

Statements 3.17.2020

Your Honors,

I have just finished a meeting with Judge Brown and I anticipate that [she](#) will issue an order allowing each court to [hold proceedings](#) "At any location within the court's venue which the court determines is necessary to allow the court to safely and practicably conduct its proceeding, providing reasonable notice to the participants and the public for the place of public access."

I anticipate that Judge Brown will require you to confirm the location and confirm that it is in fact within the county of your court.

I want to make you aware of the possibility that if you choose to hold court from your house (or a family member's house or anyone's home), your home address or other address *could* become public as the address of a designated courthouse. Please know Judge Brown will take every effort to protect your information. A litigant could challenge our refusal to release, and we do not know how the appellate courts will harmonize the requirements of Government Code 24.033(b) for the designation of place and the requirements of the Government Code and other statutory provisions providing for the confidentiality of a judge's home.

I am unaware of any case on point. Arguments can be made on harmonizing the provisions that I believe would protect your address from public disclosure. **HOWEVER I CANNOT GUARANTEE OUR ARGUMENTS WOULD WITHSTAND A CHALLENGE.**

If you decide that holding court from your home is the best option for your court, please know you will need to ensure that a place of public access (physical or digital) is set up, and allow sufficient time for that place to be published.

For civil courts, this does not apply to your general submission dockets. For criminal, this does not apply to your off docket resets.

To the extent that the designation of a place other than the courthouse or an auxiliary courthouse is made affects the district clerk's office, you would need to address any issues with the district clerk's office once Judge Brown issues her order.

Sincerely,

[Lance Long](#)

[Staff Attorney](#)

11th Administrative Judicial Region

Judges,

In light of the quickly changing circumstances regarding public health concerns, the Eleventh Region will follow the guidance of Texas Supreme Court's Emergency Order and the requirements of Chapter 24 of the Texas Government Code that allow proceedings to be held away from the Court's usual location with reasonable notice to the participants and the public.

In an effort to make this as easy as possible, any court choosing to hold proceedings at a place other than the court's usual location, please contact me. I will confirm the location is in the proper venue and temporarily designate that location as court. I can be reached via phone (713) 306-3576 or email Susan_Brown@Justex.net.

Please let me know if I can be of any other assistance during this time.

Susan Brown
Presiding Judge
Eleventh Administrative Judicial Region