

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: 32<sup>nd</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT : PA SUPREME COURT NO. 30 MM 2020  
:   
*Civil Section Cancellations and* :   
*Revised Scheduling Protocols* :   
*Extended*<sup>1</sup> : DELAWARE COUNTY NO. 5120-17

**THIRD EMERGENCY ORDER EXTENSION – CIVIL SECTION, AS AMENDED**<sup>2</sup>

AND NOW, this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of June, 2020, this court having previously declared in the 32<sup>nd</sup> judicial district (Delaware County) a judicial emergency and more recently once more extended that emergent declaration pursuant to such an order of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court sanctioning the same,<sup>3</sup> as well as Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(1)(2), and this court thus still having those authorities detailed under Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(2)(a-s), it is hereby **ORDERED** and **DECREED** in consultation with the liaison judge that the appended civil section directives<sup>4</sup> **SHALL** be **AMENDED** to reflect the resumption of *in-person*, arbitration panel hearings **EFFECTIVE JULY 13, 2020**, as the attached protocol more further details.<sup>5</sup>

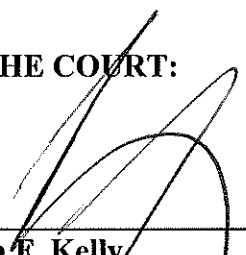
Except to the extent ordered above, this court's Third Emergency Order Extension – Civil Section dated May 27, 2020,<sup>6</sup> **SHALL** remain in full force and effect.

That directed above as subsequent material circumstances warrant and/or it otherwise believes appropriate may be revisited by this court and modified to meet the evolving concerns presented by the ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis.

To the extent possible and practical under the material circumstances, notice of this order has been and/or will promptly be posted about the Delaware County courthouse, including but not limited to the complex's entry doors, the Delaware County Office of Judicial Support, the

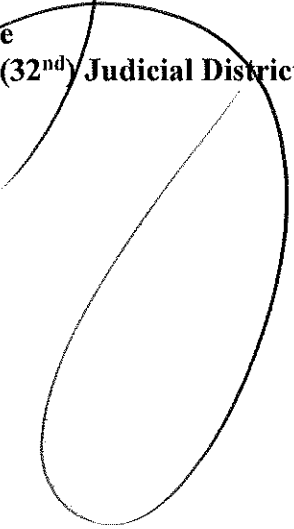
Court Administrator's Office of Delaware County, the Criminal Court Administrator's Office, the court's website, all magisterial district court facilities within Delaware County, the Delaware County Bar Association's website, and submitted to the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts ("AOPC") for posting on the Commonwealth's Unified Judicial System's website per Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(C)(5).<sup>7</sup>

**BY THE COURT:**



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**Kevin F. Kelly  
President Judge  
Thirty-Second (32<sup>nd</sup>) Judicial District**



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<sup>1</sup> See Emergency Orders – Civil Section dated March 18, 2020; Emergency Order Extension – Civil Section dated April 7, 2020; Second Emergency Order Extension – Civil Section dated May 1, 2020; and Third Emergency Order Extension – Civil Section dated May 27, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> *The amendments adopted by this order detail the scheduling and conducting of arbitration panel hearings and can be found beginning on page eight (8) of the attached civil section protocols. See Civil Section Emergency Cancellation Revised Scheduling Protocols dated June 22, 2020. (A copy of this amended protocol (June 22, 2020) is attached and wholly by reference incorporated. The additions to the immediate past civil section directives (May 27, 2020) generally start on page two (2) of the appended, updated protocol with those specific to arbitration listings commencing on page eight (8). For ease of reference, all these amendments are throughout underlined.)*

<sup>3</sup> See Orders dated March 16, 2020, pp. 1-2; March 18, 2020, pp. 1-3; March 24, 2020; April 1, 2020, pp. 1-3; April 28, 2020, pp. 2-5; and May 27, 2020, pp. 1-3 – Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Nos. 531 and 532, Judicial Administration Docket; Emergency Declaration dated March 17, 2020; Emergency Declaration Extension dated April 2, 2020; Second Emergency Declaration Extension dated April 28, 2020; and Third Emergency Declaration Extension dated May 27, 2020. See also Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(1)(2).

<sup>4</sup> The protocols the instant order amends were dated and adopted by the Third Emergency Order Extension – Civil Section of May 27, 2020. See Third Emergency Order Extension – Civil Section dated May 27, 2020, and Attached Protocol.

<sup>5</sup> These additions to the immediate previous civil section operational directives (May 27, 2020) begin generally on page two (2) of the appended protocol while those specific to arbitrations start as of page eight (8), and for ease of reference all such amendments are throughout underlined. See Civil Section Emergency Cancellation and Revised Scheduling Protocols dated June 22, 2020.

See Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(2)(d)(h)(i)(k)(l)(q). See also *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 13, 2020, Section B, p. 1 (“Infections great at Delco Jail – Jail: Nearly half of inmates tested has virus”; infection rate 50 times that of population at large.”); May 16, 2020, Section A, pp. 1, 4 (“Over that past 14 days, Delaware County has on average 275 cases for each 100,000 residents ... significantly higher than the suburban counties surrounding it.”); May 19, 2020, Section A, pp. 1, 6 (“Virus Rate Remains Stubbornly High in Delaware County”); and May 22, 2020, Section A, pp. 1, 9 (“Delaware County trails Philadelphia and the other counties in flattening the curve of new cases.”).

<sup>6</sup> See Third Emergency Order Extension – Civil Section dated May 27, 2020.

<sup>7</sup> See Orders dated March 16, 2020, p. 2; April 1, 2020, pp. 2-3; April 28, 2020, p. 3; and May 27, 2020 p. 2, Fn. 1 – Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Nos. 531 and 532, Judicial Administration Docket.

# DELAWARE COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

## ***CIVIL SECTION EMERGENCY CANCELATIONS AS WELL AS REVISED SCHEDULING AND OPERATIONAL PROTOCOLS, EXTENDED AND AMENDED***

### **PURPOSE**

Recognizing that the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania has recently directed, *inter alia*, that the Commonwealth's judicial districts while remaining focused on the discharge of critical court functions must now additionally make best efforts in all other type matters to accomplish the administration of justice, subject to the constraining safety considerations brought about by the ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis,<sup>1</sup> this court in consultation with core systematic stakeholders has developed the below described plan as the first of what is anticipated to be numerous purposefully measured, operational increments realizing the balance between the upmost concern of the judiciary for the safety of the court staff, all counsel, every litigant, the various witnesses of the parties, and the public generally,<sup>2</sup> while also being mindful of the necessity to once more provide with regularity for the timely the administration of justice.

That directed below as subsequent material circumstances warrant and/or it otherwise believes appropriate may be revisited by this court without advanced notice and modified to meet the evolving concerns presented by the continuing COVID-19 public health crisis.

### **GENERAL SAFETY and OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES**

**ALL** criminal and civil jury trials remain **SUSPENDED** and relatedly jury duty also continues to be **SUSPENDED**, until further notice.<sup>3</sup>

For **ALL** *in-person* proceedings of any type and regardless of whether the listing also has some advanced communication technology ("ACT") participants, **NO ONE** other than the parties, as well as counsel, will be permitted in the courtroom-hearing room and/or about the interior of the Delaware County courthouse-government center generally, absent a specifically reasoned basis to the contrary, including but not limited to a needed, Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts certified interpreter and/or a family member and/or some type of health aid assisting an infirm party and/or witness in navigating his or her way about the courthouse complex, as well as a parent and/or guardian accompanying a juvenile witness/complainant and/or party less than twenty-one (21) years old. Otherwise, **NO** spouses, significant others, family members and/or friends of any party and/or witness

will be permitted access to the Delaware County courthouse-government center until further notice, unless he or she is as well a party to the proceeding and/or a witness.

