

STATE OF ARKANSAS

**Eighteenth Judicial Circuit-West
Polk County Courthouse
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**JERRY RYAN
CIRCUIT JUDGE**

**Lanna Rice
Official Court Reporter**

**Michelle Boehler
Certified Court Manager**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Attorneys, Court Staff, Sheriff's Office, Personnel and Jurors
for 18th West Judicial Circuit, Polk and Montgomery Counties

FROM: Judge Ryan, Circuit Judge, 18th Judicial Circuit West

DATE: March 17, 2020

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Notice

On March 13, 2020, the Supreme Court of Arkansas issued an update to the Circuit Judges in the State. The Court, per Chief Justice Kemp, stated that the court "will follow the guidelines provided by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)." The CDC, in accordance with its guidance for large events and mass gatherings has recommended that for the next eight (8) weeks, organizers (whether groups or individuals) should cancel or postpone in person events that consist of 50 people or more throughout the United States.

In an effort to ensure the safety of these groups of citizens in this judicial circuit, I feel that precautions should be implemented to reduce the risk of contracting this virus and the ensuing complications. Effective March 17, 2020, I am postponing all scheduled jury trials up to May 1, 2020 for rescheduling at a later date.

I know that this time period is less than the period recommended by the CDC, but hopefully by that time, we will be in a better position to evaluate the situation and plan ahead.

I will also impose some restrictions on court appearances by some attendees that may pose an unnecessary or unreasonable risk to participants in court proceedings.

I realize that the implementation of these precautionary measures poses an inconvenience to many of us who participate in the functions of the judiciary. However, by following these guidelines, I feel we can reduce the risk of this emerging public health risk.

I appreciate your cooperation in doing your part to assist in decreasing the possibility of outbreaks in our communities. The goal is to continue court proceedings in a safe manner.

Thanks to all of you for your assistance.

JR:mb

