

**October 23, 2020**

**HAMILTON COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS PRESIDING JUDGE CHARLES J. KUBICKI  
ANNOUNCES TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF JURY TRIALS.**

Today, Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas Presiding Judge Charles J. Kubicki announced the temporary suspension of jury trials in Hamilton County given the sharp rise of COVID cases in the area.

The Ohio Public Health Advisory System lists Hamilton County's current status as RED Alert Level 3 with an asterisk, putting the County on Ohio's Watch List as we are approaching the highest risk level. As such, effective October 26<sup>th</sup>, all jury trials are suspended until further notice. Any jury trial currently in progress will continue until concluded. The Hamilton County Grand Jury will continue to hear cases.

Judge Charles Kubicki commented, "Unfortunately, it is necessary to suspend jury trials in Hamilton County until further notice. This is not something I do lightly. After considering local conditions, the Ohio Public Health Advisory system rating and recommendations, and in consultation with Hamilton County Municipal Court Presiding and Administrative Judge Heather Russell, other Hamilton County judges, Hamilton County Prosecutor Joe Deters, Hamilton County Public Defender Ray Faller and Hamilton County Sheriff Jim Neil, this is a necessary action.

COVID cases have risen dramatically in Hamilton County and the court system has not been immune. The courts are distinct from other types of businesses in that many participants are compelled to appear whether as a defendant, witness or potential juror.

To do what we can to keep people healthy, it is necessary to stop jury trials for some period of time. We will be watching the numbers closely and will consult with the appropriate health authorities to determine when we can safely resume jury trials. It is everyone's goal to resume jury trials as soon as it is safe to do so."

Hamilton County Prosecutor Joseph T. Deters commented, "I thank Judge Kubicki for taking the lead on this and getting agreement from all parties to suspend jury trials until our COVID numbers start to recede. No one wants to suspend jury trials - - both the defendants and victims want resolution as soon as possible- - but we must consider public health and safety. As such, this is a necessary action to do what we can to help flatten the curve of COVID cases."

Hamilton County Public Defender Raymond Faller commented, "Our office agrees with the decision of the Courts in taking this action. The safety of all participants is paramount."