NOTICE TO THE BAR

COVID-19 – Reminders: (1) Health and Safety Precautions in State Court Facilities; and (2) Availability of Courthouse Technology Rooms to Facilitate Remote Participation in Court Events

The New Jersey courts are continuing to support public health and safety during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The attached overview summarizes current health precautions in state court facilities, including the requirements that court users wear face masks and maintain social distancing (subject to narrow exceptions).

The summary reminds attorneys and others that the majority of court events still are being conducted remotely. For state court matters, all court users can request use of courthouse technology rooms, which are spaces in state court facilities with technology that can be used to participate in virtual court sessions.

Questions about this notice may be directed to the Office of the Administrative Director of the Courts at (609) 376-3000.

Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.
Acting Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: February 23, 2021

New Jersey Courts – Covid-19 Safety Measures and Remote Options

Courthouses and court facilities generally are open only to attorneys, litigants, and members of the public with scheduled events. While the courts are conducting the majority of matters remotely, judges can schedule an in-person proceeding based on the facts and circumstances in any case.

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The New Jersey courts are committed to the health and safety of all people who come to courthouses and other court facilities. We have taken steps to prevent exposure to the Covid-19 coronavirus in all state court locations.

- External and internal building signs advise all people (including judges and staff) of Covid-19 policies and requirements in state court locations. Some locations may perform temperature checks.
    - People who are sick or have been exposed to Covid-19 are not allowed to come into court buildings.
    - Everyone is required to wear a face mask in common areas (subject to medical exceptions). State courts will provide masks if needed.

- Public health precautions are enforced in all state court locations.
    - People generally must maintain six feet of social distancing.
    - Where social distancing is not possible, plexiglass or other barriers have been installed.
    - Sanitizing stations and disinfectant wipes are available.
    - Occupancy is limited in elevators and other shared areas.
    - Signs and floor decals are posted to support social distancing.

- Courtrooms have additional safety measures.
    - Occupancy is limited to support social distancing.
    - Plexiglass and other barriers have been installed.
    - Various options are available to help attorneys and clients speak privately, even if they are not seated next to each other.
    - Judges may permit individuals to briefly remove their mask when other precautions (e.g., plexiglass) are in place.

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All state court facilities have "technology rooms" where court users can use Judiciary technology to participate in virtual court events. Those rooms are cleaned after each use. Requests to use a technology room should be directed to the Vicinage Trial Court Administrator, Ombudsman, or Division Manager.

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the majority of court operations still are being conducted remotely. Anyone may ask to participate remotely instead of coming into the courthouse. Requests should be directed to the judge handling the case.

In the unlikely event of a Covid-19 case in a state court location, the court will notify anyone who is at risk of exposure based on current public health guidance.