

March 18, 2020

Good afternoon,

#### THIS WEEK AND NEXT

Understandably, there have been many inquiries about cases scheduled for this week and next. Unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 situation the Superior Court Office is dealing with, we are awaiting further information from the Health District before committing to what we can and cannot do. While the Health District did not order us to close our office, I felt it best for them to conduct their “close contact” investigation before deciding who should and should not return in the near future. If we do have court personnel that falls within the “close contact” parameters, it is likely they will not be in the office until at least later next week. I simply don’t know, at this time, to what extent we will be staffing the office next week.

As you can undoubtedly appreciate, the resources that are available will be devoted first to matters involving personal safety and safety of the community. I genuinely wish I could be more specific, as your clients are undoubtedly anxious to know what access to Superior Court they may have. Please know that once I have more information about that, I will forward it on to the ListServ, Team Captains and Kitsap County Superior Court website.

#### MESSAGING

Accurate messaging is important. Last night it was stated that the Superior Court Office will be closed for the rest of the week. I specifically did not say the Kitsap County Courthouse would remain open or that other offices would be open. I chose not to say that because I cannot speak for other agencies and I did not want to create a situation of mixed messaging. If I were to say that all other Courthouse operations are open and Chad, Andy, Allison, Judge Jahns or others with decision-making authority decided to close, there would be enhanced confusion and mixed messaging. The timing of the notification of the positive test was unfortunate insofar as it occurred after 5:30 p.m. But the affected individual notified Frank and me immediately upon learning the news. For those of you that work in the Courthouse, please contact your immediate supervisors and follow your own office protocols if you have questions as to whether you should come to work or not.

#### CRIMINAL LAW UPDATE

I understand that Chief Justice Stephens has been provided a proposed order, negotiated at a state-wide level between prosecutor and defense organizations, that may have an immediate impact on our criminal law operations. Stand by.

#### NOTES

Our Team Captains are working on proposed language for changes to SOP regarding their specific practice areas. Please reach out to them if you have input, comments or suggestions.

Yours, Kevin

Kevin Hull  
Presiding Judge  
Kitsap County Superior Court