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The Bexar County District Attorney's Office is committed to keeping both the public and our staff safe during this COVID-19 crisis. Our office remains open, but we have identified staff who may be at high-risk of contracting COVID-19 and also those who are able to work from home. This reduced in-office staffing allows us to meet court responsibilities while preventing large groups of people from congregating in small spaces.

While the District and County Courts have agreed there will be no jury trials until April 27th at the earliest, there is still work to be done at the District Attorney's Office.

When our prosecutors are not in court, they will be reviewing cases that have been filed with our office by law enforcement. Our office will continue to reach out to victims and witnesses as we learn about upcoming court settings. When possible, we hope to limit the need to have those folks appear in person so that all of us have limited contact and reduce our risk of contracting COVID-19.

Our Grand Juries have continued their service, allowing us to present cases for them to consider for indictment – a crucial part of the criminal justice system. We are thankful for their service.

The **Bexar County Family Justice Center** continues to provide services to domestic violence survivors. For the time being, we ask that anyone seeking services at the Center call first at 210-631-0100. We understand that some people may not be able to call and will have to come to the Center, but we are trying to keep our waiting area as healthy as possible to protect order applicants and our staff. In regards to protective orders, we have temporarily modified our process to the following:

1. Applicants can call the Center at 210-631-0100 during business hours (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). A Crime Victim Liaison and Protective Order Advocate will collect important information including the person's information, administer a danger assessment, go over the protective order application, and conduct a phone interview for a statement. They will also discuss other important matters like safety plans.
2. The Protective Order Advocate will call the person back once a protective order prosecutor has reviewed the case and determined whether the person meets the required legal criteria for obtaining a protective order.
3. A protective order advocate will make an appointment for the person to come to the Center in person to sign a sworn affidavit that must accompany the protective order application.

Before scheduling the appointment, the advocate will ask questions to make sure she/he is not symptomatic of COVID-19.

4. Once the signature is obtained, the District Attorney's Office will file a protective order application on behalf of the State of Texas for the person's protection. A judge will determine whether the protective order should be granted.

Please understand that protective orders are issued by judges, not the District Attorney's Office.

"It is our goal to keep the Bexar County District Attorney's Office in operation. Law enforcement continues to make arrests. The need for our assistance, either in the form of protective order applications, or criminal prosecutions in general, does not stop when a pandemic threatens us. Our job continues to be protecting the citizens of Bexar County," said District Attorney Joe Gonzales.



Joe D. Gonzales
Bexar County District Attorney