SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

In response to the growing public health crisis worldwide and in this state involving the COVID-19 coronavirus, the New Jersey Judiciary is implementing all possible measures to apply social distancing in current court operations consistent with the recommendations of the New Jersey Department of Health ("NJ DOH") and the Centers for Disease Control ("CDC").

Accordingly, it is ORDERED that effective immediately and until further order:

(1) Civil Arbitration and Matrimonial Early Settlement Panel sessions scheduled between Monday, March 16 and Friday, April 10, 2020 are postponed and will be rescheduled.

(2) Effective Monday, April 13, 2020, Civil Arbitration and Matrimonial Early Settlement Panel (ESP) sessions will resume, with participation in any session to be via video and/or telephone conference and initiated by an arbitrator or panelist. The county Arbitration Administrator or other designated court staff will resolve any scheduling issues and will provide assistance as necessary to facilitate the process. Any participant may apply to the court for extension of deadlines or rescheduling of sessions as may be required based on the circumstances of an individual case, including but not limited to barriers to participation by video or phone conferencing.

(3) Effective immediately and until further order, pursuant to N.J. Const., Art. VI, sec. 2, par. 3:

   a. In Civil matters, the provisions of Rules 4:21A-1(d) and 4:21A-4(d) are relaxed and supplemented so as to permit the extension of arbitration timeframes and to authorize arbitration proceedings to be conducted in a location other than the courthouse; and
   b. In Family matters, the provisions of Rules 5:5-5 and 5:5-6 are relaxed and supplemented: (i) to permit the extension of ESP timeframes, (ii) to

allow submissions to be sent directly to the panelists, (iii) to authorize these proceedings to be conducted in a location other than the courthouse, and (iv) to allow post-ESP events to proceed without the simultaneous entry of an court order.

For the Court

Chief Justice

Dated: March 19, 2020