

Denver Probate Court 1437 Bannock Street Denver, Colorado 80202	▲ COURT USE ONLY ▲
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2021-02	
<p style="text-align: center;">ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER REGARDING MENTAL HEALTH HEARINGS</p>	

In accordance with the inherent authority of the Denver Probate Court to manage the proceedings before it, the Presiding Judge of the Denver Probate Court enters the following Order governing hearing procedures for actions filed pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes Titles 27 and 25.5.

Colorado Revised Statutes Titles 27 and 25.5 set forth the procedures for various mental health hearings, including but not limited to, hearings on certifications for involuntary mental health treatment, involuntary medication administration, imposition of legal disability, and involuntary commitments. This authority requires the Court, in certain circumstances, to hold an expedited hearing, usually within 10 days. *See, e.g.*, C.R.S. §§ 27-65-107(6); 27-65-109(5); 27-65-111(5); 27-81-112(3).

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, this Court would frequently order the Denver Sheriff's Department to transport Respondents from various designated facilities to the Denver Probate Court for any hearings held pursuant to statute. Ordering the Denver Sheriff's Department to transport Respondents required the Sheriff's Department to staff such transports with a minimum of two deputy sheriffs and to remain with Respondent during the hearing, as well as involve hospital staff to ensure the safe transport of the Respondent. This transport procedure often resulted in lengthy delays in the Court's docket. For some Respondents, the transport procedures resulted in escalation and were not entirely trauma-informed, resulting in some Respondents not being able to fully participate in their hearing or being removed entirely from the courtroom. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, this Court has successfully implemented technology for hearings to be held virtually without the need for sheriff transport to the courtroom.

Virtual hearings protect Respondents' rights to fully participate in their own hearings in a safe environment. Virtual hearings promote judicial efficiency, judicial economy and