

**Judge Robert W. Berger**  
**Portage County Common Pleas Court**  
**Juvenile Division**

Joseph Szymanski  
Chief Magistrate

Roxana R. Lyle  
Magistrate

April 29, 2020

To: Kellijo Jeffries, Darlene Baad, All JFS Prosecutors, Chris Meduri, Victim Assistance, Bar Members, Attorneys Who Practice or Access the Portage County Juvenile Court

The Emergency Order filed March 16, 2020, concerning access to the Juvenile Courthouse building shall remain in full force and effect until September 30, 2020 or until further Order of the Court.

The Emergency Order filed March 19, 2020, concerning priority and methods of hearings shall remain in full force and effect until September 30, 2020 or until further Order of the Court.


For clarification **all** pending cases shall be set for telephone status and/or Pre-trial conferences prior to adjudication, hearing, or trial.

- All parties and all counsel, including guardian ad-litem shall provide a current and working telephone number with the Clerk and for the case file;
- All parties and all counsel shall immediately update any changes in telephone numbers or address to the Clerk;
- All parties or counsel at telephone status or pre-trial hearings shall indicate to the judicial officer the following:

- ✚ Status of case
- ✚ Status of Discovery
- ✚ Issues contested
- ✚ Issues stipulated
- ✚ If a stipulation or agreement can be reached prior to hearing (not the day of the hearing)
- ✚ Number of witnesses to be called
- ✚ Identity and purpose of the witness
- ✚ Court time required for adjudicatory, trial or hearing

- Contested adjudicatory, trials, or hearings may be set from 3:00 p.m. or after and may be heard until 7:00 p.m. or until completion at the discretion of the judicial officer;
- Social distancing in the Court Lobby and in the Courtroom is required;
- Masks may be required and are encouraged for parties, counsel, and others;
- Any counsel who does not wish to attend Court (for medical reasons or other) must withdraw immediately and aid their client in retaining other counsel or securing appointed counsel;
- Children First Parenting Classes shall start again in July 2020.

Sincerely,

  
Bob Berger, Judge  
Court of Common Pleas  
Juvenile/Probate Division

Attachments: 3/16/20 Emergency Order  
3/19/20 Emergency Order

RWB/ct

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
JUVENILE DIVISION

PORTAGE COUNTY  
FILED

STATE OF OHIO )  
 )  
COUNTY OF PORTAGE )

2020 MAR 16 AM 8:33

IN THE MATTER OF:  
EMERGENCY ORDER  
NOVEL CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

COMMON PLEAS COURT  
JUVENILE DIVISION  
JOURNAL ENTRY  
ORDER OF REFERENCE

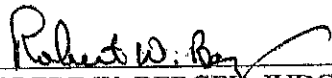
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The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) has been declared to be a Pandemic by the World Health Organization. The President of the United States has declared a National Emergency as a result of the Pandemic. Governor DeWine has declared a State of Emergency for Ohio and the Ohio Department of Youth Services, the Ohio Department of Health and Portage County Department of Health have issued certain guidelines. The Portage County Juvenile Court in order to keep the Court Open and protect the health, safety and welfare of its staff and the citizens it serves makes the following Emergency Order which shall remain in effect from 8:00 a.m., March 16, 2020 until further Order of the Court:

- 1.) No person shall enter the Portage County Juvenile Court located at 8000 Infirmary Road, Ravenna, Ohio, if they have a fever over 100.4 F and/or coughing symptoms. This Order includes employees and staff;
- 2.) All persons seeking entrance to the Portage County Juvenile Court shall truthfully execute a Screening Tool form;
- 3.) If available, all persons entering the Portage County Juvenile Court, inclusive of employees and staff, shall have their temperature taken with a no contact thermometer;
- 4.) Any person denied entrance to the Portage County Juvenile Court shall truthfully complete a Denial of Entrance form which shall promptly be put in the case file for the case the person was appearing and the Judicial Hearing Officer for the case shall be immediately notified;
- 5.) If a person denied is a party, essential witness, attorney or guardian ad-litem, the Judicial Hearing Officer, after consulting the parties and attorneys, shall decide whether to go forward or reset the hearing because of the pandemic emergency;
- 6.) Any person denied entrance shall be given a March 6<sup>th</sup> 2020 Ohio Department and Portage County Health Department Fact Sheet and will be asked to leave the Portage County Juvenile Court premise and remain at a minimum of six (6) feet from any other person.

This Emergency Order shall be reviewed by the Court not more than every fourteen (14) days after its filing date.

IT IS SO ORDERED

March 16, 2020  
March 16, 2020

  
ROBERT W. BERGER, JUDGE  
ADMINISTRATIVE AND PRESIDING JUDGE

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

JUVENILE DIVISION

PORTAGE COUNTY  
FILED

2020 MAR 19 PM 3:09

COMMON PLEAS COURT  
JUVENILE DIVISION

STATE OF OHIO )  
 )  
COUNTY OF PORTAGE )

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IN THE MATTER OF:

EMERGENCY ORDER:  
MODIFYING PORTAGE COUNTY  
JUVENILE COURT  
PROCEDURES AND LOCAL RULES

JOURNAL ENTRY  
ORDER OF REFERENCE

2020JMX02

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The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) has been declared to be a Pandemic by the World Health Organization. The President of the United States has declared a National Emergency as a result of the Pandemic. Governor DeWine has declared a State of Emergency for Ohio and the Ohio Department of Youth Services, the Ohio Department of Health and Portage County Department of Health have issued certain guidelines. The Portage County Juvenile Court in order to keep the Court Open and protect the health, safety and welfare of its staff and the citizens it serves makes the following Emergency Order which shall remain in effect from 8:00 a.m., March 20, 2020 until further Order of the Court:

MODIFICATION OF COURTHOUSE PROCEDURES

1.) All foot traffic, person-to-person contact, and counter service shall be limited during the period of the COVID-19 public health crisis.

