ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19)

COUNTY OF FORSYTH 2020 APR 23 P 6: 30 FORSYTH COUNTY RECORD NO. 20 R 179

FORSYTH CO., 6. S. C.

IN RE: CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) (2, -1)

Closure of Courthouse Facilities

This Order is entered by the undersigned judge, being the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge of Judicial District 21, through the inherent authority of those offices and pursuant to Executive Orders of the Honorable Roy Cooper, Governor of North Carolina and the Emergency Directives of the Honorable Cheri Beasley, Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court, to protect the public as well as state and local employees working in the Forsyth County Courthouse.

The undersigned received communication from the Forsyth County Clerk of Court that a clerk has tested positive for COVID-19, a highly contagious communicable disease. This clerk works within the bookkeeping department of the Forsyth County Courthouse. The clerk is responsible in assisting the public with payments and for filing and distributing papers within the Clerk's Office.

Based upon a review of information readily available, the following facts are found:

- 1) An employee of the Forsyth County Clerk of Court has tested positive for COVID-19 on or about April 23, 2020. This individual may have exposed other immediate staff members and they therefore may have exposed other individuals throughout the Forsyth County Hall of Justice.
- 2) Forsyth County Clerk of Court Renita Thompkins-Linville is requiring that all staff who had contact with the clerk whom tested positive shall self-quarantine for the next fourteen (14) days beginning April 23, 2020.
- 3) These facts came to the attention of the undersigned late afternoon on April 23, 2020.
- 4) COVID-19 is highly contagious and can be deadly.
- 5) In similar situations Public Health has advised as a precaution that the affected building be shut down for a deep cleaning prior to re-opening. In the alternative the building shall be shut down for seven (7) days from April 24, 2020 until May 4, 2020.

6) As has been the case throughout this Pandemic crisis, this court is faced with making unprecedented decisions concerning the closure of courthouse facilities, which are generally required by law to be open to the public. Such decisions necessarily include a balancing of the imperative and absolute necessity of protecting the public from the possibility of infection, while at the same time protecting the constitutional rights of those having pending civil and criminal proceedings that need to be addressed in a timely manner.

Therefore, based upon the foregoing, it is **HEREBY ORDERED**:

- 1. The Forsyth County Hall of Justice Shall be closed on Friday, April 24, 2020. The closure shall remain in effect to the public until Monday, May 4, 2020.
- 2. The Forsyth County Hall of Justice shall re-open for employees on Friday, May 1, 2020.
- 3. All Courts scheduled shall be cancelled unless otherwise notified.
- 4. Upon the re-opening at the Forsyth County Hall of Justice it is mandated that no employee return to work if experiencing any symptoms of the CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19).

This the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of April 2020.

L. Todd Burke

Senior Resident Superior Court Judge