FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 14, 2020

Judicial Emergency and closure of all Delaware Court facilities to the public extended to May 14, 2020

Delaware Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr. today extended the Judicial Emergency, declared on March 14, 2020 due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, until May 14, 2020. The Judicial Emergency had originally been set to expire on April 15, 2020. In conjunction with this new order, the Chief Justice also extended the closure of all court facilities to the public – with the exception of the Justice of the Peace Court's three 24-hour courts – until May 14, 2020.

"The Delaware courts have been operating under a Judicial Emergency Declaration to protect the health of judicial officers, court employees, our justice partners and members of the public from the COVID-19 virus. We are continuing to conduct necessary and urgent court operations following Department of Public Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations. Consistent with the Governor's ongoing Emergency Orders, I am issuing an order extending both the judicial emergency and the restriction barring the public from court facilities for an additional 30 days," said Chief Justice Seitz.

The Chief Justice said the Delaware Judiciary, along with the Department of Public Health, the Delaware Emergency Management Agency and our system partners, continue to monitor the situation and hope to resume court operations as soon as it is safe and practical.

During this unprecedented time, the Courts have halted all trials and to the extent possible have been conducting hearings by video conference or telephonic proceedings. Courthouse staff have been reduced and many court employees have been working remotely.

The 24-hour Justice of the Peace Court locations in each county (Court 11 in New Castle County, Court 7 in Kent County and Court 3 in Sussex County) remain open for payment of bail for all courts between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. and for emergency criminal and civil filings for the Justice of the Peace Court. Courthouses closed to the public are using drop boxes for attorneys and the public without access to e-filing who need to file paper documents.

To see the full text of the order please visit: https://courts.delaware.gov/rules/pdf/COVID-extended-deadline.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.