The Delaware County courts (32<sup>nd</sup> judicial district) for purposes of ACT on the recommendation of the court IT department utilize Microsoft Teams and/or because of its existing hardware configurations already throughout the systematic structures, including the George W. Hill Correctional Facility, Polycom. The use of other ACT's (E.g. Zoom) may at the discretion of the presiding judge be permitted.

Victims-complainants having a right to be present in court for listings of their criminal case juvenile delinquency matters and/or protection from abuse actions may also attend all such schedulings. The complainant-victim may be accompanied by one (1) person when so appearing *in-person* and as the victim-complainant believes best that individual may be a family member, friend, and/or victim advocacy organization representative. The Delaware County District Attorney's Office must in advance timely notify the Delaware County Park Police via email at [ParkPoliceCourtList@co.delaware.pa.us](mailto:ParkPoliceCourtList@co.delaware.pa.us) of any victim-complainant intending to attend *in-person* a criminal and/or juvenile delinquency listing, as well as who, if anyone, will then be accompanying that specific victim-complainant. The complainant-victim and the person, if any, accompanying her or him on entering the courthouse are to proceed directly to the assigned courtroom. Likewise, the victim-complainant and any individual accompanying him or her **MUST** immediately on the proceeding's conclusion directly leave and exit the courthouse-government center complex.

Subject to the direction of the presiding judge otherwise, **ALL** witnesses on arriving in the vicinity of the courthouse complex **MUST** remain waiting in his or her vehicle until contacted by the lawyer or self-represented party calling the person that he or she is now for purposes of testifying to enter the courthouse. On entering the courthouse, the witness is to go directly to the assigned courtroom. Every witness immediately on the conclusion of his or her testimonial appearance **MUST** directly leave and exit the courthouse, unless the presiding judge directs to the contrary.

Credentialed members of the media will be allowed to attend any and/or all proceedings and are to arrange in advance for the same through District Court Administrator Gerald C. Montella, Esquire (610 891-4557). (Should the level of press attention in a given matter be of such a nature that permitting all requesting media members *in-person* access be contrary to then applicable public health guidelines (E.g. Social distancing in the courtroom because of the appreciable numbers present not possible), the District Court Administrator in collaboration the interested media will create a pool of representative media members to attend *in-person* the court proceedings.)

Unless the presiding judge directs to the contrary, credentialed press members will still be able to listen to audio recordings of court proceedings at the Office of Court Electronic Recording as arranged through its Director Richard J. Coogan (610 891-4477); however, no more than one (1) media representative may at a given moment be in the Court Electronic Recording Office.

Should a member of the general public want access to a certain court proceeding he or she was currently not permitted to attend *in-person*, arrangements may be made immediately subsequent to any such listing's conclusion for a person to review an audio recording of a particular hearing, unless the presiding judge via his or her order directs otherwise, by arranging through its director, Richard J. Coogan (610 891-4477) to listen to the same at the Court Electronic Recording Office to the same.

**ALL** interested persons should plan to arrive at the courthouse approximately thirty (30) minutes prior to the listing's schedule start to allow sufficient time to work through both the below referenced security and health screening processes. Take note that individuals arriving appreciably earlier than their set time may then be refused entry by the Park Police to prevent unnecessary loitering about the courthouse and/or courtrooms-hearing rooms.

**ALL** individuals entering the Delaware County courthouse-government complex **MUST** first undergo a COVID-19 health assessment, including but not limited to the taking of temperatures, by the Delaware County Park Police.<sup>4</sup> Based on the outcome of this Coronavirus screening assessment, the involved Park Police Officer at his or her discretion may prohibit a person from entering the courthouse-county government complex. Park Police personnel will promptly make the presiding judge aware as applicable should an individual based on the health screening not be permitted entry, including but not limited to lawyers, parties and/or witnesses. If a litigant and/or witness refused entry on health considerations cannot identify the judge before whom he or she is to then appear, contact is to be promptly made for such assistance with the Court Administrator's Office (Ext. 4550).

As it relates **SOLELY** to criminal defendants, those declined entry because of the health assessment's results will be asked to remain outside the building and/or another location the Park Officer may direct pending the assigned judge's chambers providing a date for that accused to return and the defendant executing as well as being provided a copy of such a written criminal notice form.

In addition to having successfully undergone the COVID-19 health screening, **ALL** persons entering the courthouse-government center **MUST** otherwise be in **FULL COMPLIANCE** with **ANY** federal and/or state directives then in place to stem the Coronavirus spread, including but not limited to the proper wearing of a recommended mask.

**ANY** litigant, lawyer, witness and/or other interested party experiencing a dry, persistent cough, shortness of breath-difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, headache, a loss of smell or taste without congestion, and/or a fever greater than 99.5 Fahrenheit if taken with a temporal thermometer **MUST NOT** report as scheduled, but rather **PROMPTLY** notify the assigned or presiding judge's chambers that he or she is suffering from such symptoms. (If unaware of the assigned and/or presiding judge, an interested party should instead contact promptly the Court Administrator's Office – 610 891-4550.)

**ANY** litigant, lawyer, witness and/or other interested party having been past tested and/or diagnosed by a physician positive for COVID-19 **MUST NOT** report as scheduled, but instead

**PROMPTLY** notify **PRIOR TO THE LISTED DATE** the Court Administrative Office of the same (610 891-4550) and follow the directions that office then provides.

**ANY** litigant, attorney, witness and/or other interested party wanting to appear and participate via some type of ACT in lieu of *in-person* **MUST** notify the assigned and/or presiding judge ***no less than three (3) business days prior to the scheduled date*** to allow for those necessary arrangements to be made by the Legal Audio Visual Department. The involved judge will for now allow the same subject to applicable constitutional limitations, if any,<sup>5</sup> or continue the listing to a future date should constitutional concerns dictate such and/or if he or she believes in the exercise of his or her discretion that the nature of the proceeding and individual requesting remote participation would otherwise be contrary to material law and/or occasion a party to suffer actual prejudice. (*E.g.* The inability of the factfinder to visually observe a witness only available to testify aurally by telephone.) Parties represented by a lawyer **MUST** first direct any such concerns about participating via some type of ACT to his or her counsel and witnesses similarly in the first instance are to initially bring these matters to the attention of the attorney subpoenaing his or her appearance these issues and subsequently the court only if the witness and involved counsel cannot make such mutually agreeable arrangements subject to the presiding and/or assigned judge's approval.

In the event a self-represented litigant, lawyer, and/or other interested party does not know the assigned and/or presiding judge to whom a request to appear and participate via some manner of ACT should be submitted, such inquires consistent with the above three (3) business day advanced notification are to be directed to the Court Administrator's Office (610 891-4550).

**ALL** *in-person* listing days **MUST** be held in a manner to reasonably restrict COVID-19 exposure and undertaken wholly consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus guidelines, as well as any other such federal and/or state directives, including but not limited to presently social distancing and/or the wearing of a mask.

**ALL** courtrooms – hearing rooms utilized for proceedings will on the conclusion of a given day's cases be sanitized, as will those areas of the courthouse commonly used for individuals to get to and from a courtroom – hearing room (*E.g.* Courthouse's public elevators and the stairwell to the second floor).

The judges will provide in advance to the Delaware County Park Police through Superintendent Scott D. Mahoney a list of **ALL** cases scheduled on a given day, including but not limited to the names of any interested parties expected to appear, as well as counsel. Such information is to be timely forwarded by email as follows: [ParkPoliceDailyCourtList@co.delaware.pa.us](mailto:ParkPoliceDailyCourtList@co.delaware.pa.us).

