

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA

FILED
U.S. DISTRICT COURT
AUGUSTA DIV.

IN RE: Exclusion of Time Under)
Speedy Trial Act)

2021 FEB -1 A 11:13

CLERK J. Hodge
SO. DIST. OF GA.


STANDING ORDER MC- MC121-004

The Court enters this standing order to address continued court operations in light of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. The Court observes that the March 13, 2020 declaration of National Emergency in response to the spread of the coronavirus remains effective and the State of Georgia continues to operate under a public health state of emergency. As of the date of this Order, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other public health authorities continue to advise the taking of precautions to reduce the possibility of exposure to the coronavirus and slow the spread of the disease, including social distancing for the foreseeable future. Further, the CDC has identified populations who are particularly vulnerable to the coronavirus, including members of the public who form our jury pools, members of our Bar, Court staff, and Judges. These facts render the Court's current ability to safely conduct jury trials difficult, if not impossible.

Upon considering the current status of the pandemic and in order to protect public health, including the health of court employees, parties, and court participants, the Court finds that the ends of justice require the following action:

With regard to criminal cases now or hereafter pending in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Georgia, the Court finds that the right of defendants in criminal cases and the public to a speedier trial during the period of **February 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021** is substantially outweighed by the public interest of protecting the health and safety of the defendants, case participants, court employees, jurors, and the public. Accordingly, the following time period, **February 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021**, shall be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. §3161(h)(7)(A). Although this order permits jury trials to be continued during this excluded period, any defendant in a criminal case shall have the right to file a motion for a speedier trial, which shall be considered and decided by the judge assigned to the defendant's case.

ORDER ENTERED, this 15th day of February, 2021.



J. RANDAL HALL, CHIEF JUDGE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA