FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 13, 2020

Delaware Justice of the Peace Court issues new standing order to help limit the spread of COVID-19 virus

Effective March 17, 2020, the Delaware Justice of the Peace Court will be taking measures to protect against the spread of the COVID-19 virus. It is of the utmost importance that litigants communicate with the Court as the impact of the COVID-19 virus continues to develop. In the event a litigant scheduled to appear in the Justice of the Peace Court has been infected, or potentially exposed to, the COVID-19 virus, the litigant should not report for the proceeding, but should promptly notify the Court. Additionally, the standing order also implements the following:

Criminal and Truancy Proceedings

All criminal proceedings scheduled for in-court appearance from March 17, 2020 through April 16, 2020 shall be rescheduled for a date not earlier than May 1, 2020, with the following exceptions:

- All scheduled criminal trials shall proceed as scheduled;
- All forthwith criminal proceedings shall continue and be conducted by videophone unless the police agency can articulate a specific reason to bring the defendant in person;
- Walk-in practice at criminal court locations shall continue to be permitted as usual;
- All proceedings involving individuals in custody for the scheduled proceedings, and emergency reviews of bail shall proceed as scheduled.
- Truancy Court proceedings shall be scheduled at the discretion of the Judge, where the treatment need is determined as clinically necessary;
- Case-by-case exceptions may be ordered at the discretion of the Court and with proper notice to all parties.

The Court will continue to issue rulings on criminal motions that do not require in-person appearance by the parties.

Civil Proceedings

All landlord/tenant, debt, replevin and trespass proceedings scheduled for in-court appearance and all evictions currently ordered and scheduled from March 17, 2020 through April 16, 2020 shall be rescheduled for a date not earlier than May 1, 2020, with the following exceptions:

- Forthwith summons applications in landlord-tenant matters involving essential services and/or harm to person or property will be accepted and ruled upon;

- Case by case exceptions to these guidelines may be ordered at the discretion of the Court and with proper notice to all parties.

For additional information, please refer to the Justice of the Peace Court Standing Order Concerning COVID-19 Precautionary Measures.

https://courts.delaware.gov/rules/pdf/JPCourt-Standing-Order-Concerning-COVID19.pdf

For questions, please contact the Justice of Peace Court Administrative Office at:

302-323-4530

If you believe you have been exposed or have been in contact with someone exposed to the COVID-19 virus, or if you are exhibiting symptoms of the COVID-19 virus identified by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, please contact the Justice of the Peace Court location where you were to appear in order to reschedule your appearance.