For **ANY AND ALL** evidentiary hearings, the attorneys and/or self-represented parties **MUST** provide the presiding judge with a list naming **ALL** reasonably expected witnesses no later than one (1) full business day prior to any such scheduling. (The presiding judge most certainly may in his or her discretion direct counsel and/or the parties in whatever format he or she believes best for such a witness list to be submitted (*E.g.* As part of a pre-trial statement) and/or instruct that the same be sent by a sooner

date.) The chambers of the presiding judge will promptly forward to the Delaware County Park Police through Superintendent Scott D. Mahoney copies of **ALL** received witness lists via email, [ParkPoliceDailyCourtList@co.delaware.pa.us](mailto:ParkPoliceDailyCourtList@co.delaware.pa.us).

Each section and/or division of the court will coordinate among those judges sitting on a given date start times staggered by at least thirty (30) minutes.

As is more fully described below, **ALL** *in-person* matters must be set for a specific hour or alternatively, that the number of interested parties, including counsel, present in a courtroom during a certain hour is no more than ten (10).

Court officers assigned to the entry door of every operational courtroom – hearing room will be tasked subject to any such specific directives of the presiding judge with the general responsibility of managing in accord with this protocol the number of people at any given moment permitted in a particular courtroom – hearing room to allow for any required social distancing. As may be necessary to assure compliance with that salient to such considerations this protocol details, court officers may temporarily prohibit entry into a courtroom – hearing room and rather direct counsel, any interested parties and/or witnesses to remain in the outer waiting area or that unused courtroom and/or another area of the courthouse complex (*E.g.* jury assembly room) then designated for overflow purposes by the District Court Administrator.

Should a court officer observe any interested party, a lawyer and/or witness in a courtroom not observing social distancing, failing to wear a mask, and/or not following any other of the various governmental guidelines and/or that which this protocol directs, the same must be promptly reported to the presiding judge and if such personnel are present in the courtroom – hearing room, deputy sheriffs, and/or park officers.

Should a court officer observe an interested party, lawyer and/or a witness outside of a courtroom – hearing room failing to comply with salient governmental directives, including but not limited to social distancing and/or the wearing of a mask, he or she must promptly report the same to the Delaware County Park Police (Ext. 5000), as well as the judge presiding over the matter involving that party, attorney and/or witness, and if in proximity, any deputy sheriff.

The continued failure and/or refusal of an interested party, counsel and/or a witness to follow the governmental directives material to stemming the COVID-19 spread may, *inter alia*, result in any such individual's immediate removal from the courthouse-governmental complex by sworn personnel of the Delaware County Park Police and/or Delaware County Sheriff's Office. In the event a person for noncompliance with these safety measures is removed from the courthouse complex, involved law enforcement are to promptly notify the judge presiding over the matter involving that party, lawyer and/or witness of the removal.



## CIVIL SECTION

The four (4) judge civil section has been temporarily structured into two (2) subgroups as follows: Judges Dozor and Whelan; and Judges Angelos and Eckel. **BOTH** judges of each team during a given week will generally have for their respective use courtrooms available with the second team of judges sitting the next week. Hence, on any day of a week no more than two (2) civil judges will be simultaneously in session, unless there is some emergent need for another such courtroom to then be operational sanctioned by the president judge or civil liaison.

On those alternating weeks they will be sitting, Judge Dozor will utilize courtroom No. seven (7) while Judge Whelan will be in courtroom No. eight (8). For those every other weeks they are listed to sit, Judge Angelos will use courtroom No. seven (7) and Judge Eckel courtroom No. eight (8).

Attached and wholly incorporated by reference is an *interim*, civil section master calendar detailing, *inter alia*, through June and July 2020 the specific two (2), civil judges sitting weekly. For reasons such as vacations, the appended, *temporary* civil section master calendar is subject to change with the judges on one (1) judicial team exchanging, in whole or part, the otherwise assigned courtroom weeks.

To maximize the use of the two (2), operational civil courts, a judge listed to sit in a certain week will promptly notify the other team's two (2) judges of any one-half (1/2) or greater day when he or she does not need the courtroom so as a colleague judge believes appropriate he or she may then list his or her case(s).

Any judge assuming a court week, in whole or part, of another jurist **MUST** without exception sit in the courtroom of the originally assigned judge because of the first-floor courtrooms being scheduled on a rotational basis each week among both the civil and family sections.

Consistent with this judicial district's (32<sup>nd</sup>) individual calendaring system, each civil judge will be responsible for scheduling his or her assigned cases as he or she believes appropriate, along with providing all interested parties timely notice of the same.

On **ANY** day the judicial civil teams have *in-person* schedulings, the two (2) judges then sitting will have start times staggered by at least thirty (30) minutes (*E.g.* Judge Whelan begins at 9:00 a.m. and Judge Dozor starts no earlier than 9:30 a.m.). Beyond these staggered commencement times regarding each judge sitting on a certain day, there is for now a limit of no more than ten (10) interested parties (*I.e.* litigants, and/or counsel) permitted *in-person* attendance per a given civil courtroom.

There will for now be no *in-person* appearances involving inmates of any county, state, and/or federal penal facility before the civil courts, but rather **ALL** listings where a party and/or witness is for whatever the reasons incarcerated any such person will participate through some ACT means, assuming the prisoner party's agreement.<sup>6</sup> **ALL** inmate witnesses **MUST** for now appear by ACT. **ANY** prisoner of a county, state, and/or federal correctional institution being a named party and wanting to proceed

with an *in-person* listing will have his or her matter continued for at least thirty (30) days with the hope the currently ongoing public health crisis, particularly relative to those attendant concerns enveloping southeastern Pennsylvania, including but not limited to Delaware County, would have then sufficiently abated to safely allow for the prisoner's custodial transportation and related *in-person* appearance before the court.<sup>7</sup>

Various hearings as the assigned civil judge believes appropriate will once more be scheduled, including but not limited to arguments, contested pre-trial evidentiary hearings and/or non-jury trials. **ALL** these listings for now will be just those cases reasonably expected to conclude within at most a few days. Such schedulings, including but not limited to contested evidentiary matters, may be conducted as the designated judge believes proper through some manner of ACT, *in-person* and/or such a combination. (*E.g.* A witness appearing via video conferencing while the lawyers are *in-person* before the presiding judge.)

Civil miscellaneous lists will proceed per the attached *interim*, civil master calendar on the following dates: June 23, 2020; July 7, 2020; and July 21, 2020. Having overall staggered start times, each of these civil miscellaneous lists will be divided among at least two (2) judges with each of the sitting jurists then having no more than three (3) to four (4) cases listed by a specific hour and a one half (1/2) day aggregate cap of ten (10) such cases. It is expected based on past experiences with the civil miscellaneous lists that the for the presiding judges a morning and afternoon session will be planned subject to the per hour case scheduling directives and the ten (10) *in-person* courtroom attendance limitation.

There is by such a recent emergency order no sheriff real estate sales listed in June, July, and/or August of 2020,<sup>8</sup> and a next sheriff real estate sale is for now still set on September 18, 2020.

