

NOTICE ON CLOSURE OF THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF COURT

Effective March 20, 2020: The Ottawa County Courthouse will be closed to the public until further notice. The Court and county administrative offices will remain open. The office of the Clerk of Courts is an extension of the Court of Common Pleas and will remain open to serve the needs and purposes of the Common Pleas Court and the affected public. The Clerk's office will be open by **phone, email, fax, online** or by **scheduled appointment** if necessary, subject to the following:

- (1) Clerk will provide essential staff to facilitate the needs and purposes of the Court's agenda.
- (2) Access to the office by the public will be by **appointment only** upon determination by the Clerk that entry is for an essential purpose. Access will be denied if the need is not essential to the needs or schedule of the Court or the purpose can be addressed and satisfied over the phone, by faxing, or emailing needed information, at no cost. "Essential" means 'absolutely necessary' and the determination thereof is solely within the discretion of the Clerk or his staff. If access to the office is essential and normal to the function and purpose to one's business, access may be available by **appointment** between the hours of 12:45 PM and 3:00 PM.
- (3) Office hours will be 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM; office will be closed without available staff from 12:00 PM to 12:45 PM; office will be open for public access by appointment only from 12:45 PM to 3:00 PM. At 3:00 PM, the office will be closed to the public.
- (4) Requests for public records requests may be made by phone, email, or written letter; response thereto will be pursuant to existing rule regulation and subject to payment of reasonable fees.
- (5) Appointments, if made, will be for a period of 15 minutes between 12:45 AM and 3:00 PM. Appointments will be restricted to the one person for which the essential need applies. Children, supporting friends, and family will have to remain outside the building. Appointments will not be granted for the purpose of seeking or securing pleadings, documents, or forms, or for filing new pleadings. Filing of pleadings can be made mail with appropriate fee or by faxing if an existing file is of record.
- (6) Access to the Clerk's office will also be available in conjunction with the proceedings required by the Court or court staff. Essential participants to the proceeding will be allowed in the Clerk's office. All non essential but supporting family, friends, and/or children will be asked to remain outside of the Clerk's office. "Essential Participants" means the party(s) and his/her or its attorney.