

Justices, Judges and Circuit Court Clerks:

Judicial Branch preparing in event of coronavirus outbreak in Kentucky

The Judicial Branch wants to be prepared in the event of a coronavirus outbreak in Kentucky and we're closely monitoring the situation through the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Kentucky Department for Public Health.

The CDC describes the current situation in the United States this way: "Imported cases of COVID-19 in travelers have been detected in the U.S. Person-to-person spread of COVID-19 also has been seen among close contacts of returned travelers from Wuhan, [but at this time, this virus is NOT currently spreading in the community in the United States.](#)"

Based on the CDC's latest assessment, we're obviously not at a point where court closures are necessary. Should the threat escalate, however, the Judicial Branch will follow the lead of the Kentucky Department for Public Health and the Executive and Legislative branches in determining the threshold for closure.

Policy on Court Closures Unrelated to Weather

From a personnel standpoint, we already have a policy in place to address emergency court closures. You can find that in the [Kentucky Court of Justice Personnel Policies](#) under Section 5.07 Court Closures Unrelated to Weather.

New Pandemic Response Task Force

In addition to monitoring advisories, I've asked the Administrative Office of the Courts to create a task force that will prepare a Pandemic Response Plan to incorporate into our overall KCOJ Emergency Management Plan.

Resources

Below are links to several resources you might find helpful:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: [Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- Kentucky Department for Public Health website: [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Outbreak](#)
- National Center for State Courts: [Preparing for a Pandemic: An Emergency Response Benchbook and Operational Guidebook for State Court Judges and Administrators](#)

I'll keep you updated on any changes that may occur in this situation.

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