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SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT RULES

Order in re: COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic

Supreme Judicial Court Supplemental order regarding virtual proceedings and administration of oaths and affirmations

ADOPTED DATE:

07/07/2020

EFFECTIVE DATE:

03/17/2020

UPDATES:

Entered July 7, 2020, effective March 17, 2020 nunc pro tunc (https://www.mass.gov/media/2153721/download)

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Order

To safeguard the health and safety of the public and personnel during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, the Supreme Judicial Court (SJC), pursuant to its superintendence and rule-making authority, issues the following ORDER to clarify the scope of its prior orders concerning virtual operations:

1. **Virtual proceedings by certain court-related entities.** In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, various prior orders of this Court have required the courts of the Commonwealth to conduct most proceedings virtually (i.e., by telephone, videoconference, email, or comparable means, or through the electronic filing system). The Board of Bar Examiners, the Board of Bar Overseers, the Clients' Security Board, and the Commission on Judicial Conduct may also elect to conduct any proceeding virtually and may issue protocols to govern such virtual proceedings.
2. **Administration of oaths and affirmations**. To the extent not already authorized, oaths and affirmations by witnesses may be administered remotely by telephone, videoconference, or comparable means, in any virtual proceeding conducted by the courts of the Commonwealth, the Board of Bar Examiners, the Board of Bar Overseers, the Clients' Security Board, or the Commission on Judicial Conduct, except where it would be inconsistent with constitutional or statutory requirements.
3. **Suspension of rules.** Any rules or orders that prohibit or otherwise restrict the courts of the Commonwealth, the Board of Bar Examiners, the Board of Bar Overseers, the Clients' Security Board, or the Commission on Judicial Conduct from conducting proceedings virtually or administering oaths and affirmations remotely are suspended until further order of this Court.

This Order is effective as of March 17, 2020, nunc pro tunc, and shall remain in effect until further order of the court.

Downloads

SJC Supplemental order regarding virtual proceedings and administration of oaths and affirmations

(https://www.mass.gov/doc/sjc-supplemental-order-regarding-virtual-proceedings-and-administration-of-oaths-and/download)

(PDF 189.35 KB)

UPDATES:

Entered July 7, 2020, effective March 17, 2020 nunc pro tunc (https://www.mass.gov/media/2153721/download)

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