

Chambers of
Rachel L. Pickering
Judge of the District Court

Kansas District Court

Shawnee County Courthouse
Division Number Fifteen
Topeka, Kansas 66603-3922
Phone (785) 251-6510

Tahnee Smith
Administrative Assistant

April 13, 2020

In accordance with Kansas Supreme Court Administrative Order 2020-PR-032, Division 15 will continue to hold essential hearings for the following cases:

1. Issuing ex parte orders for CINC, K.S.A. 2019 Supp. 38-2242(a);
2. Issuing ex parte orders for violation of a valid court order in CINC proceedings, K.S.A. 2019 Supp. 38-2260(c);
3. Conducting preliminary hearings on violation of a valid court order in CINC proceedings, K.S.A. 2019 Supp. 38-2260(d);
4. Conducting evidentiary hearings on violation of a valid court order in CINC proceedings, K.S.A. 2019 Supp. 38-2260(e); and
5. Conducting temporary custody hearing, K.S.A. 2019 Supp. 38-2243(b) (72 hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, and days on which the office of the clerk of the court is not accessible, from child being taken into protective custody).

Administrative Order 2020-PR-32 also allows courts to hold non-essential hearings via teleconference or videoconference. (See pages 2 and 5 of the order.) As such, Division 15 will hold permanency hearings via teleconference on its **April 20, April 27, May 4, May 11, May 18, and May 27 dockets**. The **revised** dockets for April 20, April 27 and May 4 already have been sent to your attention via email from Tahnee Smith. The **revised** dockets for May 11, May 18, and May 27 will be emailed later this week. Ideally, each hearing is set on the half-hour, starting at 8:30am for the morning docket, and 1:30pm for the afternoon docket.

In preparation of these hearings, two “troubleshooting” calls will be scheduled for the Thursday or Friday before the next week’s teleconference hearings. For efficiency, each docket will have its own troubleshooting call. Ms. Smith will email the morning and afternoon attorneys, KVC (Malinda Kufahl or Erika Smalley), and Court Services (Sheila Hull or James Malcolm) to schedule the two calls.

On a case-by-case basis, this Court will hold adoptions and motion hearings via teleconference. If an issue needs to come to this Court’s attention and set for a teleconference hearing, please do not hesitate to email Ms. Smith at tsmith@shawneecourt.org.

Please note, this Court is considering setting additional hearings on Tuesday, May 19 and Tuesday, May 26. Those hearings would likely be adjudication and/or disposition hearings. That strongly depends, however, on whether other courts will hear cases those two days as well, *i.e.*, tribal court or the municipal docket. This Court will finalize its decision by the end of April.

Finally, in following the administrative orders, and as stated in this Court’s March 21, 2020 notice, all bench trials are continued until further order of the Kansas Supreme Court.

Thank you all for your time and efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of many.

Rachel L. Pickering
District Court Judge, Division 15