

JUDGE BRISTOL'S DIVISION (JS 39)
Coronavirus (COVID19) Procedures
Effective April 20, 2020

****THE BROWARD COUNTY COURTHOUSE IS CURRENTLY CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC,****
BUT COURT IS STILL "IN SESSION" – ALBEIT VIRUTALLY.

**THESE PROCEDURES ARE DESIGNED TO ANSWER MANY QUESTIONS REGARDING
HOW COURT IS BEING CONDUCTED IN LIGHT OF THE CLOSURE AND PANDEMIC.**

IF YOU NEED TO COMMUNICATE WITH JUDGE BRISTOL'S CHAMBERS

Email is the preferred method of contact at this time. Please be sure to copy all Parties on correspondence so as to avoid any ex parte communications. Judge Bristol's Judicial Assistant, Nadine Turner, can be reached at Nturner@17th.flcourts.org.

Telephone calls are permitted and are being monitored/ answered. If the Judicial Assistant does not answer, please leave a message and she will return your call. Please say your number twice slowly, so it can guarantee call back. Also your case number or a name of the parties involved. The telephone number for Judge Bristol's chambers remains (954) 831-7882.

Because of the closure, there is limited access to the courthouse, even for Judicial Assistants. As such, please do not mail items to Judge Bristol's chambers via U.S. Mail as they may not be received in a timely manner. Likewise, please do not plan to drop anything off at the courthouse.

IF YOU HAVE A HEARING (i.e. – ECC, Drug Court Hearing, Judicial Review, Trial, Arraignment, Status, etc.)

All Dependency Hearings are being conducted via Zoom. See Florida Supreme Court Administrative Orders AOSC20-12 and AOSC20-16. Zoom works on any device with a camera, speaker and microphone including computers, cellular telephones and tablets. Judge Bristol's Zoom link is <https://17thflcourts.zoom.us/j/690396951>.

If signing on directly from Zoom, the Meeting ID is 690 396 951.

If a party does not have access to a computer or smart device then Zoom can also be accessed via telephone. **You can use any of the following numbers to call into Zoom is** (312) 626-6799, (646) 876-9923, 1-408-638-0968, 1- 669-900-6833, 1-253-215-8782, 1-301-715-8592, 1-346-248-7799. **The Meeting ID is 690 396 951.**

Parents, Child Advocates, GAL Volunteers and all other parties can choose how they wish to participate: via Zoom, via Zoom telephone connectivity, or via telephone speaker on their lawyer's end (if appearing via phone then the party should contact their lawyer for further information in advance of the hearing time).

If you do not have an attorney, some hearings will require a Notary.

Please note that while the Dependency Courts are attempting to handle as many matters as possible during this time, not all hearings lend themselves to a virtual courtroom. As such, the Court may determine that a matter should be reset. If the Judge determines a matter cannot be heard using the alternative communication system then the case will be reset. See 17th Judicial Circuit Administrative Order 2020-32-TEMP.

This decision will be made on a case-by-case basis before or during each hearing and the decision rests solely with the judiciary. *See id.* Unless notice is provided in advance by Judge Bristol's office that a matter is not going forward, parties should still plan to participate, even if a matter is not going to be heard on the merits, so the Court can attempt to reschedule the hearing with all parties.

IF YOU HAVE A SHELTER OR EMERGENCY HEARING:

If you have a matter that you believe is an emergency as defined outlined in 17th Judicial Circuit Administrative Order 2015-10-UFC, please file the Motion and contact Judge Bristol's chambers to see if it can be heard by Judge Bristol or if it needs to be set on the Shelter Docket.

IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION:

Any parent, Child Advocate, Guardian ad Litem, caregiver, provider or interested party with questions regarding these procedures is urged to call, e-mail or text their lawyer. The Judge's Judicial Assistant, Nadine Turner, may also be able to assist **but parties should consult with their counsel first.**

OTHER REMINDERS:

All attorneys should test their equipment prior to scheduled hearings in which their participation is needed. Upon entering the Zoom Courtroom all parties should be 'MUTED.' Once your case is called, you should be unmuted as necessary so you can actively participate. During hearings, parties should conduct themselves as they would real-life courtroom hearings: appropriately prepared and without distractions, while refraining from multitasking on other matters. Clients should also be participating in hearings via Zoom. Again, lawyers are responsible for providing their clients with the link and ensuring that the client's equipment is tested in advance.

Please understand that just as matters sometimes run long for in-person hearings, hearings in the VIRTUAL COURTROOM may be running over. **You may be kept in the Zoom "Waiting Room" until your case is ready to be called. Please just have patience and know you will be admitted to the VIRTUAL COURTROOM** when Judge Bristol is ready to start. Please also be quiet and/or mute yourself if you are admitted to a VIRTUAL COURTROOM and the judge is not yet handling your case.

Lawyers are also reminded Odyssey is still functioning and is not affected by the current circumstances. Thus, all Motions, Reports, and other legal documents must still be e-filed as required by law and in a timely fashion. The Court will not be able to hear any matter where the appropriate and necessary documentation has not been filed.

After a hearing, if an order needs to be submitted to the Court, the order shall be circulated among the Parties for approval. Once approved or after a reasonable period of time has elapsed for a party to voice an objection to the proposed order, it shall be the responsibility of the proponent of the hearing/motion to submit the proposed order to the Court via email for signature. If there remains disagreement among the parties as to any of the terms of an order after a proposed order has been circulated, the proponent of the hearing/motion shall submit the proposed order along with an email outlining about which areas there was disagreement so the Court can determine the appropriate language before signing the order.

PLEASE NOTE: You are not permitted to record the hearings, as they are already being recorded by Court Reporting Service.

Thank you for your cooperation during this challenging time.