

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTEENTH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

Administrative Order 2021-15-Temp (Amendment 1)

JURY EXCUSALS AND POSTPONEMENTS RELATED TO COVID-19

(a) Pursuant to Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution, and section 43.26, Florida Statutes, the chief judge of each judicial circuit is charged with the authority and the power to do everything necessary to promote the prompt and efficient administration of justice.

(b) The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic continues to have an effect upon the operations of the State Courts System and the lives of Floridians.

(c) Since March 17, 2020, the Florida Supreme Court has issued various emergency administrative orders addressing the judicial branch's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including establishing the Workgroup on the Continuity of Court Operations and Proceedings During and After COVID-19 ("Workgroup").

(d) In accordance with the authority vested in the chief judge by Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution, section 43.26, Florida Statutes, Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215, and Florida Supreme Court Administrative Order AOSC20-23, Amendment 13 (May 6, 2021), it is hereby **ORDERED:**

(1) Excusal of a potential juror shall be considered pursuant to section 40.0135(5) and (6), Florida Statutes, if the juror indicates, subject to penalty of perjury, that he or she:

- a. Is a person at higher risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 infection as identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and requests to be excused;
- b. Must care for a child or relative whose regular care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19; or
- c. Is receiving leave pursuant to the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

(2) Postponement of a juror for up to six months shall be considered pursuant

to section 40.23(2), Florida Statutes, if the potential juror indicates, subject to penalty of perjury, that he or she:

- a. Has recently returned to work after being unemployed due to COVID-19; or
- b. Has suffered a financial or personal loss due to COVID-19 that makes it a hardship to perform jury service.

(3) The Clerk of the Court is directed to post a form on its website, which potential jurors may sign and submit under penalty of perjury to request an excusal or postponement based on one of the foregoing reasons.

(4) The Clerk of the Court shall then forward for review the completed form seeking either an excusal or a postponement which exceeds the six-month statutory maximum to the jury management judge or any other judge as assigned by the Chief Judge.

(5) In his or her judicial discretion, the judge will make the ultimate decision regarding all excusals or postponements relating to COVID-19. The Clerk's office does not have the discretion to grant or deny requests for juror excusals or postponements relating to COVID-19.

DONE AND ORDERED, in Chambers, Fort Lauderdale, Broward County, Florida, this 7th day of May, 2021.

/s/ Jack Tuter

Jack Tuter, Chief Judge