

Superior Court of Washington
County of Thurston

In re :

Jennifer Como

No. 19-2-30942-34

TRANSCRIPT OF MARCH 25, 2020
HEARING

Petitioner,

and

James Fowler

Respondent.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF THURSTON
FAMILY AND JUVENILE COURT

JENNIFER LORRAINE COMO,)	
)	
Petitioner,)	
)	
and)	No. 19-2-30942-34
)	
JAMES WARREN FOWLER, JR.,)	
)	
Respondent.)	

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED PROCEEDINGS

BE IT REMEMBERED that on the 25th day of March,
2020, the above-entitled and numbered cause came on for
hearing before the Honorable Commissioner Rebekah Zinn,
Thurston County Superior Court, Olympia, Washington.

Kathryn A. Beehler, CCR No. 2448
Official Court Reporter
Thurston County Superior Court
2000 Lakeridge Drive S.W.
Family and Juvenile Court
Olympia, WA 98502
(360) 709-3212

A P P E A R A N C E S

For the Petitioner: (non- appearance)

For the Respondent: Telephonic Appearance:
James Warren Fowler, Jr.
a self-represented party
7823 3rd Avenue SE
Unit B
Lacey, WA 98503-1619

March 25, 2020 Olympia, Washington

AFTERNOON SESSION

Commissioner Rebekah Zinn, Presiding

(Transcript of Recorded Proceedings

Telephonic Appearance by Respondent:)

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THE CLERK: So the Petitioner's not answering
here.

THE COURT: Well, the Respondent's the moving
party.

THE CLERK: Oh, he is? Okay. Well, I tried
both of them. So do you want me to try him?

THE COURT: Yes.

THE CLERK: Is this Mr. Fowler?

1 MR. FOWLER: Yes.

2 THE CLERK: This is Thurston County Superior
3 Court. One moment.

4 THE COURT: Mr. Fowler?

5 MR. FOWLER: Yes, ma'am.

6 THE COURT: Hi. This is Rebekah Zinn. I'm
7 the court commissioner who is going to be holding
8 your hearing, and I am here in open court in case
9 number 19-2-30942-34. And we did try --

10 MR. FOWLER: Yes, ma'am.

11 THE COURT: -- to get Ms. Como on the line but
12 it went to voicemail. And we tried two times.

13 This is your motion, and I -- I'm just going to
14 tell you the situation. You have a hearing scheduled
15 for Friday, and I don't know if you heard anything
16 about that. But that hearing is going to have to be
17 rescheduled because of the Covid 19 pandemic. And
18 you filed a motion to modify the protection order.
19 And you say you're -- you're most concerned about
20 getting contact with your children --

21 MR. FOWLER: Yes.

22 THE COURT: -- and what I'll say here is, it
23 may be a while before we can have a hearing on your
24 motion or on Ms. Como's petition for a protection
25 order.

1 MR. FOWLER: Uh, Ms. Zinn, I'm unsure if you
2 can remember this case since you have heard some of
3 it --

4 THE COURT: Mm-hmm.

5 MR. FOWLER: -- and -- because of all the --
6 just -- you have a lot -- you all have a lot of
7 things to go through. But this case was purposefully
8 set out for three -- as long as it was. You
9 didn't -- you wanted it to be that way so there would
10 be ample time for it to be taken care of.

11 THE COURT: Well, that's right, but when I
12 reissued the temporary protection order back in
13 December, none of us knew there would be a global
14 pandemic. And --

15 MR. FOWLER: Yes.

16 THE COURT: -- the situation is, we know that
17 every single case and every family that comes to our
18 court has very important issues for the court to
19 resolve. And someone's contact with their children
20 and someone's request for a protection order are both
21 very important things.

22 Today I cannot tell you when your hearing is going
23 to be. I would like your motion to be heard at the
24 same time as the protection order. And it is a
25 priority for us, and we have a lot of priorities.

1 And we'll be in contact with you about when the
2 hearing will be. It will be as soon as possible, but
3 I don't know when that is today.

