

IN THE 20TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT FOR DAVIDSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE
AT NASHVILLE

FILED

OCT 16 2020

IN RE: JURY & NON-JURY TRIALS IN
THE CIRCUIT COURTS AND
JURY TRIALS IN THE CHANCERY
COURTS AND THE CRIMINAL COURTS

20PJ

RICHARD R. ROYER, Clerk
By  **Deputy**

ORDER

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, the Circuit and Chancery Courts of the 20th Judicial District have made the following decisions:

1. As per the July 16, 2020 Presiding Judge Order, all Chancery, Circuit and Criminal Court jury trials for the months of July and August 2020 were suspended.
2. As per the August 12, 2020 Presiding Judge Order, all Chancery, Circuit and Criminal Court jury trials for the months of September, October, November and December 2020 were suspended due to the continued risks of contagion of COVID-19.
3. The Circuit Courts and Chancery Courts of the 20th Judicial District, Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, agree in principle that jury trials can commence in the month of January, 2021. The actual dates, however, for the setting of jury trials must be determined by each individual Court.

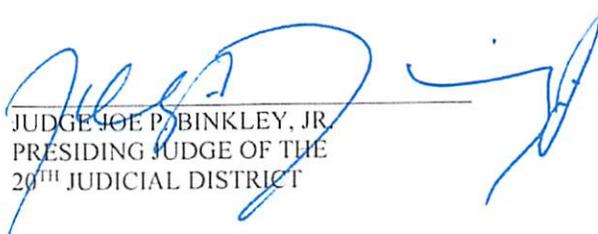
The realistic challenge facing the Circuit and Chancery Courts for commencing jury trials is that the courtrooms in the Historic Courthouse are extremely small. Possibly with one exception, the courtrooms in the Historic Courthouse cannot accommodate a 12 to 14 person jury and allow not only the jurors but also the parties, the lawyers, assistants to the lawyers, the court reporter and Court personnel to be able to maintain a distance of 6 feet from each other as required by the CDC Guidelines and the Metropolitan Davidson County Department of Health. Some of the courtrooms in the Historic Courthouse are even too small to accommodate a 6-7 person jury and allow all participants to be able to maintain a distance of 6 feet from each other.

4. The Circuit Court Judges and Chancellors continue to stand ready to schedule any jury trials where the parties are willing to waive a jury trial and allow the case to be tried by the Judge/Chancellor. Also, the Circuit Court Judges and Chancellors are ready to schedule any jury trials where the parties are willing to waive a 12 person jury and accept a 6 person jury.
5. As per the July 16, 2020 Presiding Judge Order, until further notice, the Circuit Court Central Assignment System will no longer be in place for Circuit Court non-jury trials. All non-jury trials will be scheduled with the Circuit Court to which the cases were originally assigned. All attorneys and pro se litigants shall contact the respective Judge's office to which their case was originally assigned in order to obtain a trial date.

The Central Assignment System which is incorporated in the 20th Judicial District's Local Rule 27.07 applies only to the following Circuit Courts/Judges: First Circuit Court/Judge Gayden, Second Circuit Court/Judge McClendon, Fifth Circuit Court/Judge Binkley, Sixth Circuit Court/Judge Brothers, and Eighth Circuit Court/Judge Jones.

All six (6) Criminal Court Judges of the 20th Judicial District, Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, agree that Criminal Court jury trials can commence in the month of November of 2020; however, the actual dates for the setting of trials will be determined by each individual court and is contingent upon the availability of the parties, all witnesses and the attorneys for the cases that have been assigned to their respective Courts. The procedures for conducting the trials in compliance with Covid-19 health guidelines will be the responsibility of the individual court.

The courtrooms in the A.A. Birch Building where the six (6) Criminal Court Judges preside over jury trials are large enough after some modifications are made to accommodate a 12-14 person jury trial. Three of the six courtrooms are even larger than the other three courtrooms.



JUDGE JOE P. BINKLEY, JR.
PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE
20TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

cc: All Judges/Chancellors in the 20th Judicial District
Special Master Mary Ashley Nichols
Assignment Clerk Kelli Olin
Circuit Court Clerk Richard Rooker
Clerk & Master Maria Salas
Criminal Court Clerk Howard Gentry