

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

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IN RE: COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY COVID-19 (JURY SUSPENSION ORDER) FILED ON MARCH 24, 2020 AT 1:03 P.M. SUPERSEDING GENERAL ORDER

WHEREAS, the President of the United States has declared a national emergency, and the Governor of the State of Connecticut has declared a public health emergency throughout the State;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has advised people to take precautions in light of the COVID-19 virus (coronavirus) outbreak, and has noted that the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus, through, among other means, social distancing; AND

WHEREAS, trial and grand jurors often have to work in close quarters to hear the evidence and deliberate following presentation of the evidence;

THEREFORE

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, effective immediately, that:

1) All civil and criminal (grand and petit) jury selections and jury trials scheduled **to commence now through May 15, 2020** before any district or magistrate judge in any courthouse in the District of Connecticut (i.e., Richard C. Lee U.S. Courthouse in New Haven; Abraham Ribicoff Federal Building in Hartford; and Brien McMahon Federal Building in Bridgeport) are CONTINUED pending further Order of the Court;

2) With regard to grand jury proceedings, due to the recent inability to obtain quorums to conduct grand jury proceedings, current grand juries sitting in any courthouse in the District (i.e., Richard C. Lee U.S. Courthouse in New Haven; Abraham Ribicoff Federal Building in Hartford; and Brien McMahon Federal Building in Bridgeport) are suspended commencing now through May 15, 2020;

3) With regard to criminal trials, due to the Court's reduced ability to obtain an adequate spectrum of jurors and the effect of the above public health recommendations on the availability of counsel and Court staff to be present in the courtroom, the time period of the continuances implemented by this Standing Order will be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, as the Court specifically finds that the ends of justice served by ordering the continuances outweigh the best interests of the public and each defendant in a speedy trial, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A).

The District of Connecticut courthouses remain open for all other business. Staff in the Clerk's Office are available by telephone, mail will be received, and intake desks remain open for filings. Electronic filings may still be made through the CM/ECF system. The public is encouraged to continue utilizing Court services while following all applicable public health guidelines.

SO ORDERED:

Dated: April 2, 2020

/s/ Stefan R. Underhill
Stefan R. Underhill
Chief United States District Judge