



## COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF DELAWARE COUNTY, OHIO

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CLERK OF COURTS

### **Update on Court Operations and Courthouse Access** **During the COVID-19 Pandemic:** **March 20, 2020**

In recent days as the new coronavirus has continued to spread across Ohio, all divisions of the Court of Common Pleas of Delaware County and the office of the Delaware County Clerk of Courts have continued to operate. Using live-video technology and smartphones, we have held numerous hearings, and our courts' electronic-filing options for new and existing cases have continued to operate without interruption.

To protect public health even as we remain focused on protecting access to justice, we have now decided that entry by the public to our court buildings will be limited for at least the next two weeks.

Public access to the Hayes Building – the home of the Probate and Juvenile Divisions of our court – at 145 N. Union Street in Delaware is now on an appointment-only basis. Court staff will continue to work in the building each weekday throughout the court's regular business hours of 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., and the court will continue to conduct hearings by phone and by videoconference.

Drop boxes for juvenile and probate court filings have been placed near the public entrance to the Hayes Building, and security officers will continue to staff the public-entry doors there during the court's regular business hours. The public is encouraged to call the court at 740-833-2600 (Juvenile Division) or 740-833-2680 (Probate Division) with questions or to inquire about in-person public access to the building.

Public access to the Delaware County Courthouse – the home of the Domestic-Relations Division and the General Division of our court – at 117 N. Union Street in Delaware is now limited to persons whose legal business involves emergencies or time-sensitive matters. Security officers will continue to staff the public-entry doors on the

first floor of the Courthouse, and they will be able to assist persons seeking to enter the building for emergencies and time-sensitive matters during the court's regular business hours of 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. on weekdays.

Many hearings continue to be conducted in the Domestic Relations Division and in the General Division with the help of Zoom videoconferencing technology or by telephone, and staff from both divisions will be present at the Courthouse each weekday during the court's regular business hours. The public is welcome to call the Domestic Relations Division at 740-833-2025 or the General Division at 740-833-2530 (Judge Gormley) or 740-833-2550 (Judge Schuck).

The Clerk's Office is also up and running every weekday even though public entry to the Courthouse is now limited. Persons coming to the Courthouse to request a protection order will be referred to the Victim's Services staff in the Prosecuting Attorney's office. Attorneys are strongly encourage to file documents in all cases electronically using the Clerk's e-filing system, which operates at all hours of the day and night and on every day of the week. The public is welcome to call the Clerk's office at 740-833-2500.

The judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Delaware County and the Delaware County Clerk of Courts – with the help of our dedicated staff members – remain committed to fulfilling our public duties in these trying times. We will continue to do all that we can to keep the Clerk's office and all divisions of the Court operating without interruption in ways that protect public health and safety without compromising our commitment to the rule of law and equal access to justice.