

Problem Solving Courts added to the list of non-essential and non-critical proceedings that may be conducted remotely

Chief Judge Michael T. McHugh's latest directive adds Problem Solving Courts (Felony Drug Court, Mental Health Court, and Veterans Treatment Court) status conference hearings/wellness checks to the list of non-essential and non-critical proceedings that MAY be conducted remotely. This means the hearings may be done using communication equipment (no live participation) as long as the presiding judge finds it can be done without violating due process. No approval from the Chief Judge is necessary.

Other non-essential and non-critical proceedings that may be conducted remotely are outlined in the latest memorandum (Memo 7 – Courts Remain Open with Limitations AMENDED2). Along with the proceedings that have been deemed essential or critical.

Court proceedings that are considered essential and critical allow for in-person appearances as long as all available methods of "social distancing" are taken, with only attorneys, parties, necessary witnesses, and the media allowed in the courtroom. Everyone present will be required to abide by "social distancing." Alternatively, necessary persons may choose to appear remotely using communication equipment, if remote appearance can be done effectively.

All civil and family non-evidentiary hearings shall be held remotely unless the Administrative Judge of the division or county finds that a remote hearing is impossible or would violate due process.

Attorneys, parties and witnesses with upcoming trials or hearings are advised to contact the appropriate judicial office with any questions.

Employees of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit Administrative Office of the Courts will continue to report for their assigned work duties, unless they were approved for telecommuting / alternate work schedule, or deemed at a higher risk for severe illness.

Although the courthouses remain open, please do not visit any of our courthouses unless you are there for official court business.

This directive along with Administrative Order 2.39 remain in effect until further notice.

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