

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON  
IN AND FOR YAKIMA COUNTY

In re: ) GENERAL ORDER NO.  
 )  
EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION )  
SUPPLEMENTING THE SUPREME ) GR21  
COURT ORDER RELATING TO )  
COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH )  
EMERGENCY )  
 )  
 )

Whereas, the Washington State Supreme Court has issued multiple statewide orders requiring state courts to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Whereas Yakima County District Court entered its own order on June 11, 2020 that ordered that out of custody criminal matters and nonemergent civil matters except protection order hearings be stricken unless the parties notify the court at least one day prior to the scheduled matter that they can proceed virtually, telephonically or in person with proper social distancing following public health measures; that order also suspended all jury trials until September 1, 2020;

Whereas Yakima County District on June 26, 2020, extended the June 11, 2020 order and ordered the appropriate use of face coverings and social distancing while in a Yakima County District Court location.

Whereas, Yakima County District Court desires to modify said orders to give clear direction to the public, litigants, attorneys and court staff how the Supreme Court

1 order shall be implemented in Yakima County and to modify its own order in light of  
2 improved conditions in Yakima County; and

3 Whereas, Yakima County District Court has consulted with the Yakima County  
4 Health Department concerning the current status of the COVID-19 virus as well as  
5 recommendations from the Health Department and the Center for Disease Control  
6 concerning attempts to contain and mitigate the spread of the virus; and

7 Whereas, Yakima County COVID-19 conditions have improved significantly it  
8 still remains a hotspot for COVID-19 reporting new cases daily with totals surpassing  
9 10,843 confirmed cases and 237 deaths. Yakima County's has moved into and remains  
10 in a modified phase 1 of the Governor's reopening plan. The local Health District  
11 continues its directive urging its citizens to wear face coverings. The Secretary of Health  
12 continues to mandate face coverings statewide and Governor Inslee has proclaimed  
13 that no person may appear in a public place or business without a face covering in  
14 Yakima County been expanded statewide. Yakima County District Court continues to  
15 modify its facilities and procedures to best protect everyone in its facilities. However,  
16 more time is needed to enact those measures to safely conduct jury trials.

18 Whereas, the Yakima County District Court deems said supplemental order does  
19 not conflict with the Supreme Court Order and is warranted to address the current state  
20 of emergency within Yakima County.

21 NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the Court's authority to administer justice and  
22 to ensure the safety of court personnel, litigants, and the public,

1

2 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1. The June 11, 2020, Yakima County District Court Order is rescinded as to all to criminal, civil infraction and name change hearings. Those matters will be heard in accordance with the safety plan posted [www.yakimacounty.us/districtcourt](http://www.yakimacounty.us/districtcourt).
2. All jury trials are suspend until October 1, 2020 and shall be conducted in accordance with the safety plan posted on [www.yakimacounty.us/districtcourt](http://www.yakimacounty.us/districtcourt).
3. All other nonemergent civil matters are suspended until October 1, 2020 except infraction, name change and protection order hearings. These matters may still be heard in accordance with the June 11, 2020 order.
4. All persons must continue to wear masks or other appropriate facial covering of the mouth and nose when entering or remaining in a Yakima County District Court location unless they have a precluding condition in accordance with the public health guidelines. All persons shall strictly adhere to all directions and markings to ensure social distancing. All persons who enter any district court courtroom must maintain six (6) feet of distance between themselves and anyone who is not a member of their household. The number of persons allowed into a courtroom at any one time shall be limited. The courtrooms are marked to indicate allowable seating and places to stand when moving about the courtroom. Anyone, including attorneys, failing to strictly adhere to the social distancing provisions of this Order may be asked to leave, or will be removed from, the courtroom.

5. A judicial officer may allow or order individuals actively participating in a court proceeding to remove their face coverings, if the judicial officer deems it can be done safely and is necessary to facilitate clear communication and due process.
6. Any person who is sick or in quarantine may not enter into court areas.
7. This Order shall be reviewed on a weekly basis and may be modified as necessary to address the ongoing state of emergency.

Dated this 10 day of August, 2020.

Brian K. Sanderson, Presiding Judge  
Yakima County District Court