

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF KENTUCKY**

**In Re: NINTH EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION TO USE
VIDEO AND TELEPHONE CONFERENCING FOR
CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS PURSUANT TO THE
CARES ACT**

**GENERAL ORDER
NO. 22-07**

On March 30, 2020, this Court entered General Order 20-5, authorizing the use of video and telephone conferencing, under certain circumstances and with the consent of the defendant, for various criminal case events pursuant to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES ACT”), P.L. 116-136, H.R. 748. As Chief Judge, I reviewed and extended this authorization on June 29, 2020, September 25, 2020, December 24, 2020, March 24, 2021, June 22, 2021, September 20, 2021, December 17, 2021, and March 17, 2022 by way of General Orders 20-13, 20-20, 20-28, 21-09, 21-12, 21-17, 21-22, and 22-03.

Just under 90 days have passed since the issuance of GO 22-03 and, in the interim, the undersigned judge has continued to monitor COVID-19 data from within and outside this District, as well as guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local health authorities. The national emergency declared by the President as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic remains in effect, and the Judicial Conference of the United States has found that it continues to materially affect the functioning of the federal courts.¹

While the effects of the pandemic appear to be easing, and although the Court has resumed normal operations in many respects, the Court is informed by the United States Marshal Service that, of the 268 defendants that are presently in custody and awaiting trial, only 23 are vaccinated. Moreover, COVID-19 Community Levels continue to fluctuate within the District with the Paducah Courthouse currently located in an area with High COVID-19 Community Levels and the Louisville Courthouse located in an area with Medium COVID-19 Community Levels.²

¹ [Continuation of the National Emergency Concerning the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19 Pandemic\)](#), 87 Fed. Reg. 10289 (Feb. 22, 2022) (citing [Proclamation No. 9994](#), 85 Fed. Reg. 15,337 (Mar. 13, 2020)); Memorandum from the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts to all United States Judges (Mar. 1, 2022) (on file with the Administrative Office of the United States Courts).


² See the [CDC’s COVID Data Tracker](#). Updated June 14, 2022.

Weighing the markedly improved pandemic conditions against the still-present risk, and with the President's and Judicial Conference's emergency declaration still in effect, this Court concludes that conditions warrant an additional extension of the video and teleconferencing authorization under the CARES Act. Such finding does not suggest that it is still necessary to conduct a large percentage of approved criminal hearings remotely, but rather acknowledges the continued need for flexibility to use such hearings in appropriate cases.

NOW THEREFORE, acting pursuant to section 15002(b) of the CARES Act and having conducted the necessary review, I hereby extend all findings and authorizations made in General Orders 20-13, 20-20, 20-28, 21-09, 21-12, 21-17, 21-22, and 22-03 for an additional 90 days, unless earlier terminated. The authorization allowed by this General Order will be again reviewed at or near its date of termination to determine if a further extension is warranted based on conditions existing at that time. Should the President's National Emergency declaration, or the Judicial Conference's finding that this national emergency materially affect the function of the federal courts, terminate or be revoked prior to the expiration of 90 days from the date of this Order, then this Order may then be vacated according to law.

DATED: June 14, 2022

ENTERED
JAMES J. VILT JR., CLERK
6/14/2022
Luci J. Duff
U.S. DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF KENTUCKY



Greg N. Stivers, Chief Judge
United States District Court