

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO**

IN RE:

CORONA VIRUS (COVID19) PUBLIC  
EMERGENCY

Misc. No. 20-0088 (GAG)

**AMENDED ORDER CONTINUING CIVIL AND CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS**

Given the continued risk of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and, in the interest of protecting the health and well-being of court employees, members of the bar and the public, the Court hereby issues the following directives effective immediately:

1. All civil and criminal proceedings in the District of Puerto Rico requiring a live hearing are continued until Monday, July 6, 2020.

2. The Court finds that in all criminal cases the ends of justice served by the present continuance outweigh the interests of the parties and the public in a speedy trial, and, therefore shall be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A).

3. If a presiding judge in a criminal case finds, for specific reasons, that a felony plea or sentencing in a case cannot be further delayed without serious harm to the interests of justice, said judge, with the consent of the defendant after consultation with counsel, may use Video Teleconference (“VTC”), or teleconferencing if VTC is not reasonably available, for the felony plea or sentencing in that case. *See Order CARES Act Authorization*, Misc. No. 20-088 (GAG) (Docket No. 13), March 31, 2020.

4. The Court has enabled and will continue to use its VTC or Teleconference systems to hold eligible civil and criminal proceedings.<sup>1</sup> During the pendency of this Order, presiding district and magistrate judges may order counsel to provide via motion updates on status of cases before them. Likewise, judges may continue to issue all appropriate case management, dispositive and non-dispositive motions in their cases.

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<sup>1</sup> For technical requirements and step-by-step instructions on how to participate in a VTC connection from outside the Court premises, the Court directs counsel to review the “*How to Setup a Video Tele-Conference (VTC) for Virtual Courtroom Proceedings*” instructions in the District Court’s Internet website by clicking [here](#).

5. Criminal matters before Magistrate Judges, such as initial appearances, arraignments, detention hearings, and the issuance of search warrants, shall continue to be conducted by VTC with the defendant's consent.

6. All petty offense Central Violations Bureau hearings are continued until July 6, 2020.

7. The Court extends the terms and conditions of its Visitor Entry Protocol until July 6, 2020. *See Standing Order, Visitor Entry Protocol Due to COVID-19*, Misc. No. 20-088 (GAG) (Docket No. 1), March 11, 2020.

8. In accordance with the May 11, 2020 policy adopted by the Facilities Security Committee of the Federal Office Building in Hato Rey, all employees and visitors, including but not limited to members of the bar, press and public, are required to wear a face mask or face covering while in the premises of the Clemente Ruiz Nazario United States Courthouse and the Federico Degetau Federal Office Building in Hato Rey. This policy will continue until a further directive to the contrary is issued.

9. The Clerk's Office will continue to operate with only essential personnel until further notice. The Clerk's Office Intake Area at the Federico Degetau Federal Office Building will be open on a limited schedule of Tuesdays and Fridays from 9:00AM to 4:00PM. During regular business hours, all court employees will telework, process court filings, issue orders and judgments, schedule hearings and conferences, and be available to answer telephone calls and emails from the public and bar.

10. Court-hosted naturalization events scheduled before July 6, 2020 are cancelled. This order does not, however, impact the authority of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service to conduct administrative naturalization ceremonies.

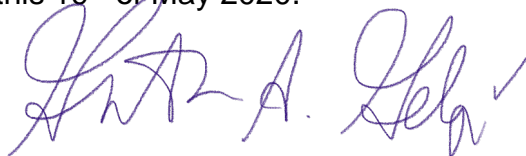
11. All non-case related events scheduled before July 6, 2020, including but not limited to public tours, administration of oaths to attorneys, and committee meetings, are cancelled.

12. The Court may issue other orders concerning future continuances as necessary and appropriate.

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IT IS SO ORDERED.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, this 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2020.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gustavo A. Gelpí", with a checkmark at the end of the signature.

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Gustavo A. Gelpí  
Chief, US District Judge