

MAR 18 2020

SEAN F. McAVOY, CLERK  
DEPUTY  
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

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. 20-101-1

This General Order is being issued in response to the evolving public health crisis caused by the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) and the recently-declared national emergency. The Court finds it necessary in the interest of justice to take proactive measures to slow the spread of the virus and ensure the safety of litigants, counsel, Court staff, grand jurors, petit jurors, witnesses, and the communities of this District.

Accordingly, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that, effective Thursday, March 19, 2020:

1. This Order does not pertain to Bankruptcy proceedings;
2. All hearings in civil and criminal cases scheduled for in-court appearance before any District Judge in the Eastern District of

1 Washington from March 19, 2020 through April 14, 2020, are  
2 VACATED, pending further Orders from the Court in each of those  
3 cases. All associated case management deadlines related to those  
4 affected civil and criminal cases are SUSPENDED, pending further  
5 Orders from the Court in each of those cases;

6 3. All grand jury sessions between now and April 13, 2020 are  
7 VACATED. Determinations of excludable delay in which to file an  
8 Indictment will be made in each individual case according to 18 U.S.C.  
9 § 3161(b) and (h);

10 4. As to pending criminal cases, the Court finds, given the outbreak of  
11 the COVID-19, that rescheduling in-person hearings set in the near  
12 future would result in minimizing undue risk to defendants, counsel,  
13 law enforcement, Court staff, grand jurors, petit jurors, witnesses, and  
14 the public at large. The Court also finds current public health  
15 advisories reduce the Court's ability to obtain an adequate spectrum of  
16 jurors and curtails the availability of counsel and Court staff to be  
17 present in the courtroom. Therefore, the Court finds, based on the  
18 widespread nature of the risks posed by COVID-19, that the ends of  
19 justice served by resetting hearings in all pending criminal cases during  
20 this period outweigh the best interest of the public and each affected

1 defendant in speedy trials, and the period between the date of entry of  
2 this Order and April 14, 2020, may be excluded from Speedy Trial Act  
3 calculations. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A). Findings of excludable  
4 delay will be entered contemporaneously in each individual case,  
5 along with an amended scheduling order;

6 **5.** Counsel need not object to this General Order to preserve any issues  
7 for litigation, including an alleged violation of a client's constitutional  
8 rights, as objections will be required in each individual case;

9 **6.** Excepted from this General Order are essential Magistrate Judge  
10 hearings and functions which will be evaluated on a case-by case basis  
11 at the discretion of the presiding Magistrate Judge after consultation  
12 with counsel;

13 **7.** Hearings in civil or criminal matters set for telephonic appearance by  
14 all parties or hearings set without oral argument are not affected by this  
15 General Order;

16 **8.** STEP Court participants will be advised separately whether they are to  
17 appear for proceedings; and

18 **9.** Naturalization Ceremonies have been CANCELLED through April  
19 30, 2020. The Citizen and Immigration Service (CIS) is authorized to  
20 administer the oath of Citizenship during this period of time.

1 Courthouses in the Eastern District of Washington will remain open with  
2 limited services available. The Clerk's Office intake desks will remain open with  
3 limited staff for filings. The public is encouraged to use online Court resources,  
4 contact the Court/Clerk's Office by telephone, and continue utilizing Court services  
5 while following all applicable public health guidelines. Electronic filings may still  
6 be made through the CM/ECF system.

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

10 **DATED** this 18th day of March 2020.



12 *Thomas O. Rice*

13 THOMAS O. RICE  
14 Chief United States District Judge  
15 on behalf of the full Court  
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