4 MR. FOWLER: Okay.

5 THE COURT: All right?

6 MR. FOWLER: So can I -- I -- now that I ask
7 you -- I don't know how this all works, and I just --
8 you know, this is -- this is really tough, because
9 you know, my kid -- I haven't even seen or been in
10 contact with -- my kid's -- her Christmas present is
11 still sitting on my bed, you know?

12 And the -- this -- the Corona virus -- this could
13 go on for (indiscernible) or even for months. And,
14 you know, I don't -- and I don't know, you know,
15 where am I going to be -- am I going -- I don't --
16 she'll be -- she'll be eight years old in June. I'll
17 be miss -- I'll have missed a whole year of her
18 life --

19 THE COURT: So what I --

20 MR. FOWLER: -- and I don't know how this is,
21 you know --

22 THE COURT: -- I --

23 MR. FOWLER: -- a -- it's an accusation that
24 was made, a false -- it's falsely made.

25 THE COURT: So, Mr. Fowler, I'm not going to

1 talk to you about your thoughts on the case because
2 Ms. Como's not here. But I will tell you, I am
3 hearing that you haven't had contact with your
4 daughter for a long time, and it may be even longer
5 because of what's going on.

6 I do know, we understand how important these
7 matters are, and we want to get them resolved. And
8 we're doing our best to do that while responding to a
9 public health emergency. So what I'm going to do now
10 is, I'm not making any decision on your motion to
11 modify. My ruling is that it will be scheduled at
12 the same time as your protection order hearing is
13 scheduled.

14 I'm going to personally give this to my office
15 manager so that it will be scheduled appropriately.
16 And unfortunately, I can't tell you when that's going
17 to be yet.

18 MR. FOWLER: Okay.

19 THE COURT: So we will reach out to you, make
20 sure we have good contact information for you so you
21 can get that -- that communication. And I hear
22 your --

23 MR. FOWLER: Yes --

24 THE COURT: -- frustration, and I share your
25 frustration. I know that families need decisions in

1 these cases.

2 MR. FOWLER: Yes, ma'am. And also, I -- I've
3 already started the process of -- because I felt that
4 it would be better, and after talking to some
5 other -- other people that are more familiar with
6 these kind of things, I started the process that I
7 was originally going to start in the first place, a
8 modification of a parenting plan. And --

9 THE COURT: All right. So you -- you can do
10 that, and just make sure you're looking at the
11 website of the court about how to present things and
12 how to move through, and we'll give you as much
13 information on that website as possible so you can
14 know about the timing of things. But about your case
15 that's already been scheduled, your motion regarding
16 the visitation will be heard at the same time as the
17 protection order hearing, but I can't tell you when
18 that is yet.

19 MR. FOWLER: Okay.

20 THE COURT: I am going to enter an order
21 explaining my ruling, which is just that I'm going to
22 schedule this at a time to be determined later. If
23 you want a copy of that, contact the Clerk's Office
24 domestic -- or protection order staff, and they can
25 get you a copy of it.

1 MR. FOWLER: Okay.

2 THE COURT: Okay? But you will hear from us,
3 because you have a hearing that needs to be
4 rescheduled already.

5 MR. FOWLER: Okay.

6 THE COURT: All right? Take good care of
7 yourself.

8 MR. FOWLER: Yes, ma'am. Thank you. You have
9 a good day.

10 THE COURT: All right. Bye.

11

12 (Conclusion of March 25, 2020, Hearing.)

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Jennifer Lorraine Como,)	
)	
Petitioner,)	
)	
and)	Case No. 19-2-30942-34
)	
James Warren Fowler, Jr.,)	TRANSCRIBER'S CERTIFICATE
)	
Respondent.)	
)	

[illegible]

I received the March 25, 2020, electronic recording directly from the trial court conducting the hearing; This transcript is a true and correct transcription of the proceedings to the best of my ability; I am in no way related to or employed by any party in this matter, nor any counsel in the matter; and I have no financial interest in the litigation.

Kathryn A. Beehler
Kathryn A. Beehler, Transcriber