

During this period of Social Distancing and pursuant to the Orders issued jointly by the Texas Supreme Court and the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals the 36<sup>th</sup>, 156<sup>th</sup> and the 343<sup>rd</sup> District Courts are encouraging those without contested issues to be heard before the Court to pass their settings or request alternate means (telephonic or video) for hearing. **NO ONE WITH ANY OF THE LIST OF COVID-19/FLU SYMPTONS WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE COURTHOUSE. IF THEY ARE A NECESSARY PARTY, PLEASE HAVE THEM CALL THE DISTRICT CLERK.** The District Courts of Aransas, Bee, Live Oak, McMullen and San Patricio Counties are Ordering the following until further notice:

**For Child Protective Hearings:**

1. No **CASA** worker will be required to appear and are encouraged not to attend Court hearings; the Court will take Judicial Notice of the Guardian Ad Litem Reports on file;
2. **Adversary Hearings** may only have the Investigator present in the Courthouse to present testimony. If necessary, all Supervisors and other potential non-party witnesses shall be available and on telephone standby to arrive at the courthouse, if approved by the presiding Judge;
3. **Status; Initial Permanency Hearing and Permanency Hearing Prior to Final Order** may only have the Case Worker assigned to the case present in the Courthouse to present testimony. If necessary, all Supervisors and other potential non-party witnesses shall be available and on telephone standby to arrive at the courthouse, if approved by the presiding Judge;
4. *Status Quo* cases need have **no one present** other than the Attorney for the Department, if all participants are in agreement and an agreed order should be presented to the court.
5. **ONLY Parents** and those with custodial rights and their attorneys are allowed to be present in the courtroom, other potential witnesses may be available and on telephone standby to arrive at the courthouse, if needed;
6. **Attorney Ad Litem** may be excused from attendance and are encouraged to not attend any uncontested hearings but must advise the Court of whether they will be attending.

PLEASE BE MINDFUL THAT MATTERS ARE CHANGING ON A DAILY BASIS. PLEASE CHECK THE COURTS' WEBSITE FOR UPDATES: [36-156-343districtcourts.org](http://36-156-343districtcourts.org)

ALL CASES ARE SUBJECT TO BEING RESET AND/OR EXTENDED PURSUANT TO THE JOINT ORDER OF THE TEXAS SUPREME COURT AND THE TEXAS COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS.

EFFECTIVE THIS THE 17<sup>TH</sup> Day of March 2020.

Judge Starr Bauer

Judge Patrick Flanigan

Judge Janna Whatley