect access to the Nassau County Courthouses by any of the following individuals: a) employees who work at the Nassau County Courthouse as a state employee for the Fourth Judicial Circuit; b) employees of the Nassau County Clerk of the Courts; c) employees of the Nassau County Sheriff's Office; d) employees working in the veteran's services office at the Nassau County Courthouses; e) county employees working in teen court; f) county employees or contract workers in building services or whose job otherwise requires repairing, cleaning, and/or maintaining Nassau Courthouse facilities; g) State Representative Cord Byrd or employees who work in his office; h) State Senator Aaron Bean and employees who work in his office; i) employees of Clear View Transformations with an office in the Nassau County Courthouse; j) County Court Judges, Circuit Court Judges, Magistrates, and Senior Judges in the

Fourth Judicial Circuit; k) employees working in the Property Appraiser's Office in the Nassau County Courthouses; l) any court reporter that is assigned to a scheduled court proceeding in the Nassau County Courthouses; m) employees of the Fernandina Beach Police Department; n) employees working in the Tax Collector's Office in the Nassau County Courthouses; and o) any employee whose job requires them to regularly work at the Nassau County Courthouses;

11. However, all employees working at the Nassau County Courthouses who are not providing essential services are strongly encouraged to work remotely from their own residence in accordance with their employer's policies;

12. Any employee, attorney, or member of the general public who has been diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus, or who has knowingly been exposed to a person diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus, is restricted from access to the Nassau County Courthouses notwithstanding any other provision in this administrative order.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers at Yulee, Nassau County, Florida, this the 19TH day of March, 2020.



JAMES H. DANIEL