

**Until further notice, all court hearings or other proceedings in Douglas County Superior Court will be held in a virtual video/audio courtroom.**

Members of the public may appear/observe such video/audio proceedings by contacting the Court Administrator for Meeting ID and Password instructions to enter the virtual courtroom. Members of the public should whenever possible contact the Court Administrator at least one business day prior to the court hearing to request such instructions. The Court Administrator may be reached at:

Court Administrator Phone: 509-745-9063

Court Administrator Email: [jjackson@co.douglas.wa.us](mailto:jjackson@co.douglas.wa.us)

The Court has made the following findings under *State v. Bone-Club*, 128 Wash.2d 254, 906 P.2d 325 (1995):

1. Chief Justice Debra Stephens, Governor Jay Inslee, and President Trump have declared statewide and national emergencies due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-25 mandates that essential businesses such as the Court are prohibited from operating, unless they establish and implement social distancing and sanitation measures established by the United States Department of Labor's Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 and the Washington State Department of Health Workplace and Employer Resources & Recommendations. Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-28 recognized that "there are a plethora of electronic, telephonic and other options that make it possible for the public to attend open public meetings remotely", and the Governor waived any requirement under Washington State open meetings laws that required in-person meetings. While not governing this proceeding, this proclamation demonstrates the nature and extent of the pandemic emergency.
2. For court proceedings, Chief Justice Stephens' General Order No. 25700-B-607 requires that all matters conducted by the Court during this time period "must be heard by telephone, video, or other means that do

not require in-person attendance, unless impossible. Where court matters must be heard in person, social distancing and other public health measures must be strictly observed." That Order further recognizes that "[n]othing in this order limits the authority of courts to adopt measures to protect health and safety that are more restrictive than this order, as circumstances warrant."

3. For the matters scheduled today before this Court today, the Court finds as follows:

- a. A compelling interest has been demonstrated that requires the Court to take to conduct today's by teleconference and to limit physical public interaction with the parties and court staff.
- b. Anyone who objects to the matter currently scheduled may dial in to the virtual courtroom and state the objection, provided that permission to address the Court is requested and granted.
- c. Members of the public must remain silent unless given permission to speak. Recording of the proceeding is prohibited without prior court approval.
- d. The Court finds that the means provided for the public to observe/listen to this court hearing is the least restrictive means available for protecting the public, the parties, and court staff.
- e. The Court has weighed the importance of open proceedings against the present health risks, and has determined that it is appropriate to defer to the guidance of public health experts during this pandemic. The risk of further spread of COVID- 19 outweighs the public's interest to be physically present in an open court at this time.
- f. This order is in place for the scheduled proceedings, and will be reconsidered daily as public health data, directives, and advice are issued. This order is narrowly tailored as to address present health risks. No less restrictive alternative is available that will sufficiently protect the health of all present.



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Judge Brian C. Huber  
Douglas County Superior Court