

RE: Seventh Extended ORDER : **IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF**
Re: Access to Courthouse and :
Modification of Court's Functions : **BRADFORD COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**
: **42nd Judicial District**
During COVID-19 Public Health : **NO. 2020IR 0015**
Emergency :

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ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

AND NOW, October 29, 2020, upon consideration of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's May 27, 2020 Order authorizing local courts to continue declarations of emergency; and the increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases within Bradford County; and in consideration of the health and safety of the employees of Bradford County Court of Common Pleas, the Courthouse, court users and the public; and in consideration that the COVID-19 virus poses a continuing health risk; and in consideration of the recommendations of the CDC for use of precautions to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, a continuing judicial emergency has been declared this date for Bradford County Court of Common Pleas through January 31, 2021.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. Bradford County Court of Common Pleas and Bradford County Magisterial District Courts are open to conduct all court business subject to protocols and procedures that limit, as much as possible, all in-person access and proceedings. Advanced Communication Technology Communications shall be used for all proceedings in both the Court of Common Pleas and the Magisterial District Offices within constitutional limitations unless the presiding judge determines otherwise except preliminary hearings. Preliminary hearings shall be conducted by



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ORDER

Main (Public)

Bradford County Prothonotary

Advanced Communication Technology unless the presiding judge directs such in-person proceeding. Statewide rules that restrict, directly or indirectly, the use of such are hereby suspended. Proceedings requiring in-person appearances shall be conducted in a manner that employs appropriate social distancing and all other safety measures consistent with the federal and state executive guidance associated with countering the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

2. Court filings shall be made by means other than in-person delivery whenever possible. Pleadings shall be made by mail or email (subject to page limitations and subsequent filing fees and paper cost invoicing) to the appropriate filing office and will be accepted as an original filing. Statewide rules impeding court filings by means other than in-person delivery are hereby suspended.

3. Access by the public to the Courthouse shall be limited to a number of individuals facilitating the 6 foot distancing and percentage capacities recommended by the CDC. Protocols and procedures shall be implemented by each County Office to limit the number of individuals accessing said offices to insure appropriate social distancing and all other safety measures consistent with the federal and state executive guidance associated with countering the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This may be accomplished by requiring appointments to enter said office and/or or by limiting the number of individuals in the Courthouse.

4. All court users and public entering the Courthouse are required to wear a mask/protective face covering in order to protect not only the employees of the County, but other court users and members of the public.

5. Court users and the public are requested and encouraged to conduct any business they have in the Courthouse by telephone, mail, email or any other advanced communication technology whenever possible in order to avoid the in-person contact with Courthouse personnel.

6. This Administrative Order shall remain in effect through January 31, 2021 or until further order of the President Judge of this Court.

Within 24 hours of this order, notice of this action shall be provided by this court via the District Court Administrator as follows:

- A. Provided to the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts;
- B. Posted on the entry doors of the county courthouse of the Judicial District and all Magisterial District Courts within the Judicial District.
- C. Posted on the Judicial District's website; and
- D. Transmitted via e-mail to the local county bar association with the request that such association promptly forward the notice to all members.

BY THE COURT:



Maureen T. Beirne, P.J.