

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT:
Cleburne County, Fulton County, Independence County, Izard County, and Stone County**

IN RE: RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Comes now Circuit Judge Lee Wisdom Harrod, as Administrative Judge for the Sixteenth Judicial District, and hereby finds as follows:

1. On or about March 17, 2020, pursuant to its constitutional superintending authority, the Supreme Court of Arkansas issued a per curiam order in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. *In Re Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, 2020 Ark 116 (per curiam)*. A subsequent per curiam order was issued on March 20, 2020. *In Re Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, 2020 Ark ____ (per curiam)*.

2. For purposes of this Order, the provisions herein are applicable to the following courts in the Sixteenth Judicial District: Circuit Court Division 1, (Judge Holly Meyer); Circuit Court Division 2, (Judge Don McSpadden); Circuit Court Division 3 (Judge Lee Harrod); Circuit Court Division 4 (Judge Tim Weaver), Independence County District Court, (Judge Chaney Taylor); Cleburne County District Court (Judge Lance Wright); Izard County District (Court Judge David Miller); Stone County District Court (Judge Jake Newton); Fulton County District Court, (Judge Larry Kisse), and as part of this court's geographic area lies in Fulton County, Sharp County District Court, (Judge Mark Johnson).

3. After consulting with all Circuit and District Judges, Circuit Clerks, and Sheriffs in each County in the Sixteenth Judicial District and Sharp County District Judge Johnson (as part of this court's geographic area lies in Fulton County), the following modifications to the courts are deemed necessary:


- a. The courts of the Sixteenth Judicial District shall remain open.
- b. All in-person proceedings of all courts are suspended to protect the public.
- c. All court hearings shall be held by video conferencing and teleconferencing via the Zoom teleconferencing application (app). All courts in the District have the current capability to conduct court through Zoom conferencing accounts. Zoom is a free application which allows participants to appear by video, utilizing your computer or cell phone camera, microphone and speakers. All are encouraged to download this free app to assure all are prepared to participate in an action before any court in this District. Each court will separately announce cancellations or closings on the Arkansas Judiciary website. If you currently have a hearing scheduled please contact your lawyer. If a party does not have a lawyer, said party should contact the court for further direction.
- d. Judges will ensure that core constitutional functions and rights are protected.
- e. Any jury trials scheduled for March and April 2020, have been postponed.
- f. The courts remain accessible by telephone and email during regular business hours.

g. All filings with any clerk of any court shall be made by mailing, facsimile, or email to protect the employees of the clerk's office and the public. The clerks of each court will work with pro se individuals and attorneys to assist in filing of cases if needed. Any party filing a pleading remains responsible for completing the requisite cover and disposition sheets in each case.

h. The clerks for each court will make efforts to accept monies for filing fees and fine payments by electronic means only to protect the clerk's employees and the public. Fees and fines may also be paid via mail.

4. This Order shall remain in effect throughout the duration of the current Per Curiam Orders referenced herein, and shall be extended without subsequent written order, in conjunction with any additional Per Curiam Orders of the Arkansas Supreme Court entered in response to the state of emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

IT IS SO ORDERED.


Lee Wisdom Harrod, Circuit Judge,
Administrative Judge for 16th Judicial District

March 24, 2020
DATE