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**Maine Judicial Branch Updates Phased Re-Opening Plan for the Courts**

July 2, 2020, Portland, Maine. The Maine Judicial Branch announced today the updating of the State of Maine Judicial Branch COVID-19 Phased Management Plan. The original plan created a five-phased process for reopening Maine Courts and was based on the most recent scientific data available from the Maine Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention and stakeholder input. The new plan provides an update to Phase 3, going into effect on July 6.

Phase 3 expands the maximum number of people permitted in courtroom from 10 to 50. Social distancing requirements will remain in effect. The new plan is available on the Judicial Branch website here: https://www.courts.maine.gov/covid19/covid-management-plan.pdf.

The plan continues to set out guidelines that must be met for each phase, including necessary staffing, availability of technology, and availability of personal protective equipment. Phases may be implemented statewide or only in specific court locations as local conditions may vary. Revisions to the plan may be necessary due to available resources, changing circumstances, or new guidance from the Maine CDC.

Throughout each phase, additional public safety restrictions and procedures will be observed, including enforcing entry screening and social distancing requirements, and ensuring that all courthouse visitors wear face shields or masks in the courthouse. These procedures and restrictions were developed in consultation with the Maine CDC.

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