

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

In Re: Teleconferencing in Criminal Matters
Pursuant To The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, And
Economic Security Act

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 378

This order renews Administrative Order 374, which was effective as of December 23, 2020.

Congress has passed legislation authorizing the use of video and telephone conferencing, under certain circumstances and with the consent of the defendant, for various criminal case events during the course of the COVID-19 emergency. See The CARES Act, H.R. 748. The Judicial Conference of the United States has also found that emergency conditions due to the national emergency declared by the President have affected and will materially affect the functioning of the federal courts generally.

Current conditions warrant the renewal of the authorization. Accordingly, as Chief Judge, and pursuant to Section 15002(b)(1) of the legislation, I authorize the use of video conferencing, or telephone conferencing if video conferencing is not reasonably available, for all events listed in Section 15002(b) of the legislation.

Pursuant to Section 15002(b)(2), I find that felony pleas under Rule 11 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure and felony sentencings under Rule 32 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure cannot be conducted in person in this district without seriously jeopardizing public health and safety. If a judge in an individual case finds, for specific reasons, that a felony plea or sentencing in that case cannot be further delayed without serious harm to the interests of justice, the judge may, with the consent of the defendant after consultation

with counsel, use video conferencing, or teleconferencing if video conferencing is not reasonably available, for the felony plea or sentencing in that case. Judges may also use this authority for equivalent events in juvenile cases as described in Section 15002(b)(2)(B).

Pursuant to Section 15002(b)(3) of the legislation, this authorization will remain in effect for 90 days from its effective date, March 23, 2021, unless terminated earlier. If emergency conditions continue to exist after June 21, 2021, I will review this authorization and determine whether to extend it.

Entered March 24, 2021.

BY THE COURT:

/s/

JAMES D. PETERSON
Chief District Judge