



**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER # 2020-00-08**

**RE: COVID-19 EMERGENCY ORDER REGARDING NON-CRITICAL CIVIL  
PROCEEDINGS AND PROCESS FOR EXTRAORDINARY WRITS**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution and section 43.26, Florida Statutes, the chief judge of each judicial circuit is charged with the authority and the power to do everything necessary to promote the prompt and efficient administration of justice; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the Chief Judge's constitutional and statutory responsibility for administrative supervision of the courts within the circuit and considering available resources, to create and maintain an organization capable of effecting the efficient, prompt, and proper administration of justice for the citizens of this State, the Chief Judge is required to exercise direction, *see* Fla. R. Jud. Admin. 2.215(b)(2), (b)(3); and

**WHEREAS**, the Centers for Disease Control and the Florida Department of Health have advised people to take precautions in light of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, and specifically noting the best way to prevent illness is to avoid exposure to the virus through such measures as small gatherings and social distancing; and

**WHEREAS**, this Court entered on March 16, 2020 Administrative Order AO 2020-00-04 regulating critical functions of the Court. The Chief Justice has entered a series of Administrative Orders, most recently on March 24, 2020, issuing AOSC20-17, continuing Emergency Measures in the Florida State Courts; and

**WHEREAS**, because of the COVID-19 outbreak, Governor Ron DeSantis declared a State of Emergency on March 1, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, Bay, Calhoun, Jackson, and Washington Counties declared a Local State of Emergency on March 17, 2020, and Gulf and Holmes Counties declared a Local State of Emergency on March 18, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, Courthouses within the Fourteenth Judicial Circuit have varying degrees of restrictions for public access; and

**WHEREAS**, in an effort to ensure public health and safety during this pandemic, while maintaining the constitutional rights of civil litigants before this Court;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I,** Christopher N. Patterson, in order to facilitate the efficient operation of the administration of justice, and pursuant to the authority vested in me as Chief Judge of the Fourteenth Judicial Circuit of Florida under Florida Rules of Judicial Administration 2.215, hereby order that, **effective immediately**, and to continue until further order:

**1. Civil Traffic Infractions**

- a. All compliance deadlines are tolled pending further order of the court.
- b. The Clerk of Court shall not issue D-6 license suspension or default any defendant on any civil traffic infraction.
- c. The Clerk of the Court shall not default or issue a D-6 license suspension on any defendant who is currently on a payment plan until further order of the court.

**2. Foreclosures.** All in-person foreclosure sales currently scheduled for any day during which the court's normal operations are suspended are cancelled and shall be rescheduled by the Clerk of Court accordingly.

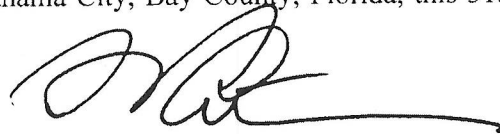
**3. Defaults and Writs of Possession and for Garnishment.** Until such time as the courts resume normal operations, in all county civil and circuit civil cases:

- a. No default shall be entered by the Clerk of Court.
- b. No writs of possession or writs of garnishment shall be served until normal operations of the court resume.

**4. Extraordinary Writs and Pandemic-Related Litigation.**

- a. Extraordinary Writs. Any petition seeking extraordinary relief related to the COVID-19 outbreak or otherwise affecting an individual's constitutional rights shall be brought to the attention of the Chief Judge.
- b. The Clerk of Court shall immediately notify the Chief Judge of any legal matter filed relating to COVID-19. This includes, but is not limited to, petitions for writ of habeas corpus filed by individuals challenging a quarantine order and petitions to enforce quarantine orders.

**DONE AND ORDERED** in Chambers, at Panama City, Bay County, Florida, this 31st day of March, 2020.



CHRISTOPHER N. PATTERSON  
CHIEF JUDGE

cc:  
All Judges  
Clerks of Court



A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY  
BILL KINSAUL CLERK  
OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

By Abraham Wiles  
Deputy Clerk

COVID-19 Emergency Order  
Regarding Non-Critical Civil  
Proceedings in the Fourteenth  
Circuit

2020-00-08

Page 2