

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

IN RE:	:	
	:	
TEMPORARY CONTINUANCE OF	:	STANDING ORDER
CIVIL AND CRIMINAL JURY	:	
TRIALS DUE TO THE EXIGENT	:	
CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY	:	
COVID-19	:	

The Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has declared the existence of a disaster emergency throughout the Commonwealth to address the threat posed by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). An increased number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported in this district in recent days. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and State and local public health authorities have advised that precautions be taken to avoid exposure to the virus and prevent its spread, including implementing social distancing measures such as avoiding large gatherings and refraining from non-essential travel. These and other recent developments with regard to COVID-19 in the geographic area comprising this district adversely affect the Court's ability to obtain an adequate complement of trial jurors from a fair cross-section of the community. In light of these developments, and to protect public health, reduce the size of public gatherings, and reduce unnecessary travel within this district, while allowing the Court to continue to perform its constitutional duties, the Court issues the following Standing Order, effective immediately:

1. The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania will remain open for business in all Court locations (Philadelphia, Allentown, Reading, and Easton), subject to the following limitations.

2. All civil and criminal jury trials and grand jury selections scheduled to begin between now and April 13, 2020, before any district or magistrate judge in any courthouse in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania are CONTINUED pending further Court order.

3. Aside from ordering a jury trial, individual judges presiding over criminal proceedings may take such actions consistent with this Order as may be lawful and appropriate to ensure the fairness of the proceedings and preserve the rights of the parties.

4. The Court is cognizant of the right of criminal defendants to a speedy and public trial under the Sixth Amendment and the particular application of that right in cases involving defendants who are detained pending trial. In light of the developments regarding COVID-19 in this district outlined above and their impact on the Court's ability to obtain an adequate complement of trial jurors, the Court finds the ends of justice served by granting a continuance outweigh the best interest of the public and each defendant in a speedy trial. The time period of any continuance entered as a result of this Standing Order shall therefore be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A). Any motion by a criminal defendant seeking an exception to this Standing Order for the purpose of exercising the defendant's speedy trial rights shall be referred to the Chief Judge.


5. Grand juries shall continue to meet.

6. All Central Violations Bureau proceedings between now and April 13, 2020, are CONTINUED pending further Court order.

7. All mass public gatherings, other than court proceedings, are SUSPENDED at all Court locations within the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. This includes, but is not limited to, group tours and visits, moot courts and mock trials, bar group meetings, seminars, and naturalization ceremonies.

8. The Eastern District of Pennsylvania will remain open for all other business. The public is encouraged to continue utilizing Court services while following all applicable public health guidelines.

9. This Standing Order will expire no later than April 13, 2020, unless extended by further Court order.



Juan R. Sanchez
Chief Judge

Date: March 13, 2020