



MELISSA FLORES  
DISTRICT COURT COORDINATOR

REENA E. BRIONES  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

**RENEE RODRIGUEZ-BETANCOURT**  
JUDGE, 449<sup>TH</sup> STATE JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT  
HIDALGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE

KARISSA GUTIERREZ  
ASST. COURT COORDINATOR

ANTHONY DE LA VIÑA  
BAILIFF

**UPDATED & REVISED PLAN OF ACTION FOR ALL JUVENILE MATTERS PENDING IN THE  
449<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT  
IN RESPONSE TO THE IMMINENT THREAT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Pursuant to the Emergency Orders of the Supreme Court of Texas, the Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas, and the Hidalgo County Board of Judges, the following measures will be implemented to protect the public and staff from the imminent threat of the COVID-19 pandemic while ensuring parties and defendants' rights are protected:

- All cases set for pretrial and jury trial from now until Friday, May 8, 2020 will be reset to the months of June and July by written order.
- All essential court proceedings such as Detention Hearings for Juvenile Respondents who are in custody will continue to be held as outlined in Section 54.01 of the Texas Family Code. Any attorney that considers a matter to be essential must file a motion for the Court's consideration and setting on the docket.
- All non-essential court proceedings such as Adjudication/Modification/Status Hearings for juvenile respondents who are **NOT IN CUSTODY** will be designated as such and re-scheduled after Friday, May 8, 2020 by written order. Any Discovery deadlines and pre-trial motions will be extended to thirty (30) days after May 8, 2020.
- The Court will accept waivers of detention hearings for subsequent detention hearings effective immediately and until deemed necessary, but they **MUST** be signed by the juvenile respondent.
- The 449<sup>th</sup> District Court will be available to assist any or all District Courts who preside over Juvenile Proceedings in order to minimize the transportation of the Juvenile Respondents to the main Courthouse. Accommodations will be made accordingly upon request.
- **All parties** are to notify the Court, in advance, with ample time, of any individuals that may have any health matters to include COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms, a fever, or who are sneezing, prior to their Court proceeding to ensure and implement the appropriate accommodations.
- **The Court has begun utilizing Zoom, an app which allows the court, lawyers and parties to participate in hearings remotely. If you would like to participate please go to <https://zoom.us> and create an account. Once the account has been created, contact the 449th with ample time, prior to your essential hearing to set up the video conference.**
- **The Court has also made the following available for individuals allowed in the courtroom when necessary: face masks, hand sanitizer and tissue paper. For safety reasons, only a limited amount of four (4) individuals will be allowed in the courtroom simultaneously when urged.**

While it is important to address the public health and safety issues raised by the COVID-19 pandemic, the public, litigants, juvenile respondents and attorneys must rest assured that the Court's primary focus will be protecting the Constitutional rights of all parties and juvenile respondents. If any party or attorney has any questions, requires guidance, or needs to be heard, please do not hesitate to contact my court at (956) 381-0744 or (956) 784-0686.

SIGNED on this the 20TH day of MARCH, 2020.

Hon. Renee Rodriguez-Betancourt  
449th District Court Judge

