

Judge E. Faye Peterson
Courtroom 4, Second Floor
Hinds County Courthouse

STANDING ORDER
RE: Jury Trials

The Court, having considered safety guidelines of the Center for Disease Control and the Emergency Administrative Orders of the Supreme Court of the State of Mississippi, has decided the following for the purposes of jury trials:

I. General Policy Regarding Jury Trials

Masks will be required while inside the courtroom at all times. The Court will provide PPE to those participating with jury trials. All persons must sit in the pre-marked areas as directed by the bailiffs. Spectators, guests and/or visitors will not be allowed into the courtroom during the trial. The Court, in its discretion and in compliance with applicable rules, will provide a livestream viewing of the proceedings through the Hinds County, Mississippi website. <http://www.hindscountymys.com/court-systems/circuit-court-judges/district-4#overlay-context=>

a. Motion Hearings

The Court will schedule motion hearings at its earliest convenience. As to civil trials, the Court will conduct motion hearings and a pre-trial conference as the matter proceeds to trial only after the parties engage in mediation at least thirty (30) days prior to the trial date. As to criminal trials, the Court will provide hearing dates after pre-trial motion hearings when so required. The Court will not conduct motion hearings the day of trial. The Court will not hear motions filed outside the timelines set by the Court when applicable. Any motion not set to be heard prior to trial will be deemed waived.

b. Voir Dire

The Hinds County Circuit Court Judges will conduct mass jury qualifications to garner jury panels for civil and criminal dockets pending before the courts. Voir dire will begin at 9:00 a.m. on the Monday morning of trial. Counsel should be present in the courtroom by 8:45 a.m.

c. Witness Testimony via ePlatform

The parties may request a witness provide testimony via an eplatform. Witnesses may be virtually present for testimony using audiovisual equipment inside the courtroom. Counsel must provide the Court with the necessary contact information to join the witness to the proceeding.

d. Criminal Trials

As it pertains specifically to criminal trials, the Court will accept only open pleas the day of trial. No recommendation by the State will be accepted the day of trial.

IT IS SO ORDERED, this the 11th day of September, 2020.



HONORABLE E. FAYE PETERSON
CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE