



COVID-19 and the Courts

An update from Chief Justice Minton

CDC: [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) ▪ Kentucky Public Health: [COVID-19](#) ▪ KCOJ: [COVID-19 and the Courts](#)

Update #2 for April 14, 2020

Justices, Judges, Circuit Court Clerks and Kentucky Court of Justice Personnel:

Supreme Court issues emergency release schedule, pretrial drug testing standards to protect criminal justice partners and defendants in county jails

The Supreme Court has issued a new emergency release schedule and emergency pretrial drug testing standards to help protect the health and safety of our criminal justice partners and defendants housed in county jails. [Administrative Order 2020-25](#), dated April 14, 2020, will be in effect through May 31, 2020.

The emergency release schedule temporarily expands the current Administrative Release Program as follows:

- Defendants who are charged with, or arrested for failure to appear on, any nonviolent/nonsexual misdemeanor and/or Class D felony (including defendants arrested on an indictment warrant) and have not been assessed as a high risk for new criminal activity shall be released on recognizance.
- Defendants who are charged with any nonviolent/nonsexual Class D felony, are a high risk for failure to appear, or have previously failed to appear on any nonviolent/nonsexual misdemeanor or Class D felony shall be supervised by Pretrial Services.
- Defendants who are served with a warrant for nonpayment of court costs, fees or fines or with a warrant for failure to appear on a violation shall be cited and released and a show cause hearing shall be set after May 31, 2020.
- Defendants who are arrested for contempt of court on civil matters (excluding any violation of a protective order), nonpayment of child support or nonpayment of restitution shall be released on recognizance and a show cause hearing shall be set after May 31, 2020.

- Defendants not released under this schedule or under the current Administrative Release Program shall be reviewed by a judge within 12 hours of their arrest.

The pretrial drug testing standards provide guidelines for our pretrial drug testing providers to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for both the providers and defendants.

Thank you once again for all you are doing for the people of Kentucky. And as always, you can email your questions to covid19@kycourts.net and find updates at [COVID-19 and the Courts](#).



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