# NOTICE

## NEW JERSEY COURT OPERATIONS – COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS: RESCHEDULING OF IN-COURT PROCEEDINGS SCHEDULED FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020; CONTINUATION OF ALL CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

This notice announces additional statewide steps by the New Jersey courts to address the ongoing public health crisis surrounding the COVID-19 coronavirus. These actions are taken in consultation with the New Jersey Department of Health to protect the health and welfare of the people of New Jersey. The following steps are intended to slow the spread of the virus.

On a typical court day, hundreds if not thousands of attorneys, litigants, and inmates appear in courts throughout the state. Our plan is to limit physical interactions in our courts to the greatest extent possible and shift to use video and phone conferencing options for attorneys, litigants, and the public. This rapid shift in approach will implement social distancing measures that the New Jersey Department of Health has recommended.

1. **All in-person court proceedings scheduled for <u>Monday, March 16, and Tuesday, March 17, 2020</u> at the trial level of the Superior Court and the Tax Court are postponed in all counties, except for proceedings listed in paragraph 3 below.**

    a. Attorneys and litigants scheduled to appear for in-person matters should <u>not</u> come to court and should await notice of a new hearing date;
    b. Previously scheduled video and phone conferences will proceed at the judge's discretion; and
    c. Ongoing jury trials also will continue as announced in the March 12, 2020 notice, unless otherwise advised.

2. **Oral arguments in the Supreme Court and the Appellate Division will be conducted on Monday, March 16 and Tuesday, March 17, 2020, as directed.**

3. **The following proceedings and functions will continue without interruption to the extent possible, including the use of telephonic and video technology:**

    a. Applications for emergent relief where immediate and irreparable harm will occur if the matter is not addressed will be accepted in all courts (including the Appellate Division) including but not limited to the following: de novo

hearings on a denial of a temporary restraining order; Sexual Assault Survivor Protection Act (SASPA) hearings; Division of Child Placement and Permanency removal hearings; and Special Medical Guardianships;

b. Central Judicial Processing (CJP) / First Appearance hearings, as well as defendants committed to the jail on municipal petty disorderly persons charges, who will have their First Appearance conducted via CJP virtual court;
c. Hearings on incarcerated child support obligors;
d. Pretrial detention hearings pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2A:162-19d(1);
e. Juvenile detention hearings, including Juvenile Detention Alternative Intervention (JDAI) risk assessments;
f. Bail determinations pursuant to Rule 3:26-2e and Rule 7:4-1, as well as defendants committed to jail on municipal failure to appear and failure to pay bench warrants;
g. Civil commitments including involuntary outpatient civil commitments, including: (i) applications for temporary orders of commitment, (ii) hearings on final orders of commitment, and (iii) review hearings;
h. Supervision and monitoring of persons on probation and pretrial services, including high risk offenders, pursuant to interim protocols designed to maintain sufficient contact while minimizing physical contact;
i. Applications for domestic violence temporary restraining orders as submitted through local police departments; and
j. Applications for Extreme Risk Protective Orders submitted through local police departments.

4. **We plan to conduct proceedings for pending motions in Civil and Family matters as scheduled for March 18 and afterward by phone or video conferencing. Attorneys and litigants should contact the court if they do not receive notice by March 18.**

5. **New jury trials will not be scheduled. Further information regarding pending jury trials and grand juries will be provided. We will communicate with jurors using our current options.**

6. **Effective immediately, the following operational modifications will be implemented statewide:**

    a. Persons detained in county jails and state prisons should not be transported to courthouses; matters will either proceed as video hearings, phone

hearings, or will be adjourned as necessary (including to support video participation by victims and witnesses); and

b. Juvenile hearings will be conducted by phone or by video where available.

7. **Time constraints for discovery will be relaxed and extended for a two-week period (from March 16 through March 30, 2020). Beginning March 18, pending motions will be subject to telephonic conferencing.**

8. **Filings still will be accepted through eCourts for applicable case types and on paper for other cases with the required fee to be submitted as usual.**

9. **Collection of fees for <u>emergent</u> applications will be suspended for applicants who are required to file on paper.**

Questions about individual cases should be directed to the relevant court offices. We continue to consult with the New Jersey Department of Health and closely monitor the ongoing health crisis. The New Jersey courts will continue to provide current information on our webpage (njcourts.gov).

/s/ Stuart Rabner
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Chief Justice Stuart Rabner

/s/ Glenn A. Grant
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Hon. Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.

Dated: March 15, 2020