

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: 49th JUDICIAL DISTRICT
JUDICIAL EMERGENCY ORDER

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39-MM-2020

REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY JUDICIAL ORDER

1. Pamela A. Ruest, President Judge of the 49th Judicial District, hereby requests the following relief by Order of the Supreme Court:

a. Authorize the president judge to declare a judicial emergency in this judicial district through December 10, 2021 to take the actions set forth in paragraph 1b as authorized by Pa.R.J.A. No. 1952(B)(2).

b. Suspend or modify statewide procedural or administrative rules in this judicial district to authorize the temporary relocation of jury selection from the County seat of Bellefonte, Pennsylvania to the Penn Stater Conference Center and Hotel in State College, Pennsylvania for December 8, 9 and 10, 2021.

2. The circumstances necessitating this request for an emergency judicial order are that a contract has been negotiated for use of the Penn Stater for jury selection December 8, 9 & 10, 2021, approved by our Commissioners, and must be signed by October 1, 2021.

We have continuing concerns regarding Covid-19 in our community. We have many unvaccinated students returning to the Pennsylvania State University (PSU) and will have an influx of several thousand visitors to our county to attend PSU football games.

We are limited in the number of potential jurors we can seat in our largest courtroom, and we have several juries we need to select. Moving jury selection to the Penn Stater will allow us to call several larger jury panels with adequate social distancing and a safe selection process. This locale will further allow us to reduce our criminal case backlog caused by the pandemic.

3. To the extent possible and practical under the circumstances, notice of this request for an emergency judicial order will be:

- a. Posted in the courthouse or other judicial office
- b. Posted on the court's or county's website
- c. Posted on the county bar association's website
- d. Submitted to the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts for publication pursuant to Rule of Judicial Administration No. 1952(C)(5)

4. Interested parties are advised that objections to any emergency judicial order issued by the Supreme Court should be transmitted to the Supreme Court Prothonotary.

Signed: Pamela A. Ruest
Pamela A. Ruest, President Judge

Date: September 13, 2021