**ALL** such emergency filings from the present through July 31, 2020, will consistent with existing administrative protocols be assigned to a civil section judge on a rotational basis as directed by the civil liaison. The designated civil jurist on a review of any such emergent pleading will schedule those next proceedings as he or she believes to be appropriate. If the reviewing judge determines the salient circumstances are such that an emergent hearing should be held, those proceedings to the extent possible may at that court's discretion be conducted via advanced communication technology (ACT), subject to applicable constitutional restrictions, if any, particularly if the involved judge is not listed to sit that week.<sup>9</sup> In the event the presiding judge determines an *in-person*, emergency hearing must be conducted, the listing of the same is to be coordinated through both the civil liaison judge and District Court Administrator to assure there is staggered scheduling allowing for as best as possible about that area of the courthouse and the specific courtroom currently recommended "social distancing," as well as the following of **ALL** other federal and/or state governmental guidance about countering the COVID-19 virus spread, including but not limited to currently the wearing a mask and/or prompt surface area disinfecting subsequent.<sup>10</sup>

Assigned and/or otherwise presiding civil judges may schedule as believed appropriate pretrial – case management conferences. **ANY** pretrial – case management conferences listed on a day a judge is not scheduled and/or otherwise has access to one (1) of the two (2) operational civil courtrooms **MUST**

be held with all parties, including but not limited to counsel and/or self-represented individuals, participating via some manner of ACT, which as the presiding judge believes appropriate may be of-record. **ALL** pretrial – case management conferences with *in-person* participants and/or some combination of ACT and *in-person* appearances are to be set in court for those dates per the attached sectional, *interim* calendar the assigned and/or judge presiding otherwise is then listed to sit in one (1) of the two (2) operational civil courtrooms.

The assigned judge where he or she believes is appropriate and proper as part of pretrial conferences and/or otherwise will encourage the litigants through the lawyers to participate in binding arbitration with such mediation costs shared as the parties may agree. The designated judge may relatedly as she or he feels is warranted refer matters for conciliator mediation conferences to the Honorable Charles B. Burr, II (retired) per that further detailed below, and/or the Delaware County Bar Association's mediation program.

**ALL** cases currently and subsequently referred for conciliator mediation conferences before the Honorable Charles B. Burr, II (retired) will be listed and/or rescheduled consistent with retired Judge Burr's calendar and the material, past emergency orders.<sup>11</sup> These conciliation conferences at retired Judge Burr's discretion may be held through available ACT's, *in-person*, and/or some ACT and *in-person* combination. Should retired Judge Burr decide to hold mediation conferences, in whole or in part, *in-person*, there must be staggered schedulings of the same and arrangements made through the Court Administrator's Office to secure an appropriate location as necessary to assuring compliance with **ALL** federal and/or state directives about stemming COVID-19 spread, including but not limited to sufficient distancing among the participants, if such cannot be realized in the retired jurist's office suite.

Effective **JULY 13, 2020**, *in-person* arbitration panel hearings will resume. For good cause shown (E.g. Underling medical conditions making one more vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19, **ANY** litigant, attorney, witness, and/or interested party wanting to appear and participate via some type of ACT (advanced communication technology) in lieu of *in-person* **MUST** notify the Court Administrator's involved arbitration staff **no less than seven (7) business days prior to the scheduled date**<sup>12</sup> to allow for a review of that request and/or if allowed, those necessary arrangements be made. (These requests are to be timely submitted via email to the Court Administrator's arbitration office at [DelcoArbitration@co.delaware.pa.us](mailto:DelcoArbitration@co.delaware.pa.us).)

Salient personnel of the Court Administrator's office will timely provide all interested parties written notice as to the date, time and location of arbitration panel schedulings and are expected in such regard to make good faith efforts to afford reasonable advanced notification of both initial listings and any necessary reschedulings. However, to the extent as may be applicable, Delaware County local rule 1303(A)(1)(v) is **SUSPENDED** until further notice.<sup>13</sup>

Arbitration hearings will be scheduled weekly, Mondays through Thursdays, with at least two (2) panels then listed to sit. Every Friday at least one (1) arbitration panel will be scheduled. **ALL** panels will be expected to sit for a full day. The number of cases listed daily for a panel will be function of a given matter's nature and expected length as determined by the court administrator's arbitration personnel.

On those days multiple panels are sitting (I.e. Mondays through Thursdays and possibly Fridays), each panel will have a staggered start time (E.g. panel A begins at 8:45 a.m., panel B at 9:15 a.m. begins, and panel C commences at 9:45 a.m.) with every case listed daily assigned a specific start time as determined appropriate by the court administrator's involved arbitration staff (E.g. matter A begins at 8:45 a.m., with case B set for 10:45 a.m., and matters C and D respectively listed to commence at 1:15 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.).

For ALL arbitration hearings, including but limited to those conducted fully or partially by some ACT means (E.g. the lawyers and one (1) of the parties present in-person while the litigant participates through some form of ACT), copies of ANY AND ALL reasonably anticipated evidentiary exhibits MUST be exchanged among counsel and/or any self-represented parties at least five (5) days prior to the scheduled listing. It is relatedly the responsibility of the party offering any such evidence to provide at the arbitration hearing paper or "hard" copies ANY OF ALL documents, including case pleadings if requested by the panel, in a sufficient number for both all panelists and the other party.

To as best as possible maximize the court time of these arbitration hearing lists, ANY continuance application *must be made timely known to the court administrator's arbitration staff*. As before, arbitration matter continuance applications may be submitted through the court's civil e-filing system or through the lodging of a continuance request form with the Court Administrator's arbitration staff. (Anyone having questions and/or in need of assistance with the processing of an arbitration case continuance application may call (610) 891- 8757.)

Counsel and self-represented litigates are reminded a list naming all reasonably expected witnesses MUST be submitted to the court administrator's arbitration office no later than one (1) full business day prior to any such scheduling.<sup>14</sup> It is preferred that these witness lists be emailed to the arbitration office personnel as follows: DelcoArbitration@co.delaware.pa.us. These witness lists will in turn be provided by the court administrator's office to the Park Police as a means of authorizing those individuals' entry into the courthouse facility. Hence, the failure to provide the court administrator's arbitration staff with a required list may very well result in witnesses being barred from the building and otherwise unavailable to testify. Attorneys and *pro se* litigants are relatedly reminded ALL witnesses on arriving the vicinity of the courthouse MUST remain in their vehicles until contacted by the lawyer or self-represented party calling the person that he or she is now for purposes of testifying to enter the courthouse.<sup>15</sup>

ALL parties whether *pro se* or represented by an attorney MUST meaningfully engage in good faith discovery consistent with ANY AND ALL such salient trial court orders and/or directives, including but not limited to depositions conducted to the extent practicable via some manner of available advanced communication technology (ACT), subject to applicable constitutional limitations, if any.<sup>16</sup>

"To the degree necessary, attorneys should counsel their clients that the public health emergency can in no way be used to secure strategic advantage in litigation, including by means of dilatory conduct[.]" particularly relative to the timely exchange of ANY AND ALL discoverable materials, whether the same is required by an applicable procedural rule, mandated by a relevant trial court order, compelled by some other legal authority, and/or expected by the lawyers' agreement.<sup>17</sup>

Counsel and **ALL** other interested parties are be reminded that Delaware County's civil, nonfamily, e-filing system remains operational and allows, *inter alia*, for the lodging and docketing of wide ranging pleadings as further detailed by Delaware County Local Rule 205.4<sup>18</sup> related to electronic filing and service of legal papers.

<sup>1</sup> See Orders dated April 28, 2020, p. 2; and May 27, 2020, pp. 1-3 – Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Nos. 531 and 532, Judicial Administration Docket.

<sup>2</sup> See Orders dated April 28, 2020, pp. 4-5; and May 27, 2020, pp. 1-3 – Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Nos. 531 and 532, Judicial Administration Docket.

