

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 19, 2020**

**Press Release from the District, Circuit and Probate Courts of  
Muskegon County**

14<sup>th</sup> Circuit, 60<sup>th</sup> District, 61<sup>st</sup> Probate Courts are closed to the general public except for essential functions involving health, safety and constitutional rights

Muskegon, MI March 19, 2020 – The Muskegon County Courts today announced that access to courtrooms and other spaces is now strictly limited to no more than 10 persons, including staff, effective immediately. The court has been and will remain closed to the general public except for essential functions involving health, safety and Constitutional rights.

To confront this unprecedented public health crisis, the Michigan Supreme Court issued [Administrative Order 2020-2](#) March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, which highlights in specific detail essential functions. This order supersedes the previously issued Local Administrative Orders regarding the crisis.

Muskegon County Chief Judges Timothy G. Hicks and Raymond J. Kostrzewa jointly noted that “Courts statewide are taking this step to send a clear and unified message to the public that we are taking every possible step to stop the virus while continuing to provide essential services. We are adjusting as quickly as possible to the fluid nature of this ongoing public health emergency, and we appreciate everyone’s support as we continue to work toward balancing the interests of public health and public safety.”

Essential functions include, but are not limited to: arraignments for in-custody defendants, review and determination of requests for search warrants and personal protection orders, juvenile delinquency apprehension and detainment hearings, emergency removal child protective proceedings, and emergency child custody issues necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the litigants and/or children. The new order also provides courts with additional flexibility to conduct business using technology such as video and telephone conferencing.

**Personal Protection Orders-**

Attorneys and self-represented litigants can file PPO Petitions via:

- Mail- Attention 3rd Floor PPO Clerk, HOJ, 990 Terrace St., Muskegon MI 49442
- Email- FamilyCourtServices@co.muskegon.mi.us
- Drop Box- Located at HOJ, 990 Terrace St., Muskegon MI 49442

PPO Petition Forms, available at:

- SCAO Court Forms-  
<https://courts.michigan.gov/administration/scao/forms/pages/search-for-a-form.aspx>
- Michigan Legal Self-Help Center of Muskegon County-  
<https://muskegon.michiganlegalhelp.org/>
- Forms available in the vestibule at the Hall of Justice

Visit the [Judiciary Response to COVID-19 page](#) for additional information.