

FILED  
BLAIR COUNTY  
ROBIN G. PATTON

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS, BLAIR COUNTY  
24<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT

2020 APR -8 PM 3: 00

PROTHONOTARY  
CLERK OF COURTS  
CLERK OF ORPHANS COURT

IN RE: 24<sup>TH</sup> Judicial District –

DECLARATION OF JUDICIAL EMERGENCY

Supreme Court:  
No. 20 WM 2020  
Blair County No.:  
No. 2020 MD 0003

**NOTICE OF COMPLIANCE WITH SUPREME COURT DIRECTIVE AND  
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER**

AND NOW, this 8<sup>TH</sup> day of April, 2020, pursuant to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's Orders of March 18, 2020, and April 1, 2020 and the individual Judicial Emergency declared in Blair County by President Judge Elizabeth A. Doyle, the court hereby **PROVIDES NOTICE** as follows:

1. In order to comply with the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's Order of April 3, 2020 docketed to case number 70 MM 2020 ("County Prison Compliance Order"), the President Judge requested that an emergency public meeting of the Blair County Prison Board be convened.
2. This meeting was held on April 8, 2020 via teleconference.
3. Present at the meeting were relevant stakeholders including, the undersigned, the County Commissioners, the District Attorney, the Chief Public Defender, the Warden of the Blair County Prison and two of her deputies, the Controller, the Chief Clerk, the director of Adult Parole and Probation the Sheriff and member(s) of the media.

4. The Warden provided a report at the request of the undersigned in regard to how the Blair County Prison (BCP) has addressed the threat of COVID-19 as follows:

- a. The Blair County Prison ("BCP") has been working with its healthcare provider, Prime Care, since early February to evaluate and respond to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak.
- b. In so doing, the Warden has implemented and adapted already existing influenza protocols in keeping with the guidelines provided by Prime Care and the Centers for Disease Control ("CDC").
- c. Since March 19, 2020, 112 inmates have been released from BCP, many to inpatient drug and alcohol treatment facilities, and some to electronic monitoring.
- d. These releases have been done with the review and cooperation of the District Attorney's office, the Public Defender's Office, and Blair County Adult Parole and Probation.
- e. Since April 6, 2020, 35 inmates have been transferred to state correctional institutions.
- f. BCP has cancelled in-person visitation and provided extra phone calls free of charge to inmates.
- g. BCP has issued non-medical cloth masks to all staff and mandates that these masks are worn.

- h. BCP has increased the frequency of cleaning procedures of all facilities.
  - i. Protocols are in place to deal with contingencies that may arise due to COVID-19.
  
- 5. The court finds that BCP, through the dedicated efforts of all the public servants present at the April 8, 2020 and others that were not present, is presently in compliance with the aforementioned Prison Compliance Order.
  
- 6. The court finds that consistent with their respective advocacy roles in the criminal justice system, the District Attorney's office and the Public Defender's office continue to collaborate where possible to address the ongoing situation posed by COVID-19.
  
- 7. Prior to the entry of the Prison Compliance Order, the undersigned met with the Public Defender and the District Attorney to discuss whether any agreements to release could be reached about prisoners for whom the Public Defender had filed bail modification petitions. The DA and PD agreed to meet to discuss the cases. Consent bail modifications were entered after these conferences.
  
- 8. Additionally, prior to the entry of the Prison Compliance Order, the Public Defender's office filed approximately sixty (60) applications for bail modification, which were or will be scheduled for hearing if there is no agreement for release. The undersigned, with notice to the

District Attorney and Public Defender, requested the Adult Parole and Probation office to consider for release cases in which persons were detained for probation violations, especially technical violations instead of new charges.

9. As part of the undersigned's efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19, all the Magisterial District Judges in this judicial district were made aware of the concerns COVID-19 presents to the jail population, the staff of BCP and the general public. Since the beginning of the crisis, the rate of incarceration has decreased but not ceased.

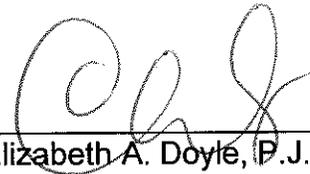
10. The court hereby **ORDERS, DIRECTS** and **DECREES** as follows:

- a. The stakeholders present at the April 8, 2020 meeting shall continue to collaborate, to the extent possible and consistent with their respective roles, to reduce the inmate population of BCP.
- b. The court recognizes the need to balance public safety both inside and outside BCP as noted by the District Attorney.
- c. The court additionally recognizes that at times the various stakeholders may take adversarial positions with regard to this court's mandate and that of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.
- d. All stakeholders are hereby put on notice that the undersigned remains committed to address the concerns raised by all

stakeholders as the course of the current crisis inevitably shifts over time.

- e. Additionally, all stakeholders shall continue to follow and apply the CDC's Interim Guidance on Management of Coronavirus Disease 2019 in Correctional and Detention Facilities as cited by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.
- f. Additional meetings of the relevant stakeholders shall be held as needed to address the fluid situation presented by the current public health crisis and attendant judicial emergency.

**BY THE COURT:**



Elizabeth A. Doyle, P.J.