



Supreme Court of Illinois

April 24, 2020

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT ISSUES ORDER LIMITING FREEZES ON PERSONAL BANK ACCOUNTS

The Illinois Supreme Court announced today an emergency order which limits freezes on personal bank accounts during the Covid-19 pandemic. This order temporarily relieves debtors of the burden of asset freezes, up to the \$4,000 exemption provided by law, at a time when they have limited recourse to the courts.

The Order is available on the Court website by clicking [here](#).

“The Court is pleased to provide relief to those who truly need it during these extraordinary times,” Chief Justice Anne M. Burke said. “We are also thankful to groups on both sides of this issue who collaborated to help achieve this timely and necessary assistance.”

This Order provides relief for Illinois citizens with judgments against them and who have little or no recourse to address freezes that have been imposed on their personal bank accounts. Many of them cannot access emergency monies such as CARES ACT and tax refund checks due to freezes stemming from the service of garnishment summons or citations on their banks.

This Order complements [Executive Order 2020-25](#), issued by Governor J.B. Pritzker, which suspended the service of garnishment summonses, wage deduction summonses, and citations to discover assets (“supplemental proceedings”) on consumer debtors or consumer garnishees for the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations. The Court’s Order helps achieve the purpose of the Executive Order by applying to summonses and citations that were served, or had original return dates, after the Governor issued the first Disaster Proclamation on March 9, 2020.

“Today’s action by the Supreme Court provides desperately needed help to Illinois consumers,” noted Steven F. Pflaum, a partner at the law firm of Neal, Gerber & Eisenberg LLP who helped lawyers from the creditors’ bar and legal aid organizations draft a proposed order for consideration by the Supreme Court. “The efforts of the lawyers who worked together on this — lawyers who normally represent clients on the opposite sides of lawsuits — exemplify the finest traditions of the legal profession in terms of their service, not just to their clients, but especially to the Court and to our state’s judicial system.”

The Order shall remain in effect until the suspension of service of summonses and citations in supplemental proceedings, pursuant to Executive Order 2020-25, is no longer in effect.