



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

Administrative Order 2020-AO70

In Re: Jury Trials – Court Normalization Order Notification to the Public

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; and

WHEREAS the outbreak of COVID-19 has become more severe in the United States and in the 31st Judicial Circuit than at any previous point. *See generally*;

Show Me Strong Recovery Plan, Missouri Department of Health,
<https://showmestrong.mo.gov/data/statewide-publichealth/>

Springfield - Greene County Health Department Website
<https://www.springfieldmo.gov/5068/Coronavirus>; and

WHEREAS despite the carefully constructed safety protocols for jury trials previously ordered and employed by the 31st Judicial Circuit Court, the outbreak has reached a point the Court cannot currently draw a venire panel, select a jury or try a case to completion in a manner consistent with safeguarding the health and safety of the public who serve on juries, the court staff, the parties and their attorneys, and all other persons involved in a jury trial, and

WHEREAS this Order does not change the Operating Phase One guidelines currently in place in the 31st Judicial Circuit, nor those guidelines in place in each of the Municipal Divisions of this Court or in the Juvenile Division of the Court.

WHEREFORE, the Presiding Judge hereby enters the following order:

1. Effective on the date of this order, all civil and criminal (grand and petit) jury selections and jury trials scheduled to commence before any judge of the 31st Judicial Circuit from the effective date through **February 15, 2021** are by this order **CONTINUED**;
2. In ordering this continuance, the Court now finds that the health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic dictate that gatherings of people be limited, which mitigate against summoning citizens for jury service;
3. The Court further finds that summoning citizens for jury service during this period of increased COVID outbreak would negatively impact the fair administration of justice and the rights of those citizens;
4. The Court further finds that each of those interests and concerns, coupled with the general public health interest at stake, outweigh the interest of each and any individual defendant's right and the public's interest in a speedy trial;
5. This Order does not affect the Court's consideration of criminal or civil motions and matters that may be resolved without oral argument, or that may be considered via telephone or audiovisual conference, or in compliance with the Phase One guidelines for in-court proceedings.

SO ORDERED.

Dated: 12/11/2020



Michael J. Cordonnier
Presiding Judge
31st Judicial Circuit Court