2.) HOW TO CONTACT THE PORTAGE COUNTY JUVENILE COURT:

Mailing Address: 8000 Infirmery Road, Ravenna, Ohio 44266  
Phone #: 330-297-0881  
Fax #: 330-297-2227  
Website: [co.portage.oh.us/juvenileprobate-court](http://co.portage.oh.us/juvenileprobate-court)

3.) FILINGS:

- Filings shall be by US Mail or faxed, addressed to the Clerk of the Portage County Juvenile Court unless a demonstrated exigency exist. All filing fees shall be paid to the Juvenile Clerk as a condition for filing. Payments can be made thru US Mail by check or money order payable to: Portage County Juvenile Court. Time stamped copies of pleadings shall be returned to the filer by United States Mail.
- *Pro Se* parties (parties without an attorney) may call the clerk's office and *Pro Se* parties may refer to the forms on the website or forms may be mailed to *Pro Se* parties upon telephone request. If parties have questions about forms *Pro Se* parties may telephone the Clerk for clarification. If forms are required to be notarized *Pro Se parties* may call the Clerk's office for an appointment to accomplish the same. Clerks cannot provide legal advice.

4.) ENTERING PORTAGE COUNTY JUVENILE COURTHOUSE:

All persons entering the Portage County Juvenile Court must obey the Emergency Order of the Portage County Juvenile Court filed March 16, 2020 (a copy of which is posted on the Portage County Juvenile Court's website).

5.) STATUS CONFERENCES – PRE-TRIALS-RULE 21 CONFERENCES:

- All Status Conferences and Pre-trials shall take place as telephone conference.
- Parties and attorneys scheduled for a Status or Pre-trial Conference shall, no later than 24-hours before the scheduled time, call the Clerk's Office and provide the telephone numbers where the party will receive the conference call. All parties and attorneys shall make themselves available to receive the telephone conference calls at the time and date designated. All attorneys shall assure their clients are accessible.
- Rule 21 telephone conference calls shall be held promptly on the time and date designated. All parties and attorneys shall call the Juvenile Prosecutor at 330-298-3915 promptly on the date and time designated. All attorneys shall assure their clients are accessible.
- If an agreement is reached at the telephone conference the matter shall be set for a hearing on the agreement. If no agreement is reached the matter shall be set for adjudication/trial.

6.) PRIORITY HEARINGS:

- All delinquency hearings for felony or violent misdemeanor offenses, all delinquency hearings for a youth detained, or competency motions will be scheduled within the timeframe of the Juvenile Rules and statute.
- All Abuse, Neglect and Dependency hearings that concern either: shelter care; adjudication; and disposition; shall be scheduled as a priority matter within the Juvenile Rules and statute.

- All Judicial Bypass and Juvenile Protection Orders are priority hearings which shall be heard within the Juvenile Rules and statute.
- Emergency Orders: For Emergency Order see Local Juvenile Rule 31.

7.) NON-PRIORITY HEARINGS

- Parentage, Custody, Visitation, Child Support, Misdemeanor Delinquency cases, and most status offenses are non-priority hearings which will be set at the Court's convenience unless exigent circumstances are found by the Court.
- Any pending parenting, custody or visitation trials may proceed at the discretion of the Magistrate or Judge. Each party shall call the Judicial Officer to determine the status of their case.

LOCAL RULE 10.04

- 8.) Portage County Juvenile Court Local Rule 10.04 shall be suspended during the pandemic at the discretion of the Judge or Magistrate assigned to the case.

9.) JUVENILE TRAFFIC OFFENSES:

Juvenile Traffic arraignments shall continue according to the Juvenile Rules and Statute.

During the pandemic:

- Youths may file a waiver (and not appear) on lesser traffic moving violations by mailing a waiver by US mail.
- Youths may file a waiver and apply for traffic diversion, if eligible.
- Waiver and application for traffic diversion shall be made by US mail and must be received before or at the date set for arraignment. Correspondence should be directed to: Portage County Juvenile Court, Traffic Clerk, 8000 Infirmary Road, Ravenna, Ohio 44266.
- Parties wishing to contest a traffic charge may mail a denial and avoid appearing at Juvenile Traffic Arraignment if the denial is received on or before the traffic arraignment date.
- If you are unsure of the procedure telephone the traffic clerk at 330-297-0881.
- No more than four (4) parties/cases shall appear at each session for traffic arraignments.

10.) TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

All parties shall give a current working telephone number to the Clerk once they become a party (file a pleading or are served with a pleading or summons).

11.) PARENTING CLASSES AND CARTEENS:

Parenting Classes and Carteens for April and May of 2020 are cancelled. New classes will be offered at the conclusion of the pandemic or by Order of the Court. Traffic Diversion may still be elected by a party by mailing election to participate in Traffic Diversion to the Portage County Juvenile Court Traffic Clerk.

This Emergency Order shall be reviewed by the Court not more than every fourteen (14) days after its filing date.

IT IS SO ORDERED

March 19, 2020  
March 19, 2020

Robert W. Berger  
ROBERT W. BERGER, JUDGE  
ADMINISTRATIVE AND PRESIDING JUDGE