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COMPLAINT

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS

Misc. Docket No. 20-9042

IN THE COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS OF TEXAS

Misc. Docket No. 20-007

FIRST EMERGENCY ORDER REGARDING
THE COVID-19 STATE OF DISASTER

ORDERED that:

1. Governor Abbott has declared a state of disaster in all 254 counties in the State of Texas in response to the imminent threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. This order is issued pursuant to Section 22.8035(b) of the Texas Government Code.

2. Subject only to constitutional limitations, all courts in Texas may in any case, civil or criminal—and must to avoid risk to court staff, parties, attorneys, jurors, and the public—without a participant's consent:

a. Modify or suspend any and all deadlines and procedures, whether prescribed by statute, rule, or order, for a stated period ending no later than 30 days after the Governor's state of disaster has been lifted;

b. Allow or require anyone involved in any hearing, deposition, or other proceeding of any kind—including but not limited to a party, attorney, witness, or court reporter, but not including a juror—to participate remotely, such as by teleconferencing, videoconferencing, or other means;

c. Consider as evidence sworn statements made out of court or sworn testimony given remotely, out of court, such as by teleconferencing, videoconferencing, or other means;

d. Conduct proceedings away from the court's usual location, but in the county of venue, and only with reasonable notice and access to the participants and the public;

e. Require every participant in a proceeding to alert the court if the participant has, or knows of another participant who has, COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms, or a fever, cough or sneezing;

f. Take any other reasonable action to avoid exposing court proceedings to the threat of COVID-19.

3. All courts in Texas may extend the statute of limitations in any civil case for a stated period ending no later than 30 days after the Governor's state of disaster has been lifted.

4. This Order is effective as of March 13, 2020, and expires May 8, 2020, unless extended by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

5. The Clerk of the Supreme Court is directed to:

a. post a copy of this Order on www.tocourts.gov;

b. file a copy of this Order with the Secretary of State; and

c. send a copy of this Order to the Governor, the Attorney General, and each member of the Legislature.

6. The State Bar of Texas is directed to take all reasonable steps to notify members of the Texas bar of this Order.

Dated: March 13, 2020

Nathaniel L. Hecht
Nathaniel L. Hecht, Chief Justice
Paul W. Green
Paul W. Green, Justice
Eva M. Guzman
Eva M. Guzman, Justice
Debra A. LeBannon
Debra A. LeBannon, Justice
William S. Boyd
William S. Boyd, Justice
John T. Devine
John T. Devine, Justice
Joseph W. Blacklock
Joseph W. Blacklock, Justice
Sharon Keller
Sharon Keller, Justice
James N. Bland
James N. Bland, Justice

FILED
Marilyn Burgess
District Clerk

MAY 03 2020

Time: _____
Harris County, Texas

By: _____
Deputy

Page 3
Sharon Keller
Sharon Keller, Presiding Judge
Michael Kenler
Michael Kenler, Judge
Burham P. Hervey
Burham P. Hervey, Judge
Bert Richardson
Bert Richardson, Judge
Kevin P. Yessy
Kevin P. Yessy, Judge
David Nebrell
David Nebrell, Judge
Mary Lou Neal
Mary Lou Neal, Judge
Scott Walker
Scott Walker, Judge
Michelle M. Slaughter
Michelle M. Slaughter, Judge