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2
3 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

4 In Re:

5
6 NEW MODIFIED COURT
7 OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT
8 CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY
CORONAVIRUS

GENERAL ORDER NO. 03-22

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10 This General Order extends the procedures of General Order 16-21 and 01-22 for an
11 additional 30 days. The Court incorporates its prior findings regarding COVID-19 and the
12 emergency declarations and public health guidelines as set forth in those prior General Orders.

13 In the last month, the average daily number of individuals testing positive for COVID-19
14 has decreased in the Western District of Washington. However, COVID-19 hospitalizations have
15 remained high after briefly falling. A surge of cases and hospitalizations was predicted by local
16 public health officials and attributed to the arrival of the Omicron variant. The Court believes
17 this surge will be temporary given early indicators from the first regions to encounter this variant.
18 Unfortunately, this surge has yet to end here.

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20 To protect unvaccinated individuals and to avoid contributing to the spread of the virus,
21 the Court ORDERS that the procedures of General Order 10-21 will continue to be temporarily
22 modified as follows:

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- 24 • All in-person civil trials scheduled to occur in the next four weeks are suspended until
25 March 7, 2022. Civil trials may be conducted virtually via Zoom.gov if good cause is
26 established for such a procedure on a case-by-case basis, at the discretion of the presiding
27 judge. Trials already scheduled to proceed virtually are not suspended.
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- 1 • In-person civil hearings and other uses of the courtroom for civil matters are continued
2 unless explicitly permitted by the presiding judge for good cause.
- 3 • Criminal trials and other criminal matters before District Judges may proceed as
4 scheduled, although the Court encourages parties to consider a continuance or holding
5 such proceedings using audio and video conference technology.
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- 7 • Criminal proceedings before Magistrate Judges, such as initial appearances, detention
8 hearings, and arraignments, shall be conducted using audio and video conference
9 technology until March 7, 2022, unless the Magistrate Judge decides that the proceedings
10 must be conducted in person at the courthouse.
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- 12 • The courthouses are open to the public only for attending court proceedings. However,
13 gallery capacity for any proceeding will continue to be limited to eight individuals unless
14 otherwise permitted by the presiding judge for good cause. All Court proceedings will
15 be accessible remotely as detailed on the Court's website. Courthouses remain closed for
16 public events and tours.
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- 18 • All other procedures of General Orders 10-21 and 11-21 remain in place.

19 The Court will revisit these procedures prior to March 7, 2022.

20 DATED this 3rd day of February, 2022.

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24 RICARDO S. MARTINEZ
25 CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
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