<sup>3</sup> See Order dated April 28, 2020, p. 9 – Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Nos. 531 and 532, Judicial Administration Docket. See also Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(2)(d)(h)(i)(q). (This court under a separate emergency order of June 22, 2020, extended the cancellation of civil and criminal trials from that date (June 22, 2020) through and including July 31, 2020. See Emergency Jury Trial Cancellation Order dated March 18, 2020; Emergency Jury Trial Cancellation Extension Order dated April 2, 2020; Emergency Jury Trial Cancellation Second Extension Order dated April 28, 2020; and Emergency Jury Trial Cancellation Third Extension Order dated June 22, 2020. )

<sup>4</sup> Although more specific to whether an employee will be permitted into the courthouse-government complex, the attached Chester County Health Department workforce screening materials provide at least a general overview of the assessment process the Delaware County Park Police will employ for **ALL** individuals attempting to enter the county courthouse-government center.

<sup>5</sup> See Orders March 16, 2020, pp. 2-3; March 18, 2020, pp. 4, 6-7; April 1, 2020, pp. 4-5; April 28, 2020, pp. 4-5; and May 27, 2020, pp. 1-3 – Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Nos. 531 and 532, Judicial Administration Docket. See also Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(2)(d)(h)(i)(q).

<sup>6</sup> See *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 13, 2020, Section B, p. 1 – “Infections greater at Delco jail – Jail: Nearly half of inmates tested had virus; infection rate 50 times that of the population at large.”

<sup>7</sup> See Orders dated April 28, 2020, pp. 4-5; May 27, 2020, pp. 1-3 – Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Nos. 531 and 532, Judicial Administration Docket; and Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(2)(a)(d)(h)(k)(q). See also *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 13, 2020, Section B, p. 1 (“Infections great at Delco Jail – Jail: Nearly half of inmates tested has virus”; infection rate 50 times that of population at large.”); May 16, 2020, Section A, pp. 1, 4 (“Over that past 14 days, Delaware County has on average 275 cases for each 100,000 residents ... significantly higher than the suburban counties surrounding it.”); May 19, 2020, Section A, pp. 1, 6 (“Virus Rate Remains Stubbornly High in Delaware County”); and May 22, 2020, Section A, pp. 1, 9 (“Delaware County trails Philadelphia and the other counties in flattening the curve of new cases.”).

<sup>8</sup> See Emergency Sheriff Sales Postponement Order dated June 18, 2020.

<sup>9</sup> See Orders dated March 16, 2020, p. 2; March 18, 2020, pp. 4, 6-7; April 1, 2020, pp. 4-5; and April 28, 2020, pp. 4-5 – Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Nos. 531 and 532, Judicial Administration Docket. See also Attached *Interim* Civil Calendar.

<sup>10</sup> See Orders dated March 16, 2020, p. 2; March 18, 2020, pp. 4, 6-7; April 1, 2020, pp. 4-5; and April 28, 2020, pp. 4-5 – Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Nos. 531 and 532, Judicial Administration Docket.

<sup>11</sup> See Emergency Orders – Civil Section dated March 18, 2020; Emergency Extension – Civil Section dated April 7, 2020; and Second Emergency Extension – Civil Section dated May 1, 2020.

<sup>12</sup> See Civil Section Emergency Cancellation and Revised Scheduling Protocols dated June 22, 2020, p. 4. (Because these arbitration hearings must for now due to facility space constraints and necessary social distancing be held in areas other than courtrooms and/or hearing rooms, the arrangements needed to allow some manner of ACT participation require additional time compared to those matters listed in a traditional civil courtroom where such technologies are large in place already.)

<sup>13</sup> See Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(2)(k). See also Emergency Declaration dated March 17, 2020; Emergency Declaration Extension dated April 2, 2020; Second Emergency Declaration dated April 28, 2020; and Third Emergency Declaration dated May 27, 2020.

<sup>14</sup> See Civil Section Emergency Cancellation and Revised Scheduling Protocols dated June 22, 2020, pp. 4-5.

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<sup>15</sup> See Civil Section Emergency Cancellation and Revised Scheduling Protocols dated June 22, 2020, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> *See* Orders dated March 16, 2020, pp. 2-3; March 18, 2020, pp. 4, 6-7; April 1, 2020, pp. 4-5; April 28, 2020, pp. 4-5 – Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Nos. 531 and 532, Judicial Administration Docket. *See also* Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(2)(d)(h)(i)(q).

<sup>17</sup> *See* Order dated April 28, 2020, p. 10 – Pennsylvania Supreme Court, Nos. 531 and 532, Judicial Administration Docket.

<sup>18</sup> A copy of Delaware County Local Rule 205.4 is attached and wholly incorporated by reference.



## Chester County Health Department

### Coronavirus COVID-19

Workforce Screening

Updated: April 22, 2020

**Purpose:** This guide has been developed to support the screening of **essential employees** to assess need to self-isolate and work remotely. Non-essential employees are encouraged to work remotely, until further notice.

#### Procedure:

##### 1. *Assess Current Symptoms upon arrival:*

- Take temperature with temporal or forehead touchless thermometer
- Are you taking any medication to treat or suppress a fever? Yes/No
- Are you currently experiencing any of the following symptoms?

Column A	Column B
1 or more symptoms	2 or more symptoms
Fever (99.5°F or higher <sup>1</sup> )	Lack of smell or taste (without congestion)
Cough	Sore throat
Shortness of breath	Chills
Difficulty breathing	Muscle pain
	Headache

"Has Symptoms" is defined as having 1 or more symptom(s) in Column A  
**OR** 2 or more symptoms in Column B  
**OR** Yes to medication to suppress a fever.

##### 2. *Provide Guidance (Table 1):*

Status	Employer Recommendation	Guidance for Essential Employee
No Symptoms	Symptom and temperature check daily upon arrival	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Employee self-monitor for symptoms.</li><li>2. Wear a face mask at all times.</li><li>3. Practice social distancing in the work-place and do not congregate in common areas.</li><li>4. Go home immediately if they become sick.</li><li>5. Do not share headsets or objects used near face.</li></ol>
Has Symptoms	Self-Isolate at home	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Notify supervisor.</li><li>2. Remain home and self-isolate until "COVID-19 Return to Work Guidance" is met.</li></ol>
Positive Test Result	Self-isolate at home	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Notify supervisor.</li><li>2. Follow the "COVID-19 Positive Test Result or Exposure" guidance.</li><li>3. Remain home and self-isolate until "COVID-19 Return to Work Guidance" is met.</li></ol>

<sup>1</sup> Taken with temporal thermometer





## Chester County Health Department

### Coronavirus COVID-19

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Workforce Screening

Updated: April 22, 2020

#### **COVID-19 Exposure or Positive Test Result:**

To ensure continuity of operations of essential functions, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) advises that essential employees and healthcare personnel may be permitted to continue work following potential exposure to COVID-19, provided they remain asymptomatic and additional precautions listed in Table 1 are implemented to protect them and the community.

Individuals are notified by their physician or the Health Department about test results for COVID-19. If an employee receives a positive test result for COVID-19, employee should remain at home in isolation until *COVID-19 Return to Work Guidance* is met.

Test results would include the following:

- Detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA in a clinical specimen using a molecular amplification detection test
  - Individuals should follow the guidance in Table 1 and "Instructions for Individuals Tested for COVID-19" (see below).
- Detection of specific antigen in a clinical specimen
  - Individuals should follow the guidance in Table 1 and "Instructions for Individuals Tested for COVID-19" (see below).
- Detection of IGM antibody in serum, plasma, or whole blood indicative of a new or recent infection
  - Individuals should follow the guidance in Table 1 and "Testing for COVID-19 Antibodies" (see below).

