

**Bosque  
County Court at Law**

Luke Giesecke  
Presiding Judge  
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Stacy Arutz  
Court Administrator  
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September 1, 2022

**RE: Update Regarding Emergency Orders and Remote Hearings**

Dear Attorneys:

The Texas Supreme Court recently issued its Fifty-Fifth Emergency Order Regarding the COVID-19 State of Disaster (Misc. Docket No. 22-9071). A copy of this order can be found by visiting the website for the Texas Judicial Branch ([www.txcourts.gov](http://www.txcourts.gov)).

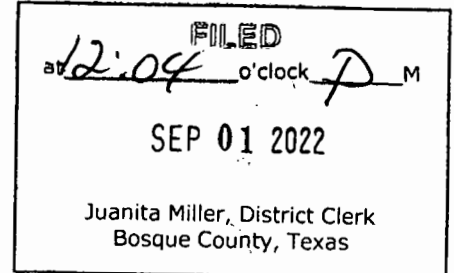
The Fifty-Fifth Emergency Order gives courts the authority to continue conducting hearings remotely. Paragraph 3 of the emergency order states that courts have the option to conduct proceedings remotely "subject to constitutional limitations." For the past few months I have been contemplating making a change to how my court handles remote CPS hearings. Case law is replete with the idea that the right to parent one's child is one of the most important rights an individual has. It even compares termination of parental rights to the death penalty. Additionally, the Family Code now affords parents the chance to have their children returned at every hearing. I want to ensure that the parents in these cases on my docket are afforded every protection due them under the law. In an effort to aid in this, I am going to start requiring all participants to appear in person for every CPS hearing.

To summarize the Court's current stance on remote participation, **except as provided below, all participants in the following hearings will be required to appear in-person:**

- All hearings on Class A and B Misdemeanors;**
- All CPS-related hearings;**
- All juvenile delinquency hearings;**
- Jury trials;**
- Hearings where another judge has been assigned, unless that judge allows remote appearances; and**
- Any other type of hearing not listed above where the Court has ordered all parties to appear in-person.**

If you are scheduled to appear in one of these type of hearings and feel you need to appear remotely because of sickness, exposure to COVID, or an express statutory authorization to do so, please contact the Court Administrator for further instruction.

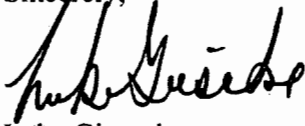
If you have a scheduled hearing that is not one of the above-listed hearings and want all participants to appear in person, please contact the Court Administrator so that I can make the appropriate orders.



For those appearing remotely, I will continue to use the same Personal Meeting ID for Zoom hearings that I have been using since the beginning. This information can be obtained from the Court Administrator.

If you have any questions, please contact the Court Administrator. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luke Giesecke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and "G".

Luke Giesecke  
Presiding Judge