IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF MARYLAND

AMENDED ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

CLARIFYING THE EMERGENCY TOLLING OR SUSPENSION OF STATUTES OF LIMITATIONS AND STATUTORY AND RULES DEADLINES RELATED TO THE INITIATION OF MATTERS AND CERTAIN STATUTORY AND RULES DEADLINES IN PENDING MATTERS

WHEREAS, Pursuant to the Maryland Constitution, Article IV § 18, the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals is granted authority as the administrative head of the Judicial Branch of the State; and

WHEREAS, The Court of Appeals has approved Chapter 1000 of Title 16 of the Maryland Rules of Practice and Procedure setting forth the emergency powers of the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals; and

WHEREAS, In instances of emergency conditions, whether natural or otherwise, that significantly disrupt access to or the operations of one or more courts or other judicial facilities of the State or the ability of the Judiciary to operate effectively, the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals may be required to determine the extent to which court operations or judicial functions shall continue; and

WHEREAS, Due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, and consistent with guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control, an emergency exists that poses a threat of imminent and potentially lethal harm to individuals who may come into contact with a court or judicial facility and personnel; and

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 emergency continues to require comprehensive measures to protect the health and safety of Maryland residents and Judiciary personnel and comply with the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control, including the stay-at-home orders issued by the Governor and restricted operations of the courts and judicial facilities, and is causing delays in the processing of routine matters; and

WHEREAS, The impact of the restrictions required to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic has had a widespread detrimental impact upon the administration of justice, impeding the ability of parties and potential litigants to meet with counsel, conduct

research, gather evidence, and prepare complaints, pleadings, and responses, with the impact falling hardest upon those who are impoverished; and

WHEREAS, the detrimental impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is so widespread as to have created a general and pervasive practical inability for certain deadlines to be met,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mary Ellen Barbera, Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals and administrative head of the Judicial Branch, pursuant to the authority conferred by Article IV, § 18 of the Maryland Constitution, do hereby order this 24th day of April 2020, that:

(a) Pursuant to Maryland Rule 16-1003(a)(7), all statutory and rules deadlines related to the initiation of matters required to be filed in a Maryland state trial or appellate court, including statutes of limitations, shall be tolled or suspended, as applicable, effective March 16, 2020, by the number of days that the courts are closed to the public due to the COVID-19 emergency by order of the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals; and

(b) Justice requires that the ordering of the suspension of such deadlines during an emergency as sweeping as a pandemic be applied consistently and equitably throughout Maryland, and no party or parties shall be compelled to prove his, her, its, or their practical inability to comply with such a deadline if it occurred during the COVID-19 emergency to obtain the relief that this Administrative Order provides; and

(c) Pursuant to Maryland Rule 16-1003(a)(7), all statutes and rules deadlines to hear pending matters shall be tolled or suspended, as applicable, effective March 16, 2020, by the number of days that the courts are closed to the public due to the COVID-19 emergency by order of the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals; and

(d) Such deadlines further shall be extended by a period to be described in an order by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals terminating the COVID-19 emergency period; and

(e) Any such filings made within the period to be described in (c) shall relate back to the day before the deadline expired; and

(f) To the extent that this Administrative Order conflicts with extant Administrative Orders or local administrative orders, this Administrative Order shall prevail,

except as provided in Section (t) of the Second Amended Administrative Order Expanding Statewide Judiciary Restricted Operations Due to the COVID-19 Emergency, filed on April 14, 2020, and the Administrative Order on Expanding the Statewide Suspension of Jury Trials and Suspending Grand Juries, filed April 3, 2020; and

(g) This Administrative Order will be revised as circumstances warrant.

/s/ Mary Ellen Barbera
Mary Ellen Barbera
Chief Judge
Court of Appeals of Maryland

Filed: April 24, 2020

Pursuant to Maryland Uniform Electronic Legal Materials Act (§§ 10-1601 et seq. of the State Government Article) this document is authentic.

Suzanne Johnson
2020-04-24 16:30-04:00

Suzanne C. Johnson, Clerk

/s/ Suzanne C. Johnson
Suzanne C. Johnson
Clerk
Court of Appeals of Maryland