

IN THE TWENTY-THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
HILLSBORO, MISSOURI
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 3-19-20-1

ORDER PARTIALLY SUSPENDING IN PERSON CONTACT
EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

COMES NOW the Court and finds:

1. A state of emergency has been declared by the President of the United States, the Governor of the State of Missouri, and the County Executive of the County of Jefferson as a result of the spread of the coronavirus (hereinafter COVID – 19),
2. The spread of COVID-19 has resulted in the declaration of a world-wide pandemic (hereinafter “pandemic”)
3. It is imperative to take steps to protect the health and safety of all citizens including parents, guardians, juveniles and other relatives involved in juvenile proceedings
4. As best as determined to date, COVID-19 spreads between people who are in close contact with one another through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes,
5. Social distancing is directed to help reduce the spread of COVID-19
6. Chief Justice George Draper has issued an order dated March 16, 2020 which suspends in-person proceedings in all circuit court cases, with exceptions,
7. Presiding Judge of the 23rd Judicial Circuit has issued an order dated March 16, 2020 which locally adopts said suspensions,
8. The State of Missouri, Department of Social Services and its contracted agencies have a duty to mitigate exposure to COVID-19 among parents, guardians, juveniles and employees

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by Administrative Judge of the Family Court, and Deputy Presiding Judge, that effective immediately and continuing through Friday, April 3, 2020 unless otherwise specifically set forth below or modified or extended in subsequent administrative order, it is ordered that the Twenty-Third Judicial Circuit shall suspend court-ordered, in-person visits between juveniles and parents, guardians, other relatives or approved visitors that are supervised by Children’s Division or its contracted agencies through and including April 3, 2020 with the following conditions:

1. Available electronic alternatives such as video conferencing shall be utilized, placement shall make extraordinary efforts to avail the juvenile to the electronic alternatives
2. Phone or other electronic communications such as video conferencing (not exclusively email) may temporarily substitute in person contact between case worker and parents, guardians or other relative; and may temporarily substitute in person contact between caseworker and juvenile
3. Reasonable, diligent and continuing efforts to reunify the juvenile with a parent, guardian or other relative or persons may be met by phone or other electronic communications such as video conferencing (not exclusively email)
4. The juvenile court shall consider the restrictions herein in conjunction with the fluid nature of the pandemic in making a determination of reasonable, diligent and continuing efforts on behalf of the agency, parents or guardians, other relative or person(s)

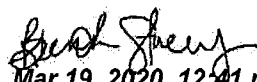
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED THAT nothing herein shall prevent parents from exercising court-ordered, in-person visitation as follows:

1. Unsupervised OR not supervised by Children's Division or its contracted agencies, and
2. is agreed upon by the supervisor (if any), parent, and/or placement (which shall include rules of residential facilities) and
3. complies with all current orders and directives of federal, state and local agencies and courts.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED THAT unsupervised visits or visits that are not supervised by Children's Division or its contracted agencies that may be suspended due to the pandemic shall comply with the conditions as delineated for visits that are supervised by Children's Division pursuant to conditions 1-4 as listed above

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED THAT Motions for Contempt for failure to allow visitation will be heard only in extraordinary circumstances, and frivolous motions may be subject to sanction

SO ORDERED


Mar 19, 2020, 12:41 pm
CIRCUIT JUDGE
DIVISION FOUR