

RICHLAND COUNTY
CLERK OF COURTS
FILED

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IN THE COMMON PLEAS COURT OF RICHLAND COUNTY, OHIO

LINDA H. FRARY
CLERK OF COURTS

IN THE MATTER OF THE COVID-19 : Case No. 20 MIS 28
PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY; :
CERTIFIED MAIL SERVICE : ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
:

Due to the worldwide pandemic known as COVID 19 (the coronavirus), the US Postal Service has stopped requiring the recipient's personal signature for delivery of certified mail and adopted the following modified signature requirements for the delivery of certified mail:

In light of the exigent circumstances created by the Coronavirus pandemic, the Postal Service determined it was necessary to change the signature requirements associated with the delivery of accountable mail and packages in order to follow the guidance of the CDC on social distancing in order to reduce opportunities for possible transmission of COVID-19. **It should be understood that our carriers are not signing for customers, but instead indicating that they have identified the customer to whom the item is being delivered.** [Emphasis added]. The new practice is deemed to fit within the requirements set forth in the Domestic Mail Manual ("DMM"). Under existing federal law, the Postal Service has authority to temporarily alter its procedures to ensure it can continue to provide postal services to nation. 39 U.S.C. §§ 101, 401, 403, 410. The Postal Service is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of our employees and the communities we serve during the COVID-19 pandemic.¹

¹ <https://faq.usps.com/s/article/USPS-Coronavirus-Updates-for-Business-Customers> (accessed 06/23/2020).

Whereas the United States Postal Service has the authority to temporarily alter its procedures and has adopted processes that indicate that they have identified the individual to whom the certified mail has been delivered;

Whereas Ohio Civil Rule 4.1(A)(1) provides for service by United States certified or express mail or for service by commercial carrier service evidenced by return receipt signed by any person;

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. that delivery of process may be evidenced by certified mail or express mail by the United States Postal Service;
2. The Clerk of Courts may enter service as "successful under COVID" so long as the return card is marked with the accepting individual's "first initial and last name and COVID"²; and
3. Service shall be deemed to be perfected unless otherwise challenged.

SO ORDERED.



JUDGE BRENT N. ROBINSON



JUDGE PHILLIP S. NAUMOFF

² <https://faq.usps.com/s/article/USPS-Coronavirus-Updates-for-Business-Customers> (accessed 06/23/2020).