UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA



IN RE: SUSPENSION OF JURY TRIALS IN MARCH 2021

G.O. 21-3

FEB 0 3 2021

ORDER

In light of the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and in order to ensure the health and safety of the parties, counsel, and the Court, the Court has determined to continue civil and criminal jury trials set on the March 2021 docket, to be reset by the presiding judge. However, absent compelling circumstances with respect to the pandemic and subject to determinations by the Court regarding the assignment of larger courtrooms for jury trials, the Court intends to hold jury trials during the April 2021 trial docket.

In civil cases, trial-related deadlines are not continued unless otherwise ordered by the presiding judge. Trial-related deadlines in criminal cases, however, are continued and will be set by the presiding judge when the case is reset on a jury docket. In addition, with respect to criminal cases, the Court finds:

1. As of February 3, 2021, the Oklahoma State Department of Health has identified 394,283 positive cases of COVID-19, an increase of more than 93,000 cases in a month. The majority of the positive cases are in the Western District of Oklahoma.

2. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention continues to recommend against

large indoor gatherings, which limits the number of people who should be in the

courthouse at the same time.

3. While the steps the Court has taken to keep court staff, parties, counsel, and

jurors safe have thus far been effective, given the prevalence of cases and the

severity of the community spread, the Court finds a greater restriction on the

number of people interacting in-person with the Court continues to be warranted.

Therefore, the period of delay resulting from continuances implemented as a result of this

Order will be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, as the Court specifically finds that the

ends of justice served by ordering continuances outweigh the best interests of the public

and each defendant to a speedy trial. See 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A).

ENTERED for the Court this ____3 day of February, 2021.

TIMOTHY D. DeGIUSTI

Chief United States District Judge