



Supreme Court of Illinois

October 27, 2020

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT ISSUES PANDEMIC-RELATED ORDERS FOR REMOTE JURY TRIALS AND PROTECTIVE ORDERS

The Illinois Supreme Court announced today two orders which were proposals from the Illinois Judicial Conference's Court Operations During [COVID-19 Task Force](#) (Task Force).

The Orders are available on the Court website by clicking [here](#).

“The Task Force continues to find ways to help the courts adapt during the COVID-19 pandemic,” Chief Justice Anne M. Burke said. “The Supreme Court greatly appreciates the work they have done and continue to do.”

The Order on Remote Jury Selection in Civil Matters is in regards to remote jury selection in civil matters and is an expansion of the changes made to [Rule 45 and Rule 251 in May](#). Most civil jury trials have been on hold during the pandemic and the pool of jurors available for selection and service has decreased due to the health and economic impacts of the pandemic. After months of research, discussion, and a mock remote jury selection conducted by the 19th Judicial Circuit, the Task Force's subcommittee developed a proposal which permits circuits to conduct jury selection in civil cases via video conference.

The Order addresses jury selection in civil cases and does not address any other part of the jury trial (presentation of evidence or jury deliberations) or whether this method of questioning potential jurors is permissible in criminal jury trials. The order allows for a flexible approach to implementing remote jury selection, affording individual circuits discretion to determine if it is an appropriate tool based on each circuit's local conditions and constraints.

In addition to the Order, Guidelines and Supporting Documents for Remote Jury Selection recommended by the Task Force were also approved by the Supreme Court. They can be found [here](#).

The Order on Remote Service in Protective Order Proceedings permits remote service of process of the protective order or personal service of the protective order on a respondent so long as the operative terms of the protective order are read to the respondent in open court during the remote court appearance.

Before the pandemic, respondents who appeared in person at a court date would often be served with protective orders in open court. This allowed protective order cases to proceed and created a

record of service on the respondent of the protective order in case of future violations. But with many court proceedings, including protective order and traffic cases, being heard remotely, courts have been unsure how to handle service on respondents who appear remotely.

The Order directs the Clerk of the Circuit Court to take appropriate action once remote service has been achieved so that the necessary authorities are properly updated. The Task Force worked with domestic violence advocates to craft the language of the order.

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