

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

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In Re:

NATURALIZATIONS UNDER THE :
ONGOING EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES :
CREATED BY COVID-19 :

GENERAL ORDER NO 20-11

DISTRICT OF OHIO
SOUTHERN DIST. OHIO
COLUMBUS

GENERAL ORDER

On March 12, 2020, this Court issued General Order 20-03 suspending all Naturalization hearings for 45 days due to the COVID-19 pandemic. That Order is set to expire on April 13, 2020. Since this Court issued General Order 20-03, the COVID-19 pandemic has continued its exponential spread throughout the SDOH and this Country resulting in growing hospitalizations and increasing fatalities. As codified in General Order 20-08, the President has invoked the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. § 1601, et seq., and Governor Mike DeWine has likewise declared a state of emergency, both of which mandate social distancing and limit large indoor gatherings. Accordingly, this Court has stayed in-Court proceedings and closed the Southern District of Ohio Courts to the public until June 1, 2020.

As recounted in General Order 20-03, pursuant to Title 8 of United States Code §1421(b)(1)(B), federal judges in the Southern District of Ohio have the exclusive authority to administer the oath of allegiance to persons seeking to become naturalized citizens of the United States. Our exclusive authority to administer the oath applies only during the 45-day period beginning on the date on which the Attorney General certifies to the Court that an applicant is eligible for naturalization. 8 U.S.C. §1421(b)(3)(A). Due to the continued invocation of the National Emergencies Act, Governor DeWine's state of emergency, and the exponential spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, this Court will continue its Order suspending all Naturalization

proceedings within this district for an additional 45 days, or until further notice. This decision is made for the health and safety of all Court personnel and visitors of the Court.

This second temporary suspension of naturalization proceedings will not divest the United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio of its exclusive authority to administer the oath of allegiance to persons seeking to become naturalized citizens in this District. *See* 8 U.S.C. §1421(b)(3)(A).

Accordingly, it is hereby **ORDERED** that effective April 13, 2020:

THERE SHALL BE NO NATURALIZATION PROCEEDINGS IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO FOR A PERIOD OF 45 DAYS OF THIS ORDER, OR UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE OF THIS COURT.

The Court will vacate or amend this General Order no later than May 28, 2020.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



**ALGENON L. MARBLEY
CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE**

DATED: April 13, 2020