**Note:** If an individual is asymptomatic or has very mild symptoms, they will not be tested. Individuals are encouraged to follow the self-monitoring and quarantine guidance and call their primary care physician if symptoms worsen.

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, the building does not need to be evacuated. An employer may choose to voluntarily close to perform a deep cleaning out of an abundance of caution (see "Cleaning and Hygiene" button at [www.chesco.org/coronavirus](http://www.chesco.org/coronavirus)).



## Chester County Health Department

### Coronavirus COVID-19

Workforce Screening  
Updated: April 22, 2020

#### Temperature Assessment:

The temperature considered a fever differs based on how temperature is taken.

Mode	Temperature for fever
Walk through scanner	97.5°F or higher
Axillary and temporal	99.5°F or higher
Oral	100.0°F or higher

#### COVID-19 Return to Work Guidance:

Essential employees may discontinue home isolation and return to work under the following conditions:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since your fever went away without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- **AND** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
- **AND** At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Essential employees and healthcare personnel (HCP) with symptoms under home isolation **MUST** be excluded from work until:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since your fever went away without the use of fever-reducing medication
- **AND** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
- **AND** at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

After returning to work, essential employees and HCP should:

- Wear a facemask at all times while at work until all symptoms are completely resolved or until 14 days after illness onset, whichever is longer.
- Be restricted from contact with severely immunocompromised individuals/patients (e.g., transplant, hematology-oncology) until 14 days after illness onset.
- Adhere to hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette (e.g., cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, dispose of tissues in waste receptacles).
- Self-monitor for symptoms. Seek immediate re-evaluation from occupational health/primary care provider and do not work if symptoms recur or worsen.



## **Chester County Health Department**

### **Coronavirus COVID-19**

Workforce Screening

Updated: April 22, 2020

## **Screening Procedure**

Everyone entering a County building must complete screening, staff and visitors. The screening tool will assess potential symptoms and provide guidance to "GO" or "STOP" as shown below.

**Step 1:** Individuals entering the building should use the camera feature on their smart phone to scan the posted QR code and fill in the survey questions.

Note: if individuals do not have a phone, security staff should access the survey on a designated laptop or device to ask the question verbally and complete the screening assessment.

**Step 2:** Complete temperature screening of individual and tell person whether they have a fever based on temperature cutoffs:

<b>Mode</b>	<b>Temperature for fever</b>
Walk through scanner	98°F or higher
Axillary and temporal	99.5°F or higher

**Step 3:** Submit survey and receive "GO" or "STOP" guidance.

If GO: Show to security and continue into building

If STOP: Leave the building, return to car. Employees must call HR to notify them and receive additional instructions, prior to leaving.



## Chester County Health Department

### Coronavirus COVID-19

Workforce Screening

Updated: April 22, 2020



# CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

CHESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

# BE INFORMED

LEARN THE FACTS, SHARE THE FACTS, STOP THE FEAR

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS TESTED FOR COVID-19

Note: This guidance is not for antibody or serology testing.

### TEST RESULTS

Contact the physician who ordered the test for results.

Do not call the Health Department for your results.

Results are typically available within 7 days of testing, but may be delayed at times depending on testing volume and the laboratory used.

### WHILE YOU WAIT FOR YOUR RESULTS



Self-isolate to your home.



Others who live in your home should also stay home.



If you live with others, self-isolate in a private room and use a separate bathroom, if possible.



Wear a mask when you enter general living areas.



If your symptoms worsen, call your healthcare provider.



Make a list of close contacts - within 6 feet for more than 10 minutes - you have from two days before you became sick until you began self-isolating.

### WHAT TO DO IF YOU TEST POSITIVE



Notify your close contacts and let them know to quarantine at home for 14 days.



If your symptoms worsen or you require hospitalization, notify your healthcare provider immediately.



Continue to self-isolate at home until you have recovered:



72 HOURS  
NO Fever  
without medicine



Other  
Symptoms  
have improved



7 DAYS  
since  
Symptoms began

### WHAT TO DO IF YOU TEST NEGATIVE



If you had a known exposure to someone with COVID-19, continue to quarantine for 14 days after your exposure.



If you did not have a known exposure to someone with COVID-19 and do not have symptoms, you can stop your quarantine.



If you did not have a known exposure to someone with COVID-19 and have symptoms, you may have another illness. Stay home until 3 days after your last day of your symptoms.

For more information visit:

Chester County Health Department

[www.chesco.org/coronavirus](http://www.chesco.org/coronavirus)

# INTERIM CIVIL CALENDAR 2020

June

	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11	12
Liaison Judge Dozor	TR	X	TR	TR	TR	O	O	O	O	O
Judge Angelos	O	X	O	O	O	TR	TR	TR	TR	TR
Judge Whelan	TR	X	TR	TR	TR	O	O	O	O	O
Judge Eckel	O	X	O	O	O	TR	TR	TR	TR	TR

O = Office    TR = Non-Jury Trials & Hearings    MJ = Motion Hearing List Day    SS = Sheriff Sale

**INTERIM CIVIL CALENDAR  
2020**

**June**

	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
	15	16	17	18	19	22	23	24	25	26
Liaison Judge Dozor	TR	TR	TR	TR	TR/SS	O	O	O	O	O
Judge Angelos	O	O	O	O	O	TR	MJ	TR	TR	TR
Judge Whelch	TR	TR	TR	TR	TR/SS	O	O	O	O	O
Judge Eckel	O	O	O	O	O	TR	MJ	TR	TR	TR

O = Office    TR = Non-Jury Trials & Hearings    MJ = Motion Hearing List Day    SS = Sheriff Sale

# INTERIM CIVIL CALENDAR 2020

## June/July

	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
	29	30	1	2	3	6	7	8	9	10
Liaison Judge Dozor	TR	TR	TR	TR		O	O	O	O	O
Judge Angeles	O	O	O	O		TR	MJ	TR	TR	TR
Judge Whelan	TR	TR	TR	TR		O	O	O	O	O
Judge Eckel	O	O	O	O		TR	MJ	TR	TR	TR

O = Office    TR = Non-Jury Trials & Hearings    MJ = Motion Hearing List Day    SS = Sheriff Sale

INTERIM CIVIL CALENDAR  
2020

July

	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
	13	14	15	16	17	20	21	22	23	24	27	28	29	30	31
Liaison Judge Dozor	TR	TR	TR	TR	TR/SS	O	O	O	O	O	TR	TR	TR	TR	TR
Judge Angelos	O	O	O	O	O	TR	MJ	TR	TR	TR	O	O	O	O	O
Judge Whelan	TR	TR	TR	TR	TR/SS	O	O	O	O	O	TR	TR	TR	TR	TR
Judge Eckel	O	O	O	O	O	TR	MJ	TR	TR	TR	O	O	O	O	O

O = Office

TR = Non-Jury Trials & Hearings

, MJ = Motion Hearing List Day

SS = Sheriff Sale



## DELAWARE COUNTY LOCAL RULE 205.4

### (a) (1) Commencement

- (i) On the commencement date, all parties may electronically file all "legal papers" as defined in Pa.R.C.P. No. 205.4 (a)(2), with the Office of Judicial Support through Delaware County's Electronic Filing system as more specifically provided in Pennsylvania Rule of Civil Procedure No. 205.4 and Delaware County Civil Rule 205.4,
- (ii) Ninety (90) days from the commencement date, parties shall electronically file all "legal papers" as defined in Pa.R.C.P. No. 205.4 (a)(2), with the Office of Judicial Support through Delaware County's Electronic Filing system as more specifically provided in Pennsylvania Rule of Civil Procedure No. 205.4 and Delaware County Civil Rule 205.4.

