EUGENE G. DOHERTY
CHIEF JUDGE

WINNEBAGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE
400 WEST STATE STREET - ROOM 215
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS 61101
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PRESS RELEASE

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CIRCUIT COURT CANCELS TRIALS
IN WINNEBAGO AND BOONE COUNTIES

In a further measure to combat the COVID-19 virus, the 17th Circuit Court announced that it is cancelling all trials through mid-May. Trials will resume May 18, 2020. "The Court has already reduced its operations to essential matters only," said Chief Judge Eugene Doherty. "However, we have now been given permission by the Supreme Court to cancel trials and adjust the speedy trial deadlines accordingly. Because trials involve the presences of multiple people, including parties, lawyers, witnesses, jurors, and the judge, delaying them is a prudent decision to guard against transmission of the virus."

Judge Doherty had a special message for jurors who have been summoned to serve: "If your jury reporting date is prior to Monday, May 18, 2020, you are excused from service. If you have any doubt about your status, please call the jury commission contact number listed on your summons for more information." As for the Grand Jury, the Court encourages any currently serving grand jurors to contact the State's Attorney's office in their county to determine if there are any changes to the grand jury's schedule.

Other essential court business is still being conducted. "The Governor's shelter-in-place order explicitly excludes essential government functions and court personnel," Judge Doherty said, "and the order further provides that each governmental entity will determine what constitutes its essential functions; we have already taken those steps. The public should be aware that the Court continues to receive filings, conduct criminal bond court, and conduct other essential proceedings as necessary, though the location of the hearing may have changed."

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