

Mar 19, 2021

SEAN F. MCAVOY, CLERK

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

In Re:

Court Operations Under the Exigent
Circumstances Created by the
Coronavirus (COVID-19)

GENERAL ORDER NO. 2021-5

This General Order is being issued pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2071(e) and in response to the evolving public health crisis caused by the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). The measures outlined in this General Order will serve as an extension of the efforts established in previous General Orders of this Court, intended to parallel the mandates issued by Washington State Governor Inslee, mitigate and slow the spread of COVID-19, and ensure the safety of litigants, counsel, Court staff, grand jurors, petit jurors, witnesses, and the public.

Accordingly, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED**, effective **April 1, 2021**, that the United States Courthouses for the Eastern District of Washington (Spokane, Richland and Yakima, Washington) will reopen to the public, with the Center of Disease Control’s (CDC) health and safety precautions in place.

1 Therefore, **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED THAT**, effective immediately:

2 1. All Spokane and Yakima grand jury sessions shall PROCEED AS
3 SCHEDULED, absent further Order of this Court.

4 2. As to pending criminal cases (District Court and Magistrate Court), the
5 Court finds that the continued use of videoconferencing or telephone conferencing
6 when necessary results in minimizing undue risk to defendants, counsel, law
7 enforcement, Court staff, witnesses, and the public at large. Accordingly, the Court
8 will continue to encourage and use these tools for those hearings allowed by General
9 Order 20-101-3, 20-101-3 Extended, and the CARES Act, Pub. L. No. 116-136,
10 when ordered by the presiding judge. The live audio content of these hearings will
11 be available in real-time to members of the public and press, via a dedicated
12 teleconference line. Dial-in information will be available on the PACER system in
13 the docket of each scheduled case that is not held in open court. Hearing content
14 provided in such manner must NOT be recorded or rebroadcast.

15 3. In light of the recent pattern of sustained decrease in COVID-19
16 transmission rates in the Eastern District of Washington, jury trials may resume in-
17 person, subject to the presiding judge's discretion, beginning **April 1, 2021**. The
18 Court will employ a cautious, phased-in approach to the resumption of jury trials,
19 ensuring the effectiveness of deployed health and safety measures for each of the
20 jury trials held.

1 4. The Clerk’s Office in Spokane, Richland, and Yakima be open and
2 physically accessible to the public beginning **April 1, 2021**.

3 5. The Probation and Pretrial Services Office in Spokane, Richland, and
4 Yakima be open and physically accessible to the public beginning **April 1, 2021**.
5 Drug testing and supervision will continue as directed by Probation and Pretrial
6 Services officers.

7 6. STEP Court participants will be advised separately when they are to appear
8 for proceedings.

9 7. Naturalization Ceremonies are **CANCELLED** through **April 30, 2021**. The
10 Citizen and Immigration Service (CIS) is authorized to administer the oath of
11 Citizenship during this period of time.

12 8. Attendees of any in-court proceedings and grand jury proceedings are
13 required to wear masks, social distance, and follow public health advisories.

14 9. This Order does not pertain to Bankruptcy proceedings. Please consult or
15 contact the Bankruptcy Court for information and specific directions.

16 The public is encouraged to use online Court resources, contact the
17 Court/Clerk’s Office by telephone, and continue utilizing Court services while
18 following all applicable public health guidelines.

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1 The District Court Executive is directed to post this General Order to the
2 Court's website and distribute a copy to each attorney registered in the CM/ECF
3 system and each pro se litigant with a case pending before this Court.

4 This Order is subject to public comment by directing all concerns to the
5 District Court Executive.

6 **DATED** this 19th day of March, 2021.



10 *Stanley A. Bastian*

11 **Stanley A. Bastian**
12 Chief United States District Judge
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