

State of Michigan
27th Judicial Circuit Court
County of Newaygo
County of Oceana



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 20, 2020

**27th Circuit Court and 78th District Court for Newaygo and Oceana County, and the
Newaygo and Oceana County Probate Courts Closed to the General Public Except for
Essential Functions Involving Health and Safety and Constitutional Rights**

White Cloud, MI March 20, 2020— The Newaygo and Oceana County courts today announced that access to courtrooms and other spaces is now limited to no more than 10 persons, including staff, effective immediately. Social distancing recommendations including that persons stay at least 6 feet apart are also adopted by the courts. The court is closed to the general public except for essential functions involving health and safety and Constitutional rights. Consistent with the directive of the Michigan Supreme Court that courts must take every measure possible to protect the public and court personnel, court staff in each office has been reduced and court hours are reduced to 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. until April 3, 2020. These changes are subject to modification. Please check the county website for changes.

To confront this unprecedented public health crisis, the Michigan Supreme Court issued [Administrative Order 2020-2](#), which highlights in specific detail essential functions. This order supersedes any previously issued Local Administrative Orders regarding the crisis.

“Courts statewide are taking this step in unison so that we send a clear message to the public that we are taking every possible step to stop the virus while continuing to provide essential services. We are faced with a very dynamic situation with information and directives from our local funding units, the Michigan Supreme Court, Governor Whitmer, and President Trump changing frequently. We will keep the public informed of any changes. It is important to note that the court is still accepting new cases, motions, and other documents on all types of cases. These documents must be submitted by mail, email, or fax. The Supreme Court Order only limits the type of public hearings we can schedule. The courts will continue to address non-emergency matters by phone or video conferencing” said Robert Springstead, Chief Judge. “Our team is adjusting as quickly as possible to the crisis, and we appreciate the support of the public as we work to put more business online in the coming days.”

Essential functions include arraignments for in-custody defendants, review and determination of requests for search warrants and personal protection orders, certain child protective proceedings, and critical issues regarding child support and child custody, among others specified in the order. The new order also provides courts with additional flexibility to conduct business using technology such as video and telephone conferencing.

The courts will continue to keep the public aware of any changes to court services to better assist people with their needs and prioritize everyone's safety during this time.

Hon. Robert D. Springstead
Chief Judge and Circuit Court Judge
Newaygo and Oceana Counties