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IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: DECLARATION OF JUDICIAL EMERGENCY IN THE 15TH JUDICIAL  
DISTRICT ON ACCOUNT OF COVID-19 ("CORONAVIRUS")

AMENDMENT TO ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 9-2020;  
SUPREME COURT DOCKET NO. 54 MM 2020<sup>1</sup>

AND NOW, this 13th day of May, 2020, in consideration of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's April 28, 2020 order extending through June 1, 2020 the statewide judicial emergency declared by that court in its order of March 16, 2020, requiring Pennsylvania courts to generally open to conduct court business beginning May 4, 2020 and directing courts to use best efforts to accomplish the timely administration of justice in all matters, and in anticipation of the June 1, 2020 conclusion of the judicial emergency in the 15th Judicial District, it is hereby **ORDERED** and **DECREED**, beginning June 2, 2020, as follows:

1. All functions of the common pleas and magisterial district courts shall be fully restored except those which are, or might be in the future, specifically proscribed by order of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court or Governor. Common pleas and magisterial district judges shall maintain their own cases and schedules, using their best discretion to address the backlog of cases accumulating since the courts were generally closed on March 19, 2020. The following shall also apply to court operations:

**Common Pleas Courts**

2. Due to the current suspension of jury trials in Pennsylvania, as directed by the Supreme Court in its April 28, 2020 emergency order, no Chester County jurors will be summoned to appear for jury trials in June and July of 2020. Consequently, jury trials will begin no

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the Supreme Court's March 16, 2020 order (¶ 8) this amendment to Administrative Order No. 9-2020 shall be posted on the entry door of the Chester County Justice Center and magisterial district courts, posted on the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial District (Chester County court administration) website and transmitted via email to the Chester County Bar Association with the request that it promptly be forwarded to the Association members.

sooner than August 3, 2020. Any postponement of a criminal case caused by this administrative order requirement shall be considered a court postponement and constitute excludable time for the purposes of Pennsylvania Rule of Criminal Procedure 600. When the Supreme Court indicates that jury trials will again be permitted, the common pleas judges assigned jury trial cases and the pertinent members of the court administration office shall confer regarding the best manner and places to assemble jurors and conduct jury trials. Thereafter, those judges and court administration staff shall determine the appropriate number of jurors to be summoned each week and coordinate which judges shall conduct jury trials, with priority given to criminal trials over civil trials. The civil judges also shall work with court administration staff to ensure that courtrooms 1, 2 and 4 in the historic courthouse are available to be utilized, with sufficient facilities, for civil jury trial assembly and use in the event the Justice Center facilities are insufficient or unavailable for such assembly and use.

#### **Magisterial District Courts**

3. The magisterial district courts shall return to the regular criminal day schedule as described in the August 26, 2019 District Court Operational Regulation No. 1-2019, e.g., three (3) or four (4) courts will hold preliminary hearings per day. The court administrator shall schedule preliminary hearings for incarcerated defendants, appearing by advanced communication technology from a prison, before a designated magisterial district court judge until circumstances require a different arrangement.

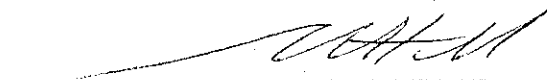
#### **General**

4. Protocols utilized to implement this Administrative Order, as amended, may be communicated by email, and other methods, among judges and relevant department heads as is necessary to efficiently ensure judicial coverage and protect the public and court/county employees.
5. Despite the anticipated June 1, 2020 conclusion of the statewide and local judicial emergency, all coronavirus related safety precautions, protocols and requirements previously described in this Administrative Order, as amended, as well as all prior

Administrative Orders will continue to remain valid and applicable to Chester County court operations.

6. These additional modifications to the 15th Judicial District's functions supersede and replace any modifications described in any prior Administrative Orders issued in March, April and May of 2020, to the extent that there is a conflict between these modifications and those preceding modifications.
7. This Administrative Order amendment is effective immediately.

BY THE COURT:



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JOHN L. HALL

P.J.