## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN RE: COURT OPERATIONS
IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Second Amended Standing Order Misc. Number: 3:20-mc-264

Due to the continuing and evolving COVID-19 national public health emergency and the resulting necessary modifications of court operations, the Court finds it appropriate to amend the April 14, 2020 Standing Order (see Misc. No. 3:20-mc-00139-RBH) to extend various continuance dates and account for other Standing Orders that have been issued (see Misc. No. 3:20-mc-00122-RBH; Misc. No. 3:20-mc-00129-RBH). Accordingly, the Court issues the following order, effective immediately:

- All civil and criminal jury selections, jury trials, and roster meetings scheduled to commence through August 1, 2020, are CONTINUED (i.e., postponed) pending further order of the Court.
- 2. All grand jury proceedings scheduled through August 1, 2020, are CONTINUED, unless otherwise ordered by the Chief Judge.
- 3. Existing deadlines in civil cases, whether set by the court or by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure or Local Rules, are not further extended by this Order. Any judge has the inherent authority to extend any deadlines in his or her cases. This Order does not toll any applicable statutes of limitation.
- 4. Any non-jury civil matters currently set, or to be set, for hearing between July 6 through August 1, 2020, shall not be continued, unless canceled or rescheduled by the Presiding Judge. The individual Presiding Judge has the discretion to decide whether to proceed with a hearing, without a hearing, reschedule the hearing for a later date, or address the matter via video or telephone conference, if practicable. Absent an order from the individual Presiding Judge, the matter will proceed as set.

By separate order, on July 1, 2020, the Court will extend its Standing Order Regarding Video Teleconferencing and Telephone Conferencing (see Misc. No. 3:20-mc-00129-RBH), which pursuant to the CARES Act (H.R. 748) allows certain criminal proceedings to occur by video or telephone conferencing if a criminal defendant consents. Where a statute or rule requires a defendant's presence within a certain time, and where video or telephone conferencing cannot be accomplished (i.e., failure of a defendant to consent or otherwise), then applicable initial criminal proceedings are to be conducted in person to satisfy constitutional and statutory requirements. Individual judges in their discretion may also schedule in-court plea/sentencing hearings between July 6 through August 1, 2020, especially in cases where the defendants do not consent to video or telephone conferencing proceedings.

The Court incorporates the public health concerns previously summarized in the March 16, 2020 Standing Order.

Other criminal proceedings scheduled, or to be scheduled, between July 6 through August 1, 2020, shall <u>not</u> be continued unless canceled or rescheduled by the Presiding Judge.

- 5. Individual judges presiding over criminal proceedings may take such actions as may be lawful and appropriate to ensure the fairness of the proceedings and preserve the rights, of the parties.
- 6. Due to the Court's reduced ability to obtain an adequate spectrum of jurors and the above-referenced public health considerations associated with criminal jury trials and grand jury proceedings, the time period of the continuances implemented by this Standing Order will be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A). The Court finds that the ends of justice served by ordering these continuances outweigh the best interest of the public and defendants in a speedy trial, as well as the interest of defendants in a timely indictment. The Court may extend the period of exclusion as circumstances may warrant.
- To the extent possible, judges should stagger their court hearings to minimize the number of people coming into the courthouses, enforce the Court's current face coverings/masks order (see Misc. No. 3:20-mc-00176-RBH), and enforce social distancing during court proceedings.
- 8. This order does not affect the Court's consideration of civil or criminal motions that can be resolved without court appearance.
- The Probation Office shall remain open unless otherwise ordered by the Court.
- 10. Regarding the District Clerk's Office, the Court hereby incorporates the provisions of its March 31, 2020 Standing Order In Re: District Clerk's Office Operations in Response to COVID-19 (see Misc. No. 3:20-mc-00122-RBH).

The Court will vacate or amend this Standing Order as necessary and appropriate.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED this 26 day of June, 2020.

R. Bryan Harwell

Chief United States District Judge