

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
NO. 2020-08

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND
FOR ORANGE AND OSCEOLA
COUNTIES, FLORIDA

**TEMPORARY ORDER GOVERNING
BATTERERS' INTERVENTION PROGRAMS**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution and section 43.26, Florida Statutes, the Chief Judge of each judicial circuit is charged with the authority and the power to do everything necessary to promote the prompt and efficient administration of justice; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Chief Judge's constitutional and statutory responsibility for administrative supervision of the courts within the circuit and considering available resources, to create and maintain an organization capable of effecting the efficient, prompt, and proper administration of justice for the citizens of this State, the Chief Judge is required to exercise direction, *see* Fla. R. Jud. Admin. 2.215(b)(2), (b)(3); and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and the Florida Department of Health have advised people to take precautions in light of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, and specifically noting the best way to prevent illness is to avoid exposure to the virus through such measures as small gatherings and social distancing; and

WHEREAS, because of the COVID-19 outbreak, Governor Ron DeSantis declared a State of Emergency on March 1, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, Orange County declared a Local State of Emergency on March 13, 2020, and Osceola County declared a Local State of Emergency on March 16, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Chief Justice Charles T. Canady issued Administrative Order No. AOSC20-13, In Re: COVID-19 Emergency Procedures in the Florida State Courts, requiring Chief Judges to continue ongoing planning and authorizing the use of mitigating measures to address the effects of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, Chief Justice Charles T. Canady issued Administrative Order No. AOSC20-15, In Re: COVID-19 Essential and Critical Trial Court Proceedings, requiring that no proceedings or other court events other than essential proceedings and proceedings critical to the state of emergency or the public health emergency shall be conducted through in-person hearings until such time as the public health emergency is resolved, or as provided by subsequent order; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Administrative Order No.: AOSC20-15, In Re: COVID-19 Essential and Critical Trial Court Proceedings, the Chief Judge may determine that other proceedings and events can be effectively conducted remotely without the necessity of in-person court appearances; and

WHEREAS, in conducting essential proceedings and proceedings critical to the state of emergency or the public health emergency, circuit and county courts shall employ all methods practicable to minimize risk of COVID-19 exposure to individuals involved in the proceedings or the general public; and

WHEREAS, during the duration of Administrative Order Nos. AOSC20-13 and AOSC20-15, the Chief Judge of each judicial circuit is authorized to establish temporary procedures for the use, to the maximum extent feasible, of communication equipment for the conducting of proceedings by remote electronic means, as are necessary in their respective circuits due to the public health emergency; and

In accordance with the authority vested in the Chief Judge by Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215, and to promote public safety, it is hereby **ORDERED, effective immediately**:

(1) Any order or portion of any Final Judgment entered by the Domestic Violence division judges (Orange County Subdivisions 44-3, 45-3, 46-3 and Osceola County Subdivisions 30-C, 40-C, 43-C) requiring a respondent to attend a Batterers' Intervention Program (BIP) or any other group treatment (where there may be 10 people or more in attendance) is temporarily suspended until such date as the Orange County Courthouse and the Osceola County Courthouses reopen for regular business. Respondents must resume their attendance at any such treatment within 10 days after the courthouse reopens.

(2) Only the portion of any order or Final Judgment that orders such attendance is suspended. All other requirements of any order or Final Judgment remain in full force and effect.

(3) BIP providers and other treatment providers are required immediately to provide a copy of this Administrative Order to any person attending their programs as a result of an order or Final Judgment from a Ninth Judicial Circuit Court Domestic Violence division judge.

DONE AND ORDERED at Orlando, Florida, this 20th day of March, 2020.



Donald A. Myers, Jr.
Chief Judge

Copies provided to:

Clerk of Court, Orange County
Clerk of Court, Osceola County
General E-Mail Distribution List
<http://www.ninthcircuit.org>