*Explanatory Note: The term "legal paper" as defined in Pa.R.C.P. No. 205.4(a)(2) encompasses all pleadings and all other papers filed with the Office of Judicial Support – including exhibits and attachments –even if the legal papers are not adversarial in nature and do not require the non-filing party or parties to respond.*

### (2) As used in this rule the following words shall have the following meanings:

CMS (*Case Management System*): A Court case management system manages the receipt, processing, storage and retrieval of data associated with a case and performs actions on the data.

Electronic Filing (*E-Filing*): The electronic transmission, acceptance and processing of a filing. A submission consists of data, one or more documents, and/or images. The definition of electronic filing does not apply to facsimile or e-mail.

Electronic Service (*E-Service*): The electronic transmission of an original document to all other electronically-registered case participants via the electronic filing system. Upon the completion of any transmission to the electronic filing system, an electronic receipt shall be issued to the sender acknowledging receipt by the electronic filing system.

BFS : Delaware County Electronic Filing System.

### (b) (1) Authorized Electronic Format of Legal Papers Electronically Filed

All legal papers shall be filed in a portable document format ("pdf"). A legal paper presented for filing in hard copy or in a format other than portable document format shall be converted to a portable document format and maintained by the Office of Judicial Support pursuant to Pa. R.C.P. 205.4 (b)(1)

- (2) This Rule shall not apply to legal papers related to actions in Support as defined in Pa.R.C.P. 1910.1 through 1910.50 and 1930.1 through 1940.9, Custody, Partial Custody and Visitation of Minor Children under Pa. R.C.P. 1951.1, Special Relief under Pa. R.C.P. 1913.13 or Actions for Divorce or for the Annulments of Marriage under Pa. R.C.P. 1920.1; Protection from Abuse under Pa. R. C. P. 1901.3; Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation under Pa. R.C.P 1951; Petition for Writ of Seizure pursuant to Pa. R. C. P. 1075; Petition to Postpone Sheriff's Sale Pa.R.C.P. 3132; Petition to Appoint a Constable. ; Claim of Exemption pursuant to Pa.R.C.P. 3123.1; Appeal from Denial of Right to Know Request under Pa.R.J. A. 509. This rule shall also not apply to certified zoning records which

include blueprints and/or plot plans under Delaware County Local Rule 27. *Motions or petitions seeking relief in emergency situations, injunctive relief or stay of proceedings shall not be filed through the EFS system but shall be taken to the Office of Judicial Support to be time-stamped, processed, and docketed and then brought by the party seeking the emergency relief or the stay of proceedings to the Court Administrator for reference to the appropriate judge.*

(2) Website. Access to the Website

- (i) Website. All legal papers shall be filed electronically through Delaware County's Electronic Filing system Electronic Filing system "EFS" which shall be accessible through the County of Delaware website <http://www.co.delaware.pa.us/ojs/efile.html> or at such other website as may be designated from time to time.
- (ii) Use of the EFS shall be in accordance with the local rule and instructions contained on the website.
- (iii) Access to the Website. To obtain access to the Delaware County Electronic Filing System, counsel and self-represented litigant must apply for and receive a User Name and Password.
- (iv) Registered users shall be individuals, and not law firms, agencies, corporations nor other groups.
- (v) User access may be suspended to prevent fraud, to maintain security of the system and network, to prevent an unacceptable level of congestion, or to prevent a disruption to the EFS or another user.

(d) (1) Payment of Filing Fees under the EFS system.

- (i) The Office of Judicial Support will accept for payment of all filing fees through PayPal.
- (ii) The Office of Judicial Support will not accept advance deposits for future filings.

(e) Reserved

(f) (1) Filing Status Messages

- (i) Upon receipt of the electronic document, the Office of Judicial Support shall provide the filing party with an acknowledgment, which includes the date and time the document was received by the Delaware County Electronic Filing system.
- (ii) After review of the electronic document, the Office of Judicial Support shall provide the filing party with e-mail notification, or notification on the Delaware County Electronic Filing System, that the document has been accepted for filing ("filed") or refused and not accepted for filing.

## (2) Official Record

- (i) When an electronic document is accepted, the document is the official record.

## (3) Signatures and Verifications

- (i) The electronic filing of documents utilizing the issued User Name and Password as provided by this rule and Pa.R.C.P. No. 205.4, constitutes the party's signature on electronic documents as provided by Pa.R.C.P. No. 1023.1 and, if the filing party is an attorney, constitutes a certification of authorization to file it as provided in Pa.R.C.P. No. 205.1.
- (ii) The electronic document filed by a party must include a signature block, and the name of the filer under whose User Name and Password the document is submitted. The document may be submitted with the filer's scanned signature or "/s/" and the filer's name typed in the space where the signature would otherwise appear on the document.
- (iii) If an attorney is the filing party, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Attorney Identification number must be included under the signature line. The correct format for an attorney signature is as follows:

/s/ Attorney name  
Pa Supreme Court ID#  
Attorney for (Plaintiff/Defendant) XYZ Corporation  
ABC Law Firm  
ADDRESS  
TELEPHONE NUMBER  
FAX NUMBER - (FAX)  
E-MAIL ADDRESS

- (iv) An authorized electronic filer must not allow their user name and password to be used by anyone other than an agent who is authorized by the electronic filer.
- (v) Electronic filers shall notify the Office of Judicial Support's Help Desk immediately if there has been any unauthorized use of their EFS user name and password.
- (vi) The Verification required by Pa.R.C.P. Nos. 206.1 and 1024 and the signature page(s) of any document or legal paper executed by a client or other persons other than the filing party must be scanned and attached to the electronic filing in a portable document format at the time the legal paper is submitted.
- (vii) Documents requiring signatures of more than one party must be scanned and attached to the electronic filing in a portable document format at the time the legal paper is submitted.
- (viii) The original of a sworn or verified document that is electronically filed (e.g. affidavit) or is contained with an electronic filing (e.g. verification) shall be maintained by the electronic filer and made available upon direction of the court or reasonable request of the signatory or opposing party.

*Explanatory Note: This subsection is designed to address issues which may arise regarding signatures on legal documents. A filer's use of the User Name and Password issued through the Delaware County Electronic Filing System is the filer's "electronic signature". However, legal documents often require verifications executed by non-filers. In addition, many legal documents require multiple signatures. Deficiencies in content and execution could be subject to preliminary objections. In order to avoid prejudicial delay, this section requires the filing party to scan such legal documents or signature pages and include them as part of the electronic filing at the time of submission. Original copies should be kept as provided for in Pa.R.C.P. No. 205.4 (b)(4).*

**(4) Electronic Filing Fees and Costs.**

- (i) The Office of Judicial Support shall collect an electronic filing user fee for each legal paper or exhibit filed as established by the Office of Judicial Support with the approval of the President Judge of the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas.
- (ii) In addition to such electronic filing user fee, the Office of Judicial Support is authorized to charge a fee as set forth from time to time for each page of a legal paper or exhibit which is filed in hard copy format and which must be converted by the Office of Judicial Support to a portable document format.
- (iii) Electronic filers shall alert the EFS to any payment errors within forty-five (45) days of the payment date by notifying the Office of Judicial Support's Help Desk.

