Trial Court Emergency Administrative Order 20-7
Trial Court Order Supplementing the Supreme Judicial Court Order Regarding Court Operations under the Exigent Circumstances Created by the COVID-19 (coronavirus) Pandemic

Due to the extreme risk of person-to-person transmission caused by the 2019 novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), which has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization, and which has occasioned the declaration of a State of Emergency in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Order No. 591: Declaration of a State of Emergency to Respond to COVID-19, and in accordance with the Supreme Judicial Court Order Regarding Court Operations Under the Exigent Circumstances Created by the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic issued on April 1, 2020 and effective as of April 6, 2020;

It is hereby ORDERED pursuant to my authority as set forth in G.L. c. 211B, § 9, that:

I. Emergency matters

Massachusetts trial courts are open for emergency matters, but the courthouses are closed to the public. During normal court hours (Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), all Massachusetts trial courts shall conduct all emergency matters as defined in the departmental standing orders virtually (i.e., by telephone, videoconference, email, or comparable means, or through the electronic filing system) without the physical presence of the parties, counsel, or other members of the public. With the exception of Mary Moe petitions pursuant to Superior Court Standing Order 4-20, no in-person matters shall be conducted in any trial court unless a Regional Administrative Justice (RAJ) or First Justice determines that virtual resolution of the matter is not practicable or would be inconsistent with the protection of constitutional rights. Entry into a courthouse will be permitted only to those persons necessary to resolve such matters.

II. Trial Court employees

Trial Court employees and judges are permitted to be present in courthouses for the purpose of conducting court-related work although care should be taken to ensure that only limited personnel are personally in the courthouse, consistent with need.

Employees in a courthouse on a particular day, including but not limited to employees in Clerks', Registers', and the Recorder's offices, the Probation Service, Security, and Facilities, shall be limited to the minimum number of employees necessary to meet operational needs, and will be assigned by the supervisor of the specific office or department on a rotating basis. All other staff will conduct their work remotely, to the extent feasible.

Clerks', Clerk-Magistrates' and Registers' offices shall provide the Massachusetts Probation Service (MPS) with the following documents and information:

- orders issued on judicial response pursuant to G.L. c. 209A and G.L. c. 258E for entry into the Domestic Violence Registry;
- copies of all docket entries detailing conditions of release and/or conditions of probation, continuance dates and modifications to payments.

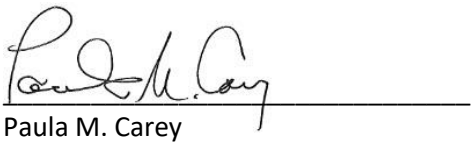
The MPS shall continue to have staff onsite or working remotely, sufficient to perform the following core functions:

- providing CARI/Triple I entries and 209A and 258E entries;
- participation, as appropriate, in the review of cases as ordered by the SJC;
- making required entries into MassCourts to maintain current case records; and
- addressing ELMO-related equipment needs, complete installations and removals as directed by the court, inside the courthouse.

III. Consistency with other orders

This order is intended to be consistent with and supplement the Supreme Judicial Court Order Regarding Court Operations under the Exigent Circumstances Created by the COVID-19 (coronavirus) Pandemic issued on April 1, 2020 and effective April 6, 2020. To the extent this Order is inconsistent with earlier Trial Court Emergency Administrative Orders or standing orders earlier issued by each department of the Trial Court, this Order supersedes those earlier orders. This Order is temporary and is subject to be modified or rescinded at any time, as necessary to address the fluctuating circumstances arising from the coronavirus pandemic.

Dated: April 6, 2020



Paula M. Carey
Chief Justice of the Trial Court