

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT
OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
STATE OF ILLINOIS**

**Jersey County Administrative Order 2020-50
Jersey County Courthouse Procedures for COVID-19 Coronavirus**

WHEREAS, The Jersey County Courts will take all reasonable measures to minimize personal contact to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus.

Whereas, The Illinois Supreme Court has entered an Order in M.R. 30370 instructing the courts to continue to establish and periodically update temporary procedures to minimize the impact of Covid-19 on the court system, while continuing to provide access to justice.

Whereas, the Illinois Supreme Court has entered an Order in M.R. 30370 (see attached Supreme Court Order M.R. 30370 and the Supreme Court Guidelines for Resuming Illinois Judicial Branch Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic) authorizing for essential court matters and proceedings to be heard.

Whereas, Illinois Supreme Court has entered an Order in M.R. 30370, and subsequently, amended said Order authorizing for trial courts to continue all civil and criminal trials indefinitely.

Whereas, the Jersey County court has conducted a review of its temporary operations and have identified a need to begin to hear certain matters that have previously been classified as non-essential in an effort to strike a balance between critical societal needs to access justice and the critical societal need to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus and the disease, Covid-19.

Whereas, the Jersey County court have secured subscriptions for the video conferencing platform Zoom for each of the members of judiciary to broaden the scope of proceedings that can be meaningfully conducted remotely. Any court action utilizing Zoom shall follow the Illinois Supreme Court Remote Access Policy, effective 1/1/2020 and Revised effective 6/1/2020.

Whereas, the Governor of the State of Illinois has imposed an Executive Order prohibiting the enforcement of eviction orders during the existence of the current disaster declaration.

WHEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that the operational limitations previously imposed upon Jersey County court proceedings shall continue with modifications as follows:

Extension of Current Operations: the operational plan, and all limitations imposed thereto, shall remain in effect through, and including, May 31, 2020.

Continuation and Expansion of Essential Cases and Court Proceedings: Through May 31, 2020, the Jersey County court will continue to hear those cases previously identified as essential, and beginning June 1, 2020, the Jersey County court will resume holding status hearings, motion hearings, and bench trials in additional cases and court proceedings. The complete list of essential cases and court proceedings that will be heard pursuant to this Administrative Order as of June 1, 2020 includes:

- Criminal Felony Cases (CF)
- Traffic & DUI cases (TR, DT)
- Criminal Misdemeanor cases (CM)
- Probate (P)
- Conservation Violations (CV)
- Family Court (F, D)
- Tax (TX)
- Miscellaneous Remedies (MR)
- Municipal Corporations (MC)
- Adoption (AD)
- Ordinance Violations (OV)
- Eminent Domain (ED)

- Child Support
- Law (L)
- Emergency Orders of Protection Hearings
- Small Claims and LM cases
- Juvenile cases
- Non-Foreclosure Chancellery (CH)
- Plenary Orders of Protection Hearings

Whenever feasible, and subject to constitutional limitations, all essential matters and proceedings shall be heard remotely, via telephone or video, or other electronic means.

Non-essential Cases and Court Proceedings: Continuing through June 30, 2020, unless modified pursuant to a periodic review hereafter conducted, the following cases and court proceedings shall be continued or otherwise postponed:

- Evictions/law magistrate (LM), and all mortgage foreclosures filed under (CH).
- On-site Weddings

Jury Trials: Continuing through June 30, 2020, unless modified pursuant to periodic review hereafter conducted, or based upon a review of this Administrative Order if so mandated by relevant Illinois Supreme Court order entered hereafter, all jury trials shall be continued as authorized in Supreme Court Order M.R. 30370.

Court Appearances: Beginning June 1, 2020, appearances shall be limited to attorneys and parties only. Any cases wherein an attorney can appear for a client while accomplishing a productive hearing shall be so held. The courts will continue to explore the potential for virtual appearances when possible. Material witnesses to any proceedings should be placed under proper subpoena to ensure access to the proceedings by security. Court participants requiring special assistance to conduct official business will be permitted entrance with one assistant. The courts will adopt a flexible approach on cases where a willful failure to appear has been declared, and trend towards granting continuances of most proceedings as justice demands and as circumstances deem appropriate. Nothing stated herein shall prohibit the court from issuing a warrant when a defendant is found to have willfully failed to appear on a case involving a possible punishment of imprisonment as a part of a sentence although discretion will be exercised in favor of continuances in most proceedings. Face coverings will be required for all persons entering the courthouse and each person will be questioned regarding any COVID-19 issues and will be required to have their temperature taken.

ENTERED THIS 21st DAY OF May, 2020.

Eric S. Pistorius
Presiding Judge