**(5) Other Procedures Necessary to the Operation of a System of Electronic Filing:** authorized by Pa.R.C.P. No. 205.4 (f), the following administrative procedures are adopted:

- (i) If a document is accepted, it shall be deemed to have been filed as of the date and time it was received by the Delaware County Electronic Filing System; provided, however, that if a document is submitted without the requisite fee, the document shall be deemed to have been accepted for filing as of the date payment was received. The Office of Judicial Support is authorized to refuse for filing a document submitted without the requisite payment. If the electronic document other than original process is accepted for filing, it will be electronically served as authorized by Pa.R.C.P. No. 205.4(g)(1)(ii) and service shall be effectuated as provided in Pa.R.C.P. No. 205.4(g)(2)(ii).
- (ii) *Termination Notice.* In addition to the procedures set forth in Pa.R.C.P. No. 230.2, in cases where a party is a registered user of the Delaware County Electronic Filing System, notice of proposed termination may also be electronic.
- (iii) An electronic filer is not required to file any paper copies unless specifically required by the court.

*Note: In addition to the electronic paper, a Judge may request counsel or a self-represented litigant to provide a courtesy copy of a pleading(s) or other such material including but not limited to a memorandum of law, a pre-trial binder for the Court including relevant pleadings, a pre-trial memo, if any, stipulations and pre-labeled exhibits which may be useful to a Judge in preparation for trial. The Court may also request courtesy motions, petitions and answers to such pleadings from time to time.*

- (iv) An electronic filer is not required to file multiple copies of documents unless requested by the Court, or as specified elsewhere in these local rules. If documents are to be served electronically, the electronic filer is not required to provide envelopes, unless requested by the Court or as specified elsewhere in the local rules, except for those parties who are to receive the document by regular mail or other means of service as required by other rules.
- (v) Electronic filing is permitted at all times when the EFS is available. If the EFS is unavailable at the time a registered user attempts to file a document, the registered user shall make reasonable efforts to file the document as soon as the unavailability ends.
- (vi) If a registered user believes the unavailability of the EFS prevented a timely filing to the party's prejudice, the registered user may submit a motion to the court within ten (10) days of the registered user's unsuccessful attempt to file the document. The motion shall state the date and time of the first unsuccessful attempt to file the document electronically, the date(s) and time(s) of any subsequent attempts to file the document electronically, and why the delay was prejudicial.
- (vii) The filing deadline for any document filed electronically is 11:59:59PM EST/EDT.
- (viii) *Documents with Attachments.* Attachments, including exhibits, that are part of any filing, shall be filed electronically at the same time as the document.
- (ix) An attachment or exhibit that exceeds the technical standards for the EFS or is unable to be electronically filed must be filed as ordered by the court. A Notice of Exhibit Attachment shall be filed in the EFS referencing such an exhibit with specificity and stating the reason why the exhibit was not filed electronically.
- (x) The Court may, on its own motion or for good cause shown, order a filing be made under seal. Filings requested to be made under seal shall be submitted to the Office of Judicial Support over the counter rather than through EFS.
- (xi) Sealed or confidential documents may be submitted for electronic filing in a manner that maintains confidentiality under applicable law.
- (xii) Filings not under seal are public and parties shall comply with the Public Access policy related to case records of the Appellate and Trial Courts of the Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania under 204 Pa. Code 213.81 and Delaware County Administrative Rule No. 17-5120 .

*Note: As required by Pa.R.C.P. No. 205.4(c)(1), access to the Delaware County Electronic Filing System shall be available at all times, except for required maintenance. However, legal papers can only be reviewed during normal court hours. Therefore, parties are cautioned to file required legal papers in advance of any filing deadline to enable timely correction and re-submission in the event a legal paper is not accepted or is refused for filing. The Office of Judicial Support may refuse for filing any legal paper submitted without the required filing fees as provided by 42 Pa.C.S. § 1725(c)(2)(xix), or, at the Office of Judicial Support's discretion, may authorize the filer to submit the required filing fees within a stated time period after which the Office of Judicial Support may refuse the legal paper for filing if payment is not received.*

- (6) If a legal paper is refused for filing, the Office of Judicial Support shall specify the reason. Subject to the provisions of subsection Rule 205.4(e)(1)(i), a legal paper refused for filing shall be deemed as not having been filed.
- (7) Neither the Court nor the Office of Judicial Support are required to maintain a hard copy of any legal paper or exhibit, notice, or order filed or maintained electronically under this rule.
- (8) If a legal paper is electronically filed, the Delaware County Civil Electronic Filing System will automatically serve all persons who have previously submitted electronic filings in the same case, pursuant to Delaware County Civil Rule \*205.4 and Pa. R.C.P. No. 205.4 (g) but the filing party must serve all others as required by rules of Court. All legal papers filed in a hard-copy format must be served by the filing party as required by rules of court.

*Note: A party has the responsibility of providing legal papers and other correspondence to the Delaware County Sheriff's Office for service of original process pursuant to Pa. R.C.P. 400-425. The Delaware County Electronic Filing Service or CMS program does not encompass the Delaware County Sheriff's Office.*

- (9) Documents shall use the universal PDF standard and shall be no more than 25 megabytes (mb). Files that exceed this limit must be split into multiple files so that each individual file is less than 25 megabytes (mb).
- (10) Color shall be Black and White, resolution of 300 dpi. If a filer has a document that is color or greystroke, the document shall not be filed electronically but must be submitted to the Office of Judicial Support.
- (11) All pleadings must conform to Pennsylvania Rule of Civil Procedure 204.1 (1) so that the size of the document be 8 ½ inch by 11 inch paper.
- (12) Any font that is not part of the Microsoft default font list must be embedded in the PDF document
- (13) PDF properties ( Title, Author, Subject, and Keywords) should be removed from the document. Documents cannot be password protected or encrypted. Documents names shall not include any special characters such / ; \* ? " < >

(g) (2) *Service by Electronic Transmission*

- (i) Service shall be made to registered users through the EFS and to all others as otherwise provided in the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure. Service by the EFS is complete upon transmission on a Saturday, a Sunday, a holiday recognized by Delaware County, or after 5:00PM EST/EDT, shall be considered complete on the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday or recognized Delaware County holiday.
- (ii) Other than original service, the electronic filer shall not be required to serve a paper copy of the electronic filing on the opposing party if the opposing party is a registered user on the EFS and the electronic filing has been served on them through the EFS.

- (h) An AOPC Civil Court Cover Sheet pursuant to Pa.R.C.P No. 205.5 shall be required and must be scanned separately from the original pleading

*Note: The following documents may be filed through the EFS system. The Office of Judicial Support, once accepted, will forward the document to Court Administration for review and processing:*

*(1) Certificate of Readiness pursuant to Local Rule 241; (2) Debtor's Exemption under Local Rule 3123; (3) Application for Continuance in arbitration cases pursuant to Delaware County Local Rule 1303 (f) or for a hearing related to a petition or motion (Local Rule 206.1 (a)(1) and 208.3 (b)(1)); (4) License Suspension Appeal (Local Rule 29); (5) Tax Assessment Appeal (Local Rule 30); (6) Board of View (Local Rule 622 (k)); and (8) Request for Extension pursuant to Local Rule 1028.*

*Once filed through the EFS system, the document will be processed by the Court Administrator and notice of the outcome and/or a hearing date, if any, will be sent electronically to the filing party. The party requesting a continuance shall provide advance notice to all parties in a case, state if the continuance is opposed or unopposed, and be responsible to notify all parties of the outcome of the request prior to a listed hearing or event.*

*Applications for Continuance in assigned cases may be filed electronically at the Court's discretion subject to the assigned judge's guidelines.*

*Motions or petitions seeking relief in emergency situations or stay of proceedings shall not be filed through the EFS system but shall be taken to the Office of Judicial Support to be time-stamped, processed, and docketed and then brought by the party seeking the emergency relief or the stay of proceedings to the Court Administrator for reference to the appropriate judge.*

Note: This rule is adopted as required by Pa.R.C.P. No. 239.9.