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6 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
7 WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

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9 In Re:

10 EXTENSION OF MODIFIED COURT
11 OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT
12 CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY
13 COVID-19 AND RELATED
14 CORONAVIRUS

GENERAL ORDER NO. 07-20

15 This General Order is being issued in response to the continuing outbreak of Coronavirus
16 Disease 2019 (COVID-19). On March 17 and 25, 2020, the Court entered General Orders 02-20
17 and 03-20 addressing, among other things, the closing of the Seattle and Tacoma Courthouses
18 for at least 30 days and the procedures for conducting civil and criminal matters remotely. The
19 Court incorporates here its prior findings regarding COVID-19 and the state of emergency
20 declarations and public health guidelines as set forth in those prior General Orders.

21 The Court finds that the current guidance of local and national public health officials
22 requires the Courthouses to remain closed. As of the issuance of this Order, the State of
23 Washington remains under a Stay Home, Stay Safe Order until May 4, 2020. The daily number
24 confirmed cases and deaths from COVID-19 have recently decreased in Washington, but the
25 Governor has indicated that social distancing restrictions may need to continue past May 4, and
26 public health officials have repeatedly identified the likelihood of a second wave of coronavirus
27 infections and deaths once the restrictions are lifted or modified.
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1 Accordingly, the Court ORDERS that the procedures established by General Orders 02-
2 20 and 03-20 will be continued for another 30 days. All grand jury proceedings, as well as civil
3 and criminal in-person hearings and trial dates in these Courthouses scheduled to occur before
4 July 1, 2020, are continued pending further order of the Court.

5 The Court continues to find that, due to the current inability to obtain an adequate
6 spectrum of jurors and the effect of the above public health situation on the availability of
7 witnesses, counsel and Court staff to be present in the courtroom, the time period of the
8 continuances implemented by this General Order will be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act,
9 as the Court finds that the ends of justice served by ordering the continuances outweigh the best
10 interests of the public and any defendant's right to a speedy trial, pursuant to 18 U.S.C.
11 §3161(h)(7)(A). For the same reasons, the Court finds under 18 U.S.C. § 3060(C) extraordinary
12 circumstances exist, and justice requires delay of all criminal preliminary hearings during the
13 time period of these continuances.
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16 Other General Orders addressing particular COVID-19 issues have not expired and need
17 not be modified at this time.
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19 Dated this 13th day of April, 2020.
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23 RICARDO S. MARTINEZ
24 CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
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