

<p>DISTRICT COURT, BROOMFIELD COUNTY, COLORADO</p> <p>Court Address: 17 DesCombes Drive Broomfield, CO 80020</p> <p>Phone Number (720) 887-2100</p>	<p>COURT USE ONLY</p>
<p><b>COMMON ORDER FOR PENDING DEPENDENCY AND NEGLECT CASES IN BROOMFIELD COUNTY</b></p>	
<p><b>5/8/20 AMENDED ORDER FOR PARENTAL VISITS DUE TO COVID 19 OUTBREAK</b></p>	

Div. A Courtroom: 2

The Court hereby amends its Order issued 3 weeks ago (April 15<sup>th</sup>) concerning parental visits in D&N cases as follows:

The Court first recognizes the criteria published this week by Broomfield HHS that they utilize in determining when it is in the best interests of a child, and the best health interests of the parents and caregivers, to have in person visits. The Court continues to support BHHS efforts to facilitate audio and video communications between parents and children, as well as their support for in person visits in appropriate cases. BHHS's policies can be found at the BHHS web site.

The Court recently met with some of the stakeholders to gain information and perspectives concerning in person visits at this time. In addition, the Court has also reviewed the current statistics involving Covid 19 in the Broomfield, Colorado area. Those statistics as of May 7, 2020, are as follows:

1. Confirmed World cases = 3.9 million    Total Covid deaths = 271,000
2. Confirmed US cases = 1.3 million        US Covid deaths = 76,740
3. Colorado Confirmed cases = 18,371    Colorado Covid 19 deaths = 944
4. Broomfield Confirmed cases = 180      Broomfield Covid deaths= 16

The Court notes that Broomfield is a smaller county and its numbers are relatively low. However, half of the Covid 19 confirmed cases in Colorado (9121) are from counties that border Broomfield. (Adams County, Jefferson County, Weld County and Boulder County)

**There have been significant increases in both cases and deaths compared to the numbers listed below from the 3 weeks ago.**

**With that in mind, the Court now continues the attached Order for another 3 weeks. The Court will continue to monitor the available information and will review this Order again on June 4, 2020. The Court will gather information and input and decide if the Order will terminate or be modified prior to June 5, 2019.**

**So Ordered, May 8, 2020.**

**Don Quick**

**District Court Judge**

Prior Order of April 15, 2020:

Due to the pandemic, the Court issued a temporary Order three weeks ago concerning a request from Broomfield Health and Human Services. That request was to modify existing orders governing visitation and contact by parents with children placed in dependency and neglect cases. That Order, based on health concerns of children, parents, and care-providers, temporarily modified Orders which allowed in person visitations to be changed to audio and video visitation. However, the Order allowed BHHS to review individual cases and expand contact if it could be done in a manner, “that fosters and protects the health, safety, and well-being of the children, their parents, and their caregivers”. The Court set the Order to be reviewed today to determine the status of the epidemic and visitations.

The information concerning the COVID 19 epidemic is still extraordinarily concerning. As of April 14, 2020, Colorado had 7941 confirmed cases and 329 deaths due to COVID 19. Due to the lack of testing, one source estimated the number of actual cases in Colorado to be in the 12,000 to 33,000 range. Cases in the U.S. numbered 619,000 yesterday and U.S. deaths were 27,112. It is still clear that COVID 19 presents serious health risks to our community. The five counties in Colorado with the highest number of cases are, Denver, Arapahoe, Weld, Jefferson and Adams. Three of those five counties border on Broomfield. Broomfield is a small county, but BHHS reports that it has 87 confirmed COVID 19 cases with two deaths. COVID 19 is especially dangerous to seniors and those with pre-existing health issues. However, three percent of the infected patients are less than 19 years of age. Finally, the epidemic is projected to continue at least for the next several months but likely longer. In fact, due to the impact of social distancing and the use of masks, it is now projected that the peak in Colorado cases will not occur until next month.

Noting this sobering information, the Court does not find that it is in the best interests of children placed outside the home to return (at this time) to prior orders allowing in person contact between parents and children. The Court recognizes the negative emotional impact on parents and kids of this Order. However, COVID is extraordinarily contagious and deadly. It is nothing like we have seen in the last 100 years. The children’s physical health and wellbeing must be our primary focus at this time. In addition, this Order-like the prior Order-allows BHHS in a case by

case process to facilitate in person visits when it can be done safely for the kids, parents and caregivers. In addition, BHHS has and will continue, to foster frequent telephone and video contact between parents and their children.

The Court has instructed BHHS to provide the Court with the criteria it uses in making individual decisions about parent/child in person contact. Those criteria will be shared with the parties. That way, parents and children will know that their case is being treated fairly and with the same criteria as other cases.

No one really knows how long this health crises will continue. That is why the Court requested representatives of parents, caretakers, BHHS, CASA, GALs and mental health professionals to serve on a small committee for the purpose of providing the Court information and perspectives on the impacts of continuing or discontinuing this Order. The Court will meet with these individuals prior to the end date of this Order on May 7, 2020. The Court will then decide whether this Order will be continued, modified or terminated.

It was stated in today's meeting that BHHS's focus continues to be on the best way to safely reintegrate parents with the children in its charge. The Court agrees with that focus and will again address these issues in three weeks time.

So ordered: April 15, 2020.

*/s/ Don Quick*

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Don Quick

District Court Judge