

FILED
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IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF WOOD COUNTY, OHIO
JUVENILE AND PROBATE DIVISIONS

In the Matter of:)
CERTIFIED MAIL SERVICE AND) JOURNAL ENTRY
PROCESS DURING)
THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC)

This order is made to address service by certified mail during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Wood County Probate and Juvenile Courts. This orders arises from changes made within the United States Postal Service ("USPS") and follows certain administrative orders made by the Ohio Supreme Court. The court notes the following:

1. Juvenile Rule 16 and Ohio Civil Rule 73(A) allow for service of certain proceedings in juvenile courts and probate courts to be made consistent with the Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure.
2. Ohio Civil Rule 4.1 (A)(1)(a) provides for 'Service by United States certified or express mail' evidenced by return receipt signed by any person.
3. Due to COVID-19, the United States Postal Service has adapted its certified mail delivery procedure to promote social distancing whereby carriers will not obtain a signature of the recipient but rather make certain notations reflecting confirmation of delivery. A copy of the USPS's procedures is attached to this order and incorporated as if fully rewritten herein.

4. USPS carriers are often indicating "COVID-19" or "CV-19" or some similar statement on the electronic signature pad or 'green card' as confirmation of delivery.
5. In that the Rules of Civil Procedure allow for certified mail service and that the modified USPS procedures provide for certified mail service in such a way as to ensure the integrity of the service process and the protection of the public, the court issues the following orders.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. Service of process may be evidenced by delivery of certified mail or express mail by the United States Postal Service as reflected by notations of 'COVID' or 'COVID-19' or notation consistent with the United States Postal Service certified mail delivery procedures on the receipt or confirmation of delivery. Service in this manner shall be deemed to be perfected unless otherwise challenged.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David E. Woessner", written over a horizontal line.

JUDGE DAVID E. WOESSNER

Mandatory Stand-Up Talk

March 19, 2020

Customer Signature Service

COVID-19 Response and Prevention

A number of cases of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) have recently been confirmed across the country.

The safety and well-being of our employees is our highest priority. To help ensure the health of our employees, we are continuing to follow recommended guidance and strategies from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local health departments, and are implementing additional measures to help maintain social distancing.

One significant measure being implemented is a temporary modification to mail handling procedures for mail that requires customer signatures. We recognize the close proximity and additional handling that occurs when employees must ask customers for a signature and government issued identification when required. To reduce health risks, we are temporarily modifying customer signature capture procedures for the MDD sign-on-glass feature, PS Form 3811 (Domestic Return Receipt), PS Form 3849 (We ReDeliver for You), and any hard-copy receipt items usually signed by customers. Effective immediately and until further notice, follow the temporary process below for signature service items. This process applies to all letter carriers:

- Avoid ringing the doorbell when possible. Knock on the customer's door. Avoid areas that may be frequently touched when knocking.
- While maintaining a safe, appropriate distance, request the customer's first initial and last name.
 - Using the MDD, scan the mail piece barcode, select Delivered and answer the prompted questions. Enter the customer's first initial and last name when prompted for name.
 - When prompted for the customer to sign the MDD's screen, employees are to print their own initials (not a signature), route number and notate C19 on the screen in lieu of the customer's signature.
 - For Return Receipts and other hard copy items, enter the customer's first initial and last name in the Signature box of the form.
 - For PS Forms 3811 and 3849, employees are to print their own initials (not a signature), route number and notate C19 in the "Received by" or "Printed Name" section, dependent on the form. With the PS Form 3849, scan the completed form following the normal process to finalize the delivery.
- For increased safety, politely ask the customer to step back a safe distance or close the screen door/door so you may leave the item in the mail receptacle or appropriate location by the customer door.
- If there is no response, follow the normal Notice Left process.
- If there are delivery points on your route where social distancing recommendations are difficult to follow, please advise your supervisor so alternative delivery methods can be explored.

It is important to remember that the best defense against sickness is good personal hygiene. Practice good respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene. Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds at a time and cover your mouth when sneezing or coughing, using your elbow or a tissue, and then discard the tissue if you use one. When unable to wash hands with soap and water, it is recommended that hand sanitizer be used to help reduce the spread of germs.

Thank you for your attention.