IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

SPECIAL ORDER OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE

ORDER NO. 8217

Update regarding COVID-19 and relaxing of Civil Rule 4

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States Postal Service has temporarily modified its customer signature procedures to permit postal service employees, instead of the addressee, to sign for certified or registered mail upon delivery. In order to avoid disputes about certified mail service under Civil Rule 4, the requirements of the rule should be relaxed to clarify that the rule does not require a return receipt be signed by the addressee. Therefore, under the authority of Supreme Court Order No. 1957,

IT IS ORDERED:

1. The requirements of Civil Rule 4 are relaxed to the extent that the rule requires a return receipt be signed by the addressee; the signature of the permitted postal service employee is sufficient proof of service under Civil Rule 4. This paragraph does not affect any existing statutory requirements regarding signature of return receipts. This modification of Civil Rule 4 regarding the addressee signature on return receipts will remain in effect until further order.

2. Filing documents with the court by electronic mail, and serving documents on other parties via electronic mail under Civil Rule 5 have previously been authorized by Supreme Court Order 1957, dated March 19, 2020, and the Presiding Judge Statewide Administrative Order Governing Relaxation and Suspension of Various Rules, paragraphs 10-12, dated March 23, 2020. The rule relaxation concerning service in paragraph 1 above does not alter those ongoing

orders; documents that do not require Rule 4 service may continue to be filed with the court and served on other parties via email.

DATED: December 8, 2020

Joel H. Bolger
Chief Justice

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