SUPREME COURT
No. 2020-07

EXECUTIVE ORDER

COVID-19 Pandemic Response -
Closure of Newport and Washington County Courthouses

In light of the ongoing public health crisis arising from the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic occurring across the world, the State of Emergency declared by the Governor on March 9, 2020, and guidance provided by the Rhode Island Department of Health in conjunction with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and pursuant to the authority invested in me by § 8-15-2 of the Rhode Island General Laws, Executive Order No. 2020-04 was issued on March 17, 2020 limiting the types of matters to be adjudicated in each of the judicial buildings across the unified judicial system through April 17, 2020. In response to Executive Order No. 2020-04, the number of hearings being heard judiciary-wide has been significantly reduced, as has the amount of foot traffic to each of the judicial buildings; this is especially true in the Newport and Washington County courthouses. As a result of the foregoing, and in an effort to conserve resources and critical supplies needed to combat the pandemic, the following order is hereby issued.

Judicial Buildings – The following judicial buildings shall be closed starting on April 1, 2020 and until further notice:

1. Murray Judicial Complex (Newport County)
2. McGrath Judicial Complex (Washington County)

All staff assigned to the above-referenced judicial buildings are instructed to consult with their supervisors as to their revised work assignment as of April 1, 2020.

Emergency/Essential Matters – As of April 1, 2020, any emergency/essential matters, as identified in Executive Order No. 2020-04, and/or by any administrative orders issued by the Presiding Justice of the Superior Court, the Chief Judge of the Family Court, the Chief Judge of the District Court, the Chief Judge of the Workers' Compensation Court, and Chief Magistrate of the Traffic Tribunal, which would have been heard in either of the judicial buildings identified above shall be heard in the Noel Judicial Complex (Kent County).

Access to Information – The public is encouraged to seek further information available on the Judiciary's website at www.courts.ri.gov.

Entered as an Executive Order this 31st day of March, 2020.

BY ORDER ,

/s/
Paul A. Suttell
Chief Justice