

6th Judicial Circuit
Tuscaloosa County, Alabama
Administrative Order
Guidelines for Court Operations
Effective March 16, 2020 to April 16, 2020

On March 13, 2020, the Alabama Supreme Court entered an administrative order suspending all in-person court proceedings through April 16, 2020. A copy of this order has been posted previously on the county bar association website, and is attached here again. It will govern in-person court proceedings.

Effective March 16, 2020, the following are suspended:

- District Criminal dockets/hearings
- Small Claims dockets/hearings
- Traffic dockets/hearings
- District Civil dockets/hearings
- Jury Trials
- Circuit Criminal dockets/hearings
- Circuit Civil dockets/hearings
- Domestic Relations dockets/hearings
- Juvenile dockets/hearings
- Child Support dockets/hearings

Exceptions to the in-person appearance ban include:

- Initial appearance hearings (48/72-hour hearings) for adults and juveniles;
- Bond related matters for adult offenders
 - Motions for bond reduction
 - Motions for bond revocation
 - Motions to set bond
- Protections from Abuse hearings. Attendees at these hearings are limited to:
 - Complainant
 - Complainant's attorney
 - Defendant
 - Defense Counsel
 - Witnesses
 - Others deemed necessary and preapproved by the Judge

- Emergency child custody and protection matters (including Department of Human Resources). Attendees at these hearings are limited to:
 - Complainant
 - Complainant's attorney
 - Defendant
 - Defense Counsel
 - Witnesses
 - Guardian ad litem
 - Others deemed necessary and preapproved by the Judge

- Petitions for temporary injunctive relief that cannot be handled via video or phone conferencing.

- Emergency protection matters involving elderly or vulnerable persons. Attendees at these hearings will be limited to:
 - Complainant
 - Complainant's attorney
 - Defendant
 - Defense Counsel
 - Witnesses
 - Guardian ad litem
 - Others deemed necessary and preapproved by the Judge

- Proceedings related to the COVID-19 public health emergencies;

- Emergency proceedings as needed by law enforcement and approved by the Presiding Circuit Judge;

- Other exceptions as requested by the Presiding Circuit Judge and approved by the State of Alabama Chief Justice.

Further, the Center for Disease Control has advised that the best precaution against COVID-19 is to avoid those who may have been exposed to the virus. Therefore, effective immediately, the following person shall not enter our courtrooms or court offices:

- Persons who have traveled outside the United States within the past 14 days;
- Persons who reside or have had close contact with someone who has traveled outside the United States with the past 14 days;
- Persons who have been asked to self-quarantine by any doctor, hospital, or health agency;
- Persons who have been diagnosed with, or have had contact with, anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

If you meet these criteria and have business with the Tuscaloosa County Circuit or District Courts, you should inform the court as follows:

- If you are an attorney and you are scheduled to appear, then e-file a motion and e-mail it to the judge's judicial assistant;
- If you are represented by an attorney, then contact your attorney;
- If you are not represented by an attorney, then notify the judge's office before whom you are scheduled to appear (and make sure they have your correct address and phone number).

Below is contact information for each judge's office:

--Judge John England
* Phone: 205-464-8256
* Email: ryan.montgomery@alacourt.gov

--Judge Brad Almond
* Phone: 205-464-8252
* Email: sonya.mckinstry@alacourt.gov

--Judge Jim Roberts
* Phone: 205-464-8270
* Email: bonnie.pennington@alacourt.gov

--Judge Al May
* Phone: 205-464-8274
* Email: Celita.mccaskill@alacourt.gov

--Judge Philip Lisenby
* Phone: 205-464-8396
* Email: Jessica.sutton@alacourt.gov

--Judge Elizabeth Hamner
* Phone: 205-464-8222
* Email: Katelynn.Savoie@alacourt.gov

--Judge Jim Gentry
* Phone: 205-464-8422
* Email: Angela.campbell@alacourt.gov

--Judge Joanne Jannik
* Phone: 205-464-8381
* Email: Cindy.moore@alacourt.gov

Also, if an emergency matter arises, contact the Judge's office at the phone number and e-mail listed above.

The Court Referral Office will not meet with clients at the Courthouse. CRO staff will contact clients about appointments and drug testing. And, Second Chance will not have in-person contact with their clients. However, Second Chance clients should continue to call Color Code as usual.

Lastly, personal contact with the clerk's staff will be limited. Citizens may drop off court payments in the form of money orders or cashiers checks and/or file case-related documents through the mail slots on the clerk's office doors or at drop boxes that will be positioned near the clerk office doors.

DONE this 15th day of March, 2020.

/s/ ALLEN W. MAY, JR.
PRESIDING JUDGE