

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO.: 2020- 004

**ORDER AUTHORIZING A1 BAIL BOND AGENCY TO TEMPORARILY EXCUSE
ALL CLIENTS SCHEDULED FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY COURT**

WHEREAS, the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) continues to be a threat requiring adjustments to protect the public and those working in the Courthouse;

WHEREAS, Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice Canady issued Administrative Order SC20-13, suspending various court hearings that would involve numerous participants through April 17, 2020¹;

WHEREAS, Chief Justice Canady has also ordered Chief Judges to continue to mitigate the potential effect of COVID-19 on the courts and court participants and to implement necessary plans for public safety;

WHEREAS, Third Circuit Chief Judge Mark Feagle, on March 15, 2020, issued written guidelines limiting persons from entering the courthouse unless they are there for a current legitimate interest requiring interaction with the Court and further directed defense counsel (to the best of their abilities) to advise their clients that their appearance in court is temporarily waived unless the client is prepared to enter a plea or other disposition agreed to by the State;

WHEREAS, A1 Bail Bond Agency handles the vast majority of bonded defendants appearing in Columbia County Court and is the only bonding agency that always has a representative present during criminal court proceedings and is willing to notify their clients and provide them with notice of a new court date and time;

WHEREAS, the Columbia County Judge executed a county-specific administrative order, 2020-1, and this administrative order shall serve to ratify 2020-1.

WHEREAS, by the authority vested in me as the Chief Judge of the Third Judicial Circuit, specifically, Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215, and upon the request of the Columbia County Judge;

It is therefore **ORDERED**:

A1 Bail Bond Agency is requested and authorized to notify clients with court dates from now until April 17, 2020, in Columbia County that their appearance in court is waived and to require their clients to sign a written notice of a new court date thirty days hence utilizing the dates

¹ This date is subject to extension by the Florida Supreme Court. If the Florida Supreme Court extends the April 17, 2020, date, this Order shall also be extended without further amendment.

of April 21, 23, and 28 with a time of 8:30 A.M. A1 Bail Bond Agency shall provide copies of the signed written notice to the client and the Court prior to the originally scheduled court date.

The terms outlined in this Administrative Order take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until the Florida Supreme Court lifts the extensions related to COVID-19.

DONE AND ORDERED in Columbia County, Florida, on March 26, 2020.



Mark E. Feagle, Chief Judge

Original: Clerk of Court

Copies to:

State Attorney

Public Defender

Gateway Judicial Services

Clerk of Court

A1 Bail Bond Agency