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7 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON  
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9 In Re:

10 COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE  
11 EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES  
12 CREATED BY COVID-19 AND  
RELATED CORONAVIRUS

GENERAL ORDER NO. 01-20

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14 This General Order is being issued in response to the recent outbreak of Coronavirus  
15 Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Western Washington, which has been home to the first reported  
16 domestic case of the disease and some of the first significant community impacts from school  
17 and business closures. As of the date of this Order, there have been over 50 confirmed cases of  
18 COVID-19 in King County and over 70 in the State of Washington. Although for many this  
19 disease appears to cause only flu-like symptoms, for others it can pose a serious risk, and ten  
20 people in this District have died.  
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22 In February of this year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”)  
23 issued “Interim Guidance” recommending that all employers consider how best to decrease the  
24 spread of COVID-19, including the review of guidance from state and local health officials.<sup>1</sup>  
25 On March 5, 2020, Public Health – Seattle & King County issued a recommendation that  
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28 <sup>1</sup> *Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19),  
February 2020*, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html>  
(last updated February 26, 2020).

1 individuals at higher risk (e.g. those over 60 years of age, those with underlying health  
2 conditions, those who are pregnant) stay at home and away from large groups of people.  
3 Employers were also advised to maximize telecommuting and to “feasibly avoid bringing large  
4 groups of people together.”<sup>2</sup>

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6 Given the significant number of identified and projected cases of COVID-19 in this  
7 District and the severity of risk posed to the public, and given the above public health  
8 recommendations from local public health authorities, it is hereby ORDERED that, effective  
9 Monday, March 9, 2020:

- 10 1) All civil and criminal matters scheduled for an in-Court appearance before any  
11 district or magistrate judge in the Seattle or Tacoma Courthouses, including any  
12 associated deadlines, are CONTINUED pending further Order of the Court;
- 13  
14 2) All grand jury proceedings in this District are CONTINUED pending further Order  
15 of the Court;
- 16  
17 3) With regard to criminal matters, due to the Court’s reduced ability to obtain an  
18 adequate spectrum of jurors and the effect of the above public health  
19 recommendations on the availability of counsel and Court staff to be present in the  
20 courtroom, the time period of the continuances implemented by this General Order  
21 will be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, as the Court specifically finds that the  
22 ends of justice served by ordering the continuances outweigh the best interests of  
23 the public and any defendant’s right to a speedy trial, pursuant to 18 U.S.C.  
24 §3161(h)(7)(A);  
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28 <sup>2</sup> *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Public Health Recommendations to Protect our Community*,  
<https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/communicable-diseases/disease-control/novel-coronavirus/protection.aspx> (last  
updated March 5, 2020).

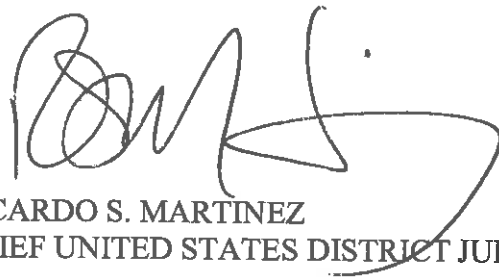
- 1 4) Case-by-case exceptions to the continuances provided herein may be ordered for  
2 non-jury matters at the discretion of the Court after consultation with counsel;  
3 5) This Order does not affect the Court's consideration of civil or criminal motions that  
4 can be resolved without oral argument.

5 The Seattle and Tacoma Courthouses remain open. Staff in the Clerk's Office will be  
6 available by telephone, mail will be received, and intake desks remain open for filings.  
7 Electronic filings may still be made through the CM/ECF system. The public is encouraged to  
8 continue utilizing Court services while following all applicable public health guidelines.  
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10 The Court will vacate or amend this General Order no later than March 31, 2020.  
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12 Dated this 6 day of March, 2020.

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RICARDO S. MARTINEZ  
CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE