



**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF GREENE COUNTY, MISSOURI,
31ST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

In Re: Juvenile Division Notice of Hearings

Administrative Order 2020-AO63

WHEREAS, in response to the declaration of national and state emergencies following the classification of COVID-19 as a pandemic, this Court and the Supreme Court of Missouri have entered several orders directing the operation of Court proceedings during the crisis, most recently its *Operational Directives* effective August 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS the Supreme Court of Missouri has previously ordered that proceedings pursuant to the Chapters 210 and 211 RSMo. pertaining to juvenile delinquency, abuse and neglect, termination of parental rights and Chapter 453 RSMo. proceedings pertaining to adoption are an exception to any orders suspending in-person hearings; and

WHEREAS, effective March 27, 2020, this Court entered *Administrative Order 25P-20* regarding the conduct of juvenile court hearings. Subsequent thereto the Juvenile Court began conducting hybrid remote/in-person hearings consistent with the phase requirements identified in previous orders; and

WHEREAS, effective October 7, 2020, the 31st Judicial Circuit Court, pursuant to *Administrative Order 2020-AO58* mandated that, with the exception of Juvenile Court and Municipal Court, court operations would continue under the guidelines of “*Operating Phase One*,” and

WHEREAS, the outbreak of COVID-19 has become more severe in the United States and in Greene County Missouri than at any previous point.

NOW THEREFORE, effective November 30, 2020:

1. To the extent possible, all protective custody hearings, abuse and neglect jurisdictional and dispositional hearings, detention hearings, delinquency jurisdictional and dispositional hearings, motions to modify and adoptions shall be held using a combination of teleconferencing and video conferencing with only court staff, the deputy juvenile officer, and legal counsel for the juvenile officer present in the courtroom for the purpose of facilitating and conducting the hearing.

If a party cannot participate in the hearing through one of the remote access methods, the party shall contact the division clerk so that arrangements can be made for alternative access or if necessary for an in-person appearance.

In the event there is a request for a contested hearing, the party making such a request shall notify the Court and a status conference will be set, utilizing teleconferencing or video conferencing, to consider the logistics of such a contested hearing.

2. Status hearings, post-permanency review hearings, probation review hearings, and other hearings that do not require an in-person appearance, to which the rules of evidence do not apply and which may be heard either formally or informally, shall continue to be heard and ruled by the Court in chambers.

The Court continues to request that the Children's Division, Contracted Case Management, Juvenile Officer, the Guardian ad Litem, counsel for parents, CASA volunteer, placement providers, and any other parties to the proceeding shall, prior to the hearing date, file their written case reports, status reports, recommendations, etc., for review by the Court on the date of the scheduled hearing. The Court will review all documents and will make the required findings and enter the required orders appropriate under the circumstances.

In the event a party is seeking some affirmative relief at such hearing (increased/decreased visitation, permissive placement, drug testing, etc.) that party shall file the appropriate motion and contact the division clerk to schedule a hearing on the motion.

In the event a party, or other entity requested to file a report, does not have the ability to e-file their reports, the reports shall be emailed to the deputy juvenile officer for filing.

3. Termination of parental rights hearings are currently assigned to specific judicial officers. Motions, status conferences, and other matters related to those hearings will be held when at all possible through teleconferences and video conferencing under the direction of the judicial officer assigned to that case. Termination of parental rights cases shall be held in a manner consistent all current orders of the Supreme Court of Missouri, and this court.

4. This Administrative Order shall remain in effect until rescinded or superseded by subsequent order of this court.

SO ORDERED,

Dated: 11/30/2020



Michael J. Cordonnier
Presiding Judge
31st Judicial Circuit Court