FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr. extends Judicial Emergency to June 13, 2020

MAY 14, 2020

Today, in consultation with the other members of the Supreme Court, Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr. extended the Judicial Emergency and related orders, due to the public health emergency caused by the Covid-19 outbreak, until June 13, 2020. This is the second 30-day extension of the March 16, 2020 Judicial Emergency Order. This means that court facilities will continue to be closed to the public at least through June 13, 2020, or until the order declaring a judicial emergency is modified or lifted.

"Our State continues to operate under the Governor's emergency declarations. Those restrictions—vital to protecting the health and safety of Delawareans—do not presently allow us to increase activity in judicial facilities," said Chief Justice Seitz. "Therefore, I have entered an order today extending the judicial emergency declaration until June 13, 2020. As I have noted before, with the exception of trials, all state courts continue to use video and audio platforms to conduct as much court business as possible. The goal is to work down each court's non-trial casework so we are prepared for increasing court operations when health and science experts tell us it is safe and reasonable to do so."

The Delaware Judiciary is working on detailed plans to gradually increase activities at judicial facilities. The Court Reopening Committee, led by Superior Court Judge William C. Carpenter, Jr. and staffed by judicial officers and employees from the state courts, our judicial system partners, and a medical expert on infectious disease, is drafting the plan for a gradual and safe increase in activities at all judicial facilities. The Committee hopes to have a final report and recommendation in May, with a possible "first phase" limited increase in judicial facility activity in June.

In announcing the extension of the Judicial Emergency, Chief Justice Seitz thanked Judicial Branch employees that continue to work each day at judicial facilities and remotely from home. He also expressed his gratitude to all those who work in the court system. "Thank you once again for your public service," he said.

To see the full text of the order please visit:

https://courts.delaware.gov/rules/pdf/COVIDOrderCJS3.pdf

For the latest information about the Delaware Judiciary's response to COVID-19, please visit https://courts.delaware.gov/aoc/covid-19. For the latest information on COVID-19 please visit the State of Delaware's informational website on COVID-19 at: de.gov/coronavirus. If you have any questions you can contact the State's Department of Public Health Coronavirus call center by phone at 1-866-408-1899 or by email at DPHCall@delaware.gov.