



**STATE DISTRICT COURTS  
DENTON COUNTY, TEXAS**

Sherry Shipman, 16<sup>th</sup> District Court      Bruce McFarling, 362<sup>nd</sup> District Court      Jonathan Bailey, 431<sup>st</sup> District Court  
Steve Burgess, 158<sup>th</sup> District Court      Margaret Barnes, 367<sup>th</sup> District Court      Tiffany Haertling, 442<sup>nd</sup> District Court  
Brody Shanklin, 211<sup>th</sup> District Court      Doug Robison, 393<sup>rd</sup> District Court      Lee Ann Breeding, 462<sup>nd</sup> District Court

**DENTON COUNTY DISTRICTS COURTS JOINT STATEMENT AND TEMPORARY  
STANDING ORDER REGARDING POSSESSION AND ACCESS DURING THE COVID-19  
EMERGENCY DECLARATION PERIOD**

Applicable to all Family Law cases in Denton County, Texas.

The Denton County District Judges take the position that “Shelter in Place” or “Stay at Home” Orders, standing alone, do not modify current orders regarding possession and access. Exchanges relating to possession and access to children are considered to be an “essential activity.”

The position stated above does not remove the ability to petition the courts for emergency relief if extraordinary circumstances exist.

It is also the Judges position that the following Temporary Standing Orders be issued:

**IT IS THEFORE IT IS ORDERED:**

1. If a parent or conservator subject to a family court order has been diagnosed with, or has reason to believe they have COVID-19 or have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus, that person SHALL notify the other parent of the diagnosis or exposure.
2. If a parent or conservator knows that a child has been diagnosed with or has reason to believe that a child has been exposed to COVID-19, that person SHALL notify the other parent or conservator of the diagnosis or exposure.
3. If a parent, conservator or child has been diagnosed with or if a parent or conservator has reason to believe that they or the child have been exposed to COVID-19, the parents and/or conservators shall confer to discuss actions necessary to protect the child’s safely and welfare.

This Temporary Order is effective from March 24, 2020, and expires upon the termination of Denton County Executive Order AE-20-03-24 – “Stay at Home Order.”

Signed this 24<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2020.

/s/ Brody Shanklin,  
Local Administrative Judge