

FIFTH EXTENDED TEMPORARY STANDING ORDER REGARDING VISITATIONS IN THE
CHILD PROTECTION COURT FOR CAMERON AND WILLACY COUNTIES.

It is ORDERED that the prior Temporary, Extended, Second Extended, Third Extended and Fourth Extended Temporary Order Regarding Visitations issued on March 17, 2020, March 31, 2020, May 4, 2020, July 2, 2020 & August 31, 2020 respectively, are hereby extended to December 1, 2020 and modified to allow visitations by other virtual or remote means, and is fully restated as follows:

For the protection of all parties due to the circumstances created by the coronavirus (COVID-19), the court ORDERS that visitations between parent-child and siblings taking place between March 17, 2020 to and including December 1, 2020 scheduled for 2 to 4 hours at any of Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) offices or at a public place and to be supervised by TDFPS or an approved caregiver are hereby temporarily SUSPENDED, subject to the further orders below.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that TDFPS shall arrange for such visitations to take place at another safe location, date, and time, or by telephone, video conferencing, skype, facetime or other virtual or remote means as TDFPS determines is available and appropriate.

All other court ordered visitations and placements shall continue and remain in effect until further order of the court on a case-by-case basis.

The Court acknowledges and approves as guidance for all parties the TDFPS Visitation Protocol During COVID-19 Situation attached hereto.

SIGNED September 30, 2020.

James E. Belton

James E. Belton
Presiding Judge

3:30 pm
Isabel Adams, Dist. Clerk, Willacy Co.
FILED

SEP 30 2020

By *Chavez* Deputy

FOURTH EXTENDED TEMPORARY PROCEDURES IN THE CHILD PROTECTION COURT FOR CAMERON AND WILLACY COUNTIES DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

This Court is implementing and extending the following temporary procedures for essential and non-essential Child Protection Court pursuant to the First, Second, and Third Emergency Orders Regarding the COVID 19 State of Disaster issued by the Supreme Court of Texas in Misc. Dockets No. 20-9042, 20-9043 and 20-9044, the subsequent applicable Emergency Orders issued by the Supreme Court of Texas to date, and the updates, guidance and directives issued to date by the Office of Court Administration and the Hon. Missy Medary, Presiding Judge of the 5th Administrative Judicial Region.

ESSENTIAL HEARINGS: From March 23, 2020 to December 1, 2020, ex parte removal hearings, emergency adversary hearings, non-emergency adversary hearings considered urgent [for the continued safety and immediate well-being of the affected child(ren)] by the court, removals from monitored return, trials already set due to dismissal dates as per prior scheduling orders or other court orders, and special hearings agreed to by all parties to address only unanticipated urgent issues will be heard by the court. For essential hearings and trials already set to be heard prior to December 1, 2020, the hearing or trial will be held on the scheduled date but the time may be changed. Unless retained by the referring Court or assigned to another Court or Presiding Judge, this Court will also consider hearing motions for court ordered participation in services and petitions in aid of investigation if this Court finds the matter is urgent to avoid emergency removal of the affected child(ren).

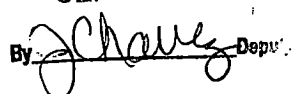
All other hearings will be considered NON-ESSENTIAL HEARINGS and may be postponed, reset to or set for a later date as determined by the court, unless set to be heard by remote means as provided below. This includes status, initial permanency, permanency before and after final order, services review, progress, compliance and other hearings not listed above. The court will examine the Child Protection Court weekly dockets to determine postponements, settings and resettings and will provide notice on a weekly if not more frequent basis. The court will also evaluate this Court's dockets and new cases filed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) to determine if any non-essential hearings can be held by remote means efficiently and effectively for all parties and participants.

Notice of any postponements, settings, resettings, time changes & non-essential hearings to be held by remote means will be provided by court order and e-mail. The Court requests that attorneys notify their clients and the TDFPS notify foster parents, placement caregivers and available parents.

Children are excused by the court from attending hearings and should not be made to appear in person except with the court's prior approval. Attorneys and guardians ad litem for children, including CASA advocates, are strongly encourage to communicate in person, by telephone or electronically with the child(ren) prior to the scheduled hearing in cooperation with the TDFPS as may be needed due to the current situation.

Every participant in a hearing diagnosed with COVID-19, who has flu like symptoms, a fever, or who are coughing or sneezing, shall contact the court before appearing in-person. Attorneys & TDFPS representatives and supervisors should warn their clients, witnesses or others having symptoms to alert the court in advance before appearing. To the extent possible, accommodations can be made to participate or appear as provided below.

3:30pm
Isabel Adams, Dist. Clerk, Willacy
F I L E D

SEP 30 2020
By:  Deputy

In order to avoid exposure to the threat of COVID-19 while at the same time protecting the constitutional rights of all litigants and continuing to pursue safe, stable and prompt permanency for children, the parties, attorneys, witnesses, the public and others involved in any hearing, will be permitted to participate or attend remotely, such as by teleconferencing or videoconferencing, or other means, subject to the court dates, facilities, security, court reporters, interpreters, other support staff and resources made available to this Court. To this extent, these procedures may be supplemented and updated as the circumstances develop and permit.

The court will consider sworn statements, sworn testimony and documentary evidence as permitted by the Supreme Court of Texas Emergency Orders.

The Order Suspending and Extending Deadlines Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic issued by this Court on March 26, 2020 continues and remains in effect.

These procedures are subject to change as required or warranted by any additional orders, updates, written guidelines and directives issued in connection with COVID-19 matters and until normal Court operations can resume.

Signed September 30, 2020



James E. Belton
Presiding Judge