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March 29, 2021

**ATTN: ATTORNEYS PRACTICING BEFORE THE SAN PATRICIO COUNTY COURT AT LAW –
CRIMINAL MATTERS**

RE: IN-PERSON HEARINGS AFTER APRIL 12, 2021

THE FOLLOWING IS HEREBY ORDERED BY THE COURT:

On April 12, 2021, in-person non-jury court hearings will resume once again in the San Patricio County Court at Law on a limited basis.

Bond Returnable/Arrestment dockets will be held in person at the Alternative Court Location of the San Patricio County Civic Center. Attorneys and Defendants are still permitted to make appearances by way of the Court's Lifesize Video Conference. The Court strongly encourages the Attorneys to file their notices of appearance prior to the day of your hearing so that no appearance is required.

At this time limited criminal pre-trial hearings may be scheduled for entry of pleas or motions at the Attorney's request. The Court anticipates that all criminal matters will return to in-person hearings after July 12, 2021, such criminal dockets to be held at the San Patricio County Civic Center until the end of the year.

Announcements and Jury Trials will continue to be held in person at the Alternative Court Location of the San Patricio County Civic Center.

When matters are heard in person, there will be continued changes to the day-to-day Court operations. Health screening, social distancing, facial coverings, and limits on the number of persons allowed in the courtroom will continue to factor into the Court's operations. *See attached Minimum Standard Health Protocols In-Person Hearings.*

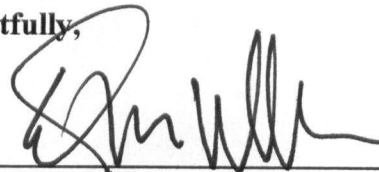
Attorneys **MUST** confer before arriving at the courthouse. There will be no time to accommodate settlement negotiations which have customarily occurred after docket call in the past. The new normal will be that attorneys will be expected to go forward on the merits of their cases as soon as the Court is ready to proceed. Announcements of “conferring” will not be honored.

Attorneys **MUST** obtain a copy of the plea paperwork from the county attorney’s office prior to their court date and review such with clients. For cases currently set for pre-trial, the announcement of “pass to announcement” will no longer be acceptable. Attorneys must be prepared to give an accurate summary of the status of their case and a concise statement as to the relief requested.

Attorneys should also anticipate the Court will curtail presentation of testimony which is not concise and to the point of the matter to be decided. All exhibits should be pre-marked and ready for submission to the Court. Attorneys should present accurate summaries of the relief requested or be prepared to make a brief statement to the Court regarding the relief requested.

Designation of Auxiliary Courtroom - The Commissioners Court of San Patricio County has designated the San Patricio County Civic Center, located at 219 W. 5th Street, Sinton, Texas as an Auxiliary Courtroom to be used by the District and County Court at Law Courts for hearings when needed to comply with social distancing guidelines. Attorneys are responsible for knowing in which location their hearing will be heard.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Welborn', written over a horizontal line.

Elizabeth Welborn

Judge, San Patricio County Court-at-Law