

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF YAZOO COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

RE: MARCH 2020 TERM OF COURT

ORDER

**THIS MATTER** is before the Court on the Court's Motion concerning the March Term of Court in Yazoo County. The Court will endeavor to move the cases to final resolution during the term. Therefore, you are to report to the Court on March 12, 2020, in writing, whether your clients will enter a plea or go to trial. You are to report in Court on March 16 at 12:00 p. m. on the final status of your cases for the March Term of Court, **with each of your clients present with you at status conference**, no excuses, if not a bench warrant will be issued. **The Court advised your clients at arraignment to be back in court on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the term.** Defense Attorneys, please start now getting in contact with your clients and contacting the State for plea offers, if any. **If the State plans on offering a recommendation, please submit the same to the defense attorney on or before March 9, 2020**, if you have not already done so. Do not wait until March 16, 2020 to do this. The Court will have a final status conference on March 16, 2020. The State shall provide the Defense Attorneys with their **final plea offer** on or before March 9, 2020. The Defense must decide on or before March 13, 2020, whether they will accept the final offer. I need to know your client's final decision on March 16, 2020. The status report will assist the Court in setting cases for trial on days where all defendants, that are not previously set, will enter a guilty plea. This will hopefully prevent wasted court days. In the event the first setting enters an open plea on the morning of trial, the other settings should be present and ready for trial.

You are ordered to be mindful and abide by the Court's standing orders on scheduling of criminal motions, psychological evaluation and omnibus hearings. The criminal status conferences are set for Defense Attorneys and the District Attorney to meet with the Court on Monday, March 16, 2020 at 12:00 p. m. to report the status of all cases set on the March Docket.

The following Defense Attorneys are hereby ordered to be present:

*T. Murry Whalen*

*Alva Taylor*

*Belinda Stevens*

*Marcus Williams*

*Alton Peterson*

The District Attorney and the Attorney General's offices are also ordered to be present at the status conference, prepared to report on the State's position.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Court will hear pleas on Thursday, March 19, 2020 at 8:30 a. m. All other pleas heard after March 19, 2020 will be open pleas. If an attorney cannot be present for status conference, you shall contact another attorney to stand in for you.

The parties failing to abide by this Court's order shall be subject to contempt proceeding, which may result in the payment of jury fees and other sanctions.

ORDERED this 2 day of March, 2020.

  
CIRCUIT JUDGE