

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER OF DECEMBER 28, 2021

Pursuant to the Interim Administrative Order of December 27, 2021 of Chief Judge Joseph M. Getty of the Court of Appeals of Maryland, the Circuit Court for Washington County, Maryland, shall enter **Phase III** of Covid-19 Emergency Operations on December 29, 2021. **Phase III** shall remain in effect until February 8, 2022 at a minimum, and, it will continue During **Phase III**, this Court will be suspending all Criminal and Civil Jury Trials and all Civil and Family Nonjury Trials and otherwise limit proceedings to those permitted in **Phases I, II and III** of the Coronavirus Phased Reopening Plan.

See mdcourts.gov/coronavirusphasedreopening for more details.

Criminal Cases presently scheduled for jury trial between December 29, 2021 and February 8, 2022 will be continued for Good Cause upon request of counsel prior to the hearing date. The hearing dates may be maintained for conducting bench trials, motions hearings and plea hearings. Upon notification of counsel that a Criminal Case may be converted from a jury trial to a permitted proceeding the Circuit Court will assign a specific time to that event to reduce the number of persons in the courtroom. Continued cases will be rescheduled for jury trial in the ordinary course.

Civil Cases presently scheduled for jury trial or bench trial between December 29, 2021 and February 8, 2022 will be continued upon request of counsel prior to the hearing date. The hearing dates may be maintained for conducting motions hearings, non-adversarial hearings, settlement conferences and scheduling conferences as needed. Continued cases will be rescheduled for jury trial in the ordinary course if not otherwise specifically set.

It is recommended that individuals arrive no earlier than 15 minutes prior to their scheduled hearing time for in-court proceedings. The number of people brought with any party must be kept to a minimum as there is limited Courtroom and waiting area capacities to promote social distancing.

The Court will utilize remote proceedings, either telephonically or by use of an approved digital platform, whenever feasible for public safety while ensuring the rights of the litigants.

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KEVIN R. TUCKER, CLERK
Entered By _____
cc: Minutes and Proceedings

A screening process will be in place for entry to the Court House for all members of the public, as well as Court House staff. Individuals may be denied access to the Court House if they do not meet the health screening guidelines or if they refuse to participate in the screening process. The Clerk of Court's Office shall be open to the public; however, for the benefit of the public, appointments are strongly recommended for in-person visits. To make an appointment, the public shall access the Clerk's Office at telephone number (301) 790-4972. If individuals arrive without appointments, the Court reserves the right to limit access to the public and remove individuals from the Court House if social distancing cannot be accomplished. All members of the public, as well as Court House staff, are ordered and directed to wear masks or cloth coverings at all times while in the Court House completely covering the individual's nose and mouth. Signs and floor marking to ensure social distancing in the Clerk of Court areas are clearly marked and shall be heeded.

At this time, jury trials and civil bench trials set to begin on or after February 8, 2022 shall proceed as scheduled except as affected by further order of this Court. So ORDERED this 28th day of December, 2021.

1
Brett R. Wilson, Administrative Judge