

State of Disaster Emergency; Orders by Chief Justice; HB 2227

HB 2227 amends law governing orders issued by the Chief Justice to secure the health and safety of court users, staff, and judicial officers during a state of disaster emergency.

The bill became effective March 30, 2021, upon its publication in Issue 12B of the *Kansas Register*.

State of Disaster Emergency Suspension Orders

The bill amends a statute that allows the Chief Justice, during a state of disaster emergency, to issue an order to extend or suspend statutory deadlines or time limitations when the Chief Justice determines such action is necessary to secure the health and safety of court users, staff, and judicial officers, to also allow the Chief Justice to issue such orders during a state of local disaster emergency.

Orders issued may remain in effect up to 150 days after the termination of the applicable state of disaster emergency or state of local disaster emergency.

The bill also allows the Chief Justice to suspend appeals verification requirements contained in the Revised Kansas Code for the Care of Children if the above conditions are met.

Operation of Deadlines or Time Limitations Upon Termination of Order

The bill provides that on the date an order issued under this statute terminates, for a deadline or a time limitation that did not begin to run due to the order, a person shall have the full period provided by law to comply with such deadline or time limitation and have the same number of days to comply with the deadline or time limitation as the person had when the deadline or time limitation was extended or suspended.

Audio-visual Communication

The bill amends the provision allowing the Chief Justice to issue an order to authorize the use of two-way electronic audio-visual communication in any court proceeding after a determination that such action is necessary to secure the health and safety of court users, staff, and judicial officers, and to also authorize such action when necessary to expeditiously resolve pending cases.

Sunset Provision

The bill extends the sunset for the provisions relating to the Chief Justice's authority to issue orders to extend or suspend statutory deadlines, time limitations, or appeals verifications from March 31, 2021, to June 30, 2022.