IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT CAMPBELL COUNTY, WYOMING

GENERAL ORDER FOR THE CIRCUIT COURT))))))	2020-01	
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GENERAL ORDER TEMPORARILY RESRTICTING PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE COURTROOMS

THIS MATTER came upon the Court's own motion. The President of the United States has declared a national emergency. The Governor of the State of Wyoming has declared a statewide emergency. The Wyoming Supreme Court implemented the Judicial Branch: Respiratory Disease Pandemic Plan, and this Court has implemented it Pandemic Mitigation Plan. Each of these actions is in response to the worldwide pandemic involving COVID-19, a corona virus that has killed thousands.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has implemented best practices to avoid further transmission of COVID-19. Those best practices include, but are not limited to:

- Minimizing/Eliminating all person-to-person contact
- Maintaining a minimum distance of six (6) feet between persons
- Avoiding gatherings of more than 50 people
- Practicing proper hygiene (washing hands, cover when coughing, disinfecting).

While the trial courts of Wyoming must remain open, they must take into consideration the global health crisis caused by COVID-19 when determining the manner in which hearings will be conducted and scheduled. Under Wyo. Const. Art. 1, § 8, Wyoming courts are generally open to the public. "[A]ccess to court proceedings should be limited only in exceptional circumstances."

Williams v. Stafford, 589 P.2d 322, 325 (Wyo. 1979), abrogated on other grounds by Vaughn v. State, 962 P.2d 149 (Wyo. 1998).

This Court concludes that the current global pandemic and risks to the public health constitutes "extraordinary circumstances" as contemplated by the Wyoming Supreme Court and therefore warrants limiting access to court hearings. *See* In the Matter of Administrative Rule 17 Emergency Relief for Indiana Trial Courts Relating to the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), No. 20S-CB-00123, 2020 WL 1239846 (Ind. Mar. 16, 2020).

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that access to proceedings shall be limited to the participants and their attorneys (if any), together with any court personnel deemed necessary by the Court. Witnesses may enter the courtroom to testify when called upon to do so, but shall be required to leave the courtroom after finishing testifying.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that any person scheduled to appear at any hearing shall notify the Court before coming to the Courthouse that the person is experiencing any flu-like symptoms, has a fever, or is coughing or sneezing. Upon notice, the Court may order such person to appear by telephone or videoconferencing at the Court's discretion;

BY THE COURT this ____ day of March, 2020.

HON. WENDY M. BARTLETT

CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE

HON. PAUL S. PHILLIPS CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE