

**STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**DISTRICT COURT**

**COUNTY OF RAMSEY**

**SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

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**In Re: Second Judicial District Court, Ramsey County,  
In-Person Proceedings During COVID-19 Pandemic**

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**WHEREAS**, on March 22, 2021, the Minnesota Chief Justice issued an Order, effective May 1, 2021, Governing the Continuing Operations of the Minnesota Judicial Branch (the “Order”); and,

**WHEREAS**, the Order requires that in-person criminal jury trials shall continue to be scheduled and held in any county unless the chief judge of the district determines that the trial cannot proceed safely due to local conditions; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Order allows in-person proceedings to be held in sentencing hearings in criminal cases in which there is a presumptive commitment to the Department of Corrections; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Order gives the chief judge of the district the authority to grant or deny requests for exceptions to remote hearings; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Order requires the chief judge of the district to grant in-person exceptions for proceedings and hearings in major criminal case-types at which evidence will be presented on issues in dispute, court trials in major criminal case-types, juvenile protection case-types (including CHIPS and permanency), and juvenile delinquency case-types, unless the chief judge of the district determines that the in-person matter cannot proceed safely due to local conditions:

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:**

1. Effective May 1, 2021, in-person proceedings are granted, without exception requests, for all criminal jury trials, sentencing hearings in criminal cases in which there is a presumptive commitment to the Department of Corrections, hearings in major criminal case-types at which evidence will be presented on issues in dispute, and court trials in major criminal, juvenile protection (including CHIPS and permanency), and juvenile delinquency case types.
2. The chief judge of the district may suspend any or all in-person proceedings if in-person hearings cannot proceed safely due to local conditions.
3. All in-person proceedings must adhere to the guidelines and exposure measures in approved Judicial Branch COVID-19 Preparedness Plans, including with respect to limits on the number of persons attending the hearing, and if applicable, the Jury Management Resource Team (JMRT)

Recommendations for Jury Trials.

4. For all other type hearings or proceedings (including civil), not identified in paragraph 1 of this order, the presiding judge must submit the Exception from Remote Hearing Form. Court operations will attempt minimize all in-person hearings while ensuring the fair and timely administration of criminal, juvenile, civil and family cases for the benefit of defendants, victims, justice partners and the public.
5. Criminal, Civil, and Juvenile/Family Division Court Administrators shall continue maintain an accounting of all in-person hearings held in their respective Divisions.
6. To the extent that the provisions of this order are inconsistent with the Chief Justice's Order or any previous order governing the operations of the Judicial Branch, the provisions of the Chief Justice's orders control.
7. This order remains in effect until June 13, 2021, unless otherwise modified by further order of this court or the Minnesota Chief Justice.

Dated: March 25, 2021

**BY THE COURT:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leonardo Castro', written over a horizontal line.

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Leonardo Castro  
Chief Judge  
Second Judicial District

