

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

IN RE: UPDATED GUIDANCE TO COURT OPERATIONS  
UNDER THE EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY  
COVID-19

**GENERAL ORDER**  
**No. 21**

WHEREAS, the Court has issued a series of General Orders re: Court Operations Under the Exigent Circumstances Created by COVID-19, which are available on the Court's website at [www.mnd.uscourts.gov](http://www.mnd.uscourts.gov);

WHEREAS, the President of the United States of America has declared a national emergency in response to COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Minnesota declared a peacetime emergency to coordinate Minnesota's strategy to protect Minnesotans from COVID-19 and extended the COVID-19 peacetime emergency through November 12, 2020;

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Minnesota has issued Emergency Executive Order 20-74, Continuing to Safely Reopen Minnesota's Economy and Ensure Safe Non-Work Activities during the COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency, which continues to place several restrictions on Minnesota residents;

WHEREAS, the Emergency Executive Order 20-74, does not limit, prohibit, or restrict in any way the operations of the federal government, or the movement of federal officials in Minnesota while acting in their official capacity, including federal judicial staff and personnel;

WHEREAS, Minnesota continues to experience high COVID-19 infection rates across the entire state, with active COVID-19 cases at record highs.

WHEREAS, the Judges of the United States District Court, District of Minnesota, have considered and extensively discussed the various interests implicated by the COVID-19 outbreak and any court response to the outbreak, including: the health of jurors, witnesses, parties, attorneys, the public, court staff, and judges; the constitutional rights of criminal defendants and other parties, and the ability to conduct certain criminal proceedings via videoconference or telephone conference under the CARES Act; and the

public's interest in, and the court's duty to ensure, the effective and expeditious administration of justice;

NOW THEREFORE, to continue to protect public health and respond to the COVID- 19 outbreak, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED**, that:

1. Effective Monday, November 9, 2020, the Clerk's Office intake desks in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, and Fergus Falls will be closed to the public.
2. The Clerk's Office will remain open to assist attorneys and the public by telephone, email, and online chat from 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.
3. The Clerk's Office will continue to accept electronic filings in civil and criminal cases through electronic case filing system (CM/ECF) and online payments through [www.pay.gov](http://www.pay.gov).
4. The Clerk's Office will continue to accept filings and payments by check and money order through the U.S. Mail.

Mail to the District Court should be directed to:

Diana E. Murphy U.S. Courthouse  
300 South Fourth Street, Suite 202  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

5. Members of the public may submit paper documents or payments by check or money order in locked drop boxes at the courthouses in Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Duluth. The drop boxes are located at:

Minneapolis: In the lobby, on the counters located between the security screening station and the elevators.

St. Paul: In the lobby immediately outside of the Clerk's Office.

Duluth: On the 4<sup>th</sup> floor, immediately outside of the Clerk's Office.

6. To reach the Clerk's Office:

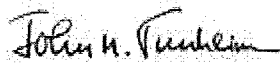
Main line: 612-664-5000

Electronic Case Filing (ECF) Helpdesk: 866-325-4975 or 612-664-5155

Electronic Case Filing (ECF) Helpdesk email: [ecfhelpdesk@mnd.uscourts.gov](mailto:ecfhelpdesk@mnd.uscourts.gov)  
Online chat: [www.mnd.uscourts.gov](http://www.mnd.uscourts.gov)

7. Exceptions to this order may be approved by the Chief Judge or the presiding judge if special circumstances so require.
8. This order updates General Order No. 18 with respect to the Clerk's Office intake desks; all other provisions in General Order 18, except for the updates provided in this order and General Order No. 20 remain in effect. Further, General Orders Nos. 7-8, 10-13, 15, and 19-20 remain in effect.
9. The Court will vacate or amend this order no later than December 31, 2020.

Dated in Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 5, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.



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JOHN R. TUNHEIM  
Chief Judge  
United States District Court