

UPDATED COURT CLOSURES AND LEGAL DEADLINES RELATED TO COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to restrict access to courts across the state of Louisiana. On April 2, 2020, Governor John Bel Edwards extended the suspension of all legal deadlines until at least April 30, 2020.

On April 6, 2020, the Louisiana Supreme Court issued an order continuing all jury trials, both civil and criminal, scheduled to commence in any Louisiana state court prior to May 1, 2020. These continued trials can be scheduled no earlier than May 4, 2020. Until May 4, 2020, courts may only conduct in-person proceedings to address emergency matters that cannot be resolved virtually. Civil matters which are considered emergency matters under this order include civil protective orders, child in need of care proceedings, emergency child custody matters, proceedings for children removed from their home by emergency court order, proceedings related to emergency interdictions and mental health orders, temporary restraining orders and injunctions, and matters of public health related to this crisis and other emergency matters necessary to protect the health, safety and liberty of individuals as determined by each court.

Please see below for additional court-specific information.

- **Louisiana Supreme Court:** All filings which were or are due to the Court between March 12, 2020 through, May 1, 2020 shall be considered timely if filed no later than Monday, May 4, 2020. Parties who are unable to meet this deadline due to the COVID-19 emergency may submit motions for extensions of time, supported by appropriate documentation and argument.
- **First Circuit Court of Appeal:** The Louisiana Court of Appeal, First Circuit Courthouse shall remain closed through Thursday, April 30, 2020, unless extended by further order. All filings due during the period of March 12, 2020 through May 1, 2020, or which become due during this period shall be deemed timely if filed on or before May 1, 2020. Parties who are unable to file within this extended time may submit a Motion and Order with supporting documentation and argument requesting re-consideration of timeliness or other such relief. All oral arguments are continued without date. Oral arguments will be scheduled to take place as soon as possible after May 1, 2020.
- **Second Circuit Court of Appeal:** All parties must submit filings via e-filing, mail or fax. Payments for fax or e-filing fees must be mailed. No in-person filings will be accepted. The entire April docket has been re-set for May 18, 2020.
- **Third Circuit Court of Appeal:** The Louisiana Court of Appeal, Third Circuit Courthouse shall maintain its restricted access through Thursday, April 30, 2020, unless extended by further order. All filings due during the period of March 12, 2020 through May 1, 2020, or which become due during

this period shall be deemed timely if filed on or before May 1, 2020. All filings must be submitted by email or fax filing, for which service charge fees have been waived.

- **Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal:** The Court will remain closed through April 30, 2020, and will reopen on May 1, 2020 or at an earlier or later date pending further order of the Court. All filings due during the period of March 12, 2020 through May 1, 2020, or which become due during this period shall be deemed timely if filed on or before May 1, 2020. All oral arguments scheduled to take place through April 30, 2020 are continued unless parties notify the court to have their matters submitted on briefs. All filings must be submitted via e-filing, for which the convenience fee has been waived.
- **Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal:** The Louisiana Fifth Circuit Court of Appeal is closed, and will reopen on May 1, 2020, unless conditions warrant an earlier or later reopening date. During the period of closure, the Court shall proceed with all Court operations electronically. The Court is accepting filings by fax and e-file. The convenience fee associated with e-filing will be waived. Filing by mail will be processed as circumstances allow. No in-person filings will be accepted. Filings otherwise due during the legal holiday shall be considered timely if filed on or before May 4, 2020. Appellant briefs otherwise due before May 1, 2020 shall be considered timely if filed on or before May 4, 2020. Appellee briefs otherwise due in this Court before May 1, 2020 shall be considered timely if filed on or before May 26, 2020.
- **United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit:** In-person oral arguments scheduled in New Orleans for April are cancelled. Parties are advised that the court has suspended until further notice the requirement to file paper copies of electronically filed pleadings and documents. The mail operations of the Clerk's Office are suspended until further notice. All current deadlines for attorney filers remain in effect, except for those regarding production of paper copies.
- **United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana:** the Hale Boggs Federal Building located at 500 Poydras Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, which houses the United States District Court as well as the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, is closed to the general public. All civil and criminal bench and jury trials, hearings, proceedings, and conferences scheduled before or on May 1, 2020 are continued to a date to be reset by each presiding judge. Those continuances do not continue any pending deadlines other than the trial dates. Litigants may file documents electronically, by U.S. mail, or by facsimile.
- **United States District Court, Middle District of Louisiana:** All civil and criminal (bench and jury) trials are postponed to a date to be determined by the presiding judge on or after May 1, 2020. Those continuances do not continue any pending deadlines other than the trial dates. All civil evidentiary hearings and other in-court hearings and proceedings requiring personal appearances, on the dockets of the United States District Court and the United States Bankruptcy Court, set before April 10, 2020 are hereby postponed, to be reset by, and at the discretion of, the presiding judge. Prescriptive, preemptive, and statute of limitation deadlines are hereby suspended until April 13, 2020. No in-person filings will be accepted through April 13, 2020 or until further order of this Court. Electronic filing via the CM/ECF system will be fully functional and help desk support will be available.
- **United States District Court, Western District of Louisiana:** All civil and criminal jury trials scheduled to begin on any date from now through May 1, 2020, are continued, to a date to be reset by each presiding judge. All other hearings, conferences and/or proceedings are subject to the discretion of the individual judge presiding over the proceeding. Any court filings or correspondence may be time-stamped and placed in the drop box located in each division.
- **Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans:** On April 7, 2020, the court issued an order closing Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans, First City Court, and Second City Court until Monday, May 4, 2020. All civil matters which are set during the closure are continued and will be reset by

request or by order of the Court. The Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans will continue to accept e-filings and fax filings.

- **19th Judicial District Court for the Parish of East Baton Rouge**: The 19th Judicial District Court for the Parish of East Baton Rouge is closed until Monday, April 13, 2020, and those with pending criminal cases and civil matters set during this closure will be notified of a new court date. Moreover, all jury trials are cancelled until Friday, April 17, 2020. However, emergency and time-sensitive matters as determined by the court may be held by teleconference or video conference. The Court's order expressly does not prohibit any court proceedings by telephone, video conferencing, or any other means. The East Baton Rouge Parish Clerk of Court's Office will be closed during this same time period, except that it will be open only for emergency filings between the hours of 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM Monday thru Friday. During this period of closure, e-filing through Clerk Connect and fax filing will be accepted.



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