The response to COVID-19 has impacted access to courthouses and may change the way cases are handled.
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News Item

Late Penalties, Collections Referrals, and Drivers' License Suspensions Temporarily Stopped to Reduce Courthouse Visits

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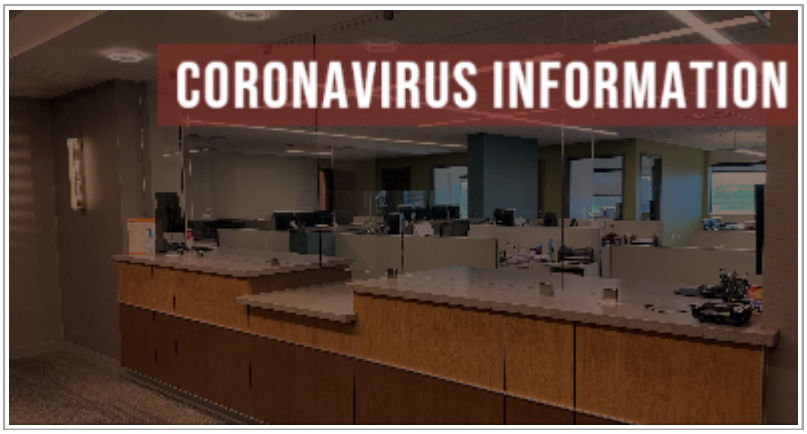

The Minnesota Judicial Branch is discouraging the public from making any non-essential visits to court facilities during the outbreak of COVID-19. In an effort to reduce foot-traffic in courthouses, the State Court Administrator has taken the following temporary administrative actions, effective Monday, March 16, 2020, for the next 30 days.

- The Judicial Branch will stop sending out late penalty notices and assessing the late penalties for all citations.
- For offenses eligible for drivers' license suspension, the Judicial Branch will halt the automated process by which a person's license is suspended for failure to appear.

- The Judicial Branch will stop referring past-due payment cases to the Department of Revenue for collections.

“We are committed to reducing the need for Minnesotans to visit their local courthouses, and are making these changes to help reduce the spread of COVID-19,” said State Court Administrator Jeff Shorba.

These temporary changes made to the automated financial collection processes will not adversely affect a defendant’s case. Related financially-connected processing, such as drivers’ license reinstatement and web-based and phone-based payments made through the Court Payment Center, will continue to be processed while these procedures are in effect.

On Friday, March 13, 2020, Minnesota Supreme Court Chief Justice Lorie S. Gildea issued a statewide **order** establishing the state courts’ continuing operations in consideration of the spread of COVID-19. The Minnesota Judicial Branch’s latest information regarding COVID-19 is posted at **www.mncourts.gov/Emergency**.