

**IN THE 506TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF TEXAS
GRIMES COUNTY and WALLER COUNTY**

March 16, 2020

After Governor Abbott's disaster proclamation entered on March 13, 2020, the Supreme Court of Texas and The Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas (the "SCT/CCA Order") have entered an emergency order modifying and suspending certain provisions related to court proceedings. The order applies in all courts and to all case types and is meant to provide courts with flexibility to delay or modify proceedings as necessary to address the disaster and states:

Relevant portions of the SCT/CCA Order pertaining to Courts is as follows:

"2. Subject only to constitutional limitations, all courts in Texas may in any case, civil or criminal—and must to avoid risk to court staff, parties, attorneys, jurors, and the public—without a participant's consent:

a. Modify or suspend any and all deadlines and procedures, whether prescribed by statute, rule, or order, for a stated period ending no later than 30 days after the Governor's state of disaster has been lifted;

b. Allow or require anyone involved in any hearing, deposition, or other proceeding of any kind—including but not limited to a party, attorney, witness, or court reporter, but not including a juror—to participate remotely, such as by teleconferencing, videoconferencing, or other means;

c. Consider as evidence sworn statements made out of court or sworn testimony given remotely, out of court, such as by teleconferencing, videoconferencing, or other means;

d. Conduct proceedings away from the court's usual location, but in the county of venue, and only with reasonable notice and access to the participants and the public;

e. Require every participant in a proceeding to alert the court if the participant has, or knows of another participant who has, COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms, or a fever, cough or sneezing;

f. Take any other reasonable action to avoid exposing court proceedings to the threat of COVID-19.

3. All courts in Texas may extend the statute of limitations in any civil case for a stated period ending no later than 30 days after the Governor's state of disaster has been lifted.

4. This Order is effective as of March 13, 2020, and expires May 8, 2020, unless extended by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court."