

Please find below court procedures for July/August 2020 regarding matters set only on Division 3 docket. Decisions are made often, and this is subject to change. It is the intention of this court to resume court proceedings as suggested by the Florida Supreme Court and the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit as soon as possible.

Docket soundings:

- Defense attorneys may appear in person or remotely. It is the discretion of the attorneys whether it is necessary for defendants to be present for docket sounding. Inmates will be transported for all hearings when required. If the attorney opts to appear remotely, they must provide a good phone number to my judicial assistant via email the day before DS.

Pleas:

- Plea hearings are encouraged to proceed as set. The Court will accept open pleas to the court at any time. Pleas in Absentia are encouraged and will be accepted in all cases. Please see the guidelines below regarding Plea in Absentia hearings.
 - o Plea hearings can be held remotely or in person. When possible, executed plea forms shall be submitted to Ms. Tuttle prior to the plea. It is strongly encouraged that attorneys facilitate pleas by coordinating with their clients. Please contact Sherry Tuttle for more information on appearing remotely/telephonically for a plea hearing.
 - o Plea in Absentia paperwork must be submitted to this office prior to the scheduled court date. Counsel may appear by phone or they may opt to waive their appearance completely. Counsel shall submit a fingerprint card (if required) with the plea in absentia. If fingerprints are not accessible due to COVID-19, a status date will be set out for 30 days for defendant to submit fingerprint cards.

Motions:

- If social distancing guidelines can be adhered to and all parties are agreeable the hearings can be conducted in person. Motions can also be heard via Microsoft teams or telephonically. This is to include but not limited to motion to suppress, motion in limine and motion to dismiss. Evidence should be reviewed by both parties prior to the hearing and stipulations be forwarded to the court prior to the hearing. Witnesses can appear remotely, and our office can provide information to facilitate the hearings.

Violation of Probation:

- Violation of probation arraignments and hearings will proceed. Pro se defendants must be present. The hearing can be addressed by defense attorney either in person or remotely.

Arraignments/ Traffic Arraignments

- Arraignments and Traffic arraignments will proceed. Defense counsel can appear remotely or in person. Pro Se defendants must be present.

Non-Jury trials and Orders to Show Cause

- These cases will be heard. Pro Se defendant must be present. Attorneys can appear in person or remotely. Arrangements to appear remotely must be made through my judicial assistant prior to the NJT/OTSC date.

UNTIL FURTHER ORDER MASKS MUST BE WORN IN THE COURTHOUSE AND DEFENDANTS MUST BRING A VALID PHOTO ID TO ENTER THE BUILDING. INFORMATION REGARDING ENTERING THE COURTHOUSE CAN BE OBTAINED BY CALLING 321-351-6255

Any questions or concerns regarding Division 3 procedures for July and August please contact my judicial assistant, Sherry Tuttle, at 321-617-7268 or via email at sherry.tuttle@flcourts18.org