

CIRCUIT COURT FOR CARROLL COUNTY



NOTICE REGARDING RETURN TO PHASE III

November 16, 2020

On November 12, 2020, Chief Judge Barbera issued the *Fifth Administrative Order Restricting Statewide Judiciary Operations Due To The COVID-19 Emergency*, according to which courts return to Phase III operations, effective November 16, 2020 through December 31, 2020. In addition, all jury trials set to commence between November 16, 2020 and December 31, 2020 are suspended. This Administrative Order also provides that regardless of Phase, courts are encouraged to consider resolution of (1) matters that can be addressed without a hearing and (2) matters requiring a hearing or court trial, to the extent that an individual court has the capacity to hear such matters, either in person or on a remote basis, with access to the public as justice requires. Although Phase III generally limits the universe of non-jury trial proceedings, the Circuit Court for Carroll County will attempt to retain trial and hearing dates in proceedings where appropriate, particularly if some or all of the matter can be converted to a remote platform. Consistent with the above:

- All civil jury trials set to commence between November 16, 2020 and December 31, 2020 will be removed from the docket and will be rescheduled by Assignment.
- All criminal jury trials for the same period will remain on the docket and in lieu of a jury trial, will be converted to a status conference on the first day they are currently set to begin.
- All non-jury trials and motions hearings in criminal matters, including post-conviction hearings and three judge panel review hearings will remain as set.
- All non-jury trials and motions hearings in civil matters, will remain as set.
- All non-jury trials and motions hearings in family matters, including guardianship matters, will remain as set, with the exception of IV-D child support contempt hearings, which will be-reset after December 31, 2020.

The Circuit Court will deal with requests for conversions to remote hearings or for remote participation in hearings and continuances on a case-by-case basis, or on the court's own motion. All parties and attorneys to currently set cases will be contacted by the Assignment Office or by the assigned judge's or magistrate's chambers to confirm the status of the case and to set conference calls with the Court, if necessary.

Fred S. Hecker
Administrative Judge