

The Law Office of The Public Defender

117 South Main St
4th Floor, Reibold Building
Dayton, Ohio 45422

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 3/18/20

Public Defender's Office Modifies Services to Respond to COVID-19 Crisis

Dayton, OH, March 18, 2020: Like many of our fellow community members, we are closely monitoring the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation. Beginning Thursday, March 19, 2020, The Law Office of the Public Defender in Montgomery County will modify hours and services to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

The Public Defender's Office will no longer serve walk-in clients or hold client meetings in their office space at the Reibold Building – 117 S. Main St. Dayton, OH 45422. To continue serving our clients, while also adhering to social distancing best practices, we ask that all current clients and prospective clients contact the office via the main telephone line at 937-225-4652 during the modified business hours of 10am – 3pm, Monday - Friday.

Our focus is, as always, on the health and safety of our employees, clients and community. To do our part in slowing the spread of the virus and to protect the vulnerable populations we serve, attorneys and office staff are working remotely when possible. However, attorneys and staff will still be present at all court proceedings and will continue to meet with clients who are incarcerated. Montgomery County Jail staff is working with our office to allow consultations with clients in a non-contact setting, including exploring virtual meeting options as well.

The attorneys in the Public Defender's Office are also filing release motions for vulnerable incarcerated clients that risk severe health consequences were they to contract the virus. "We are working with the Sheriff's Department, Montgomery County Jail, prosecutor's offices, and area judges to identify nonviolent offenders incarcerated at the jail who could be released to promote the health and safety of everyone," says Theresa Haire, Montgomery County's Chief Public Defender.

The Public Defender's Office will continue to take on new clients, and asks that anyone eligible for services contact the main number to complete an intake over the phone. Clients incarcerated in Montgomery County Jail will complete intakes within the jail setting and do not need to call the office. Soon, each court will have a dedicated intake line to process and intake clients more quickly and efficiently. We encourage our community to continue to check our website and/or social media accounts for specific intake numbers.

Court proceedings and dates in all courts – Montgomery County Common Pleas Court, Montgomery County Juvenile Court, and all county Municipal Courts – are subject to change. The Public Defender's Office urges its clients to reach out to their specific courts in addition to their attorneys to inquire about date changes. Court phone numbers can be found on each court's website.

"We are an essential, constitutionally mandated service that provides legal assistance to the County's poorest citizens. We will be here for our clients," says Theresa Haire.

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About the Public Defender's Office: The Law Office of the Public Defender provides legal representation to citizens accused by the government of criminal conduct that can result in a loss of freedom. We defend cases including Felonies, Misdemeanors, Appeals, and Juveniles. We provide these legal services to all persons and base qualification decisions solely on economic status.