

**IN THE
SUPREME COURT
OF
THE STATE OF ILLINOIS**

In re: Illinois Courts Response to COVID-19 Emergency/Temporarily Amended Rules

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Illinois Supreme Court has temporarily altered the operation of certain Illinois Supreme Court Rules. A complete listing can be found on the [Illinois Courts Response to COVID-19 page](#). Those temporary rules changes are collected here for the convenience of the public; the rules changes are governed by the M.R. 30370 orders carrying them out and may be subject to further amendment.

Temporarily Amended Rules 45 and 241

Rules 45 and 241 (governing authorization for remote proceedings) are temporarily altered by an [M.R. 30370 of October 27, 2020](#), as follows:

A. Illinois has been in a state of emergency since Governor Pritzker’s declaration on March 9, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, necessitating temporary court-imposed restrictions to minimize the impact of COVID-19 on the court system, while continuing to provide access to justice.

B. Civil jury trials are necessary to the administration of justice in Illinois, and the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an enormous impact on our entire court system, including the number of civil cases tried to verdict. Safely resuming civil jury trials will require modifications to court procedures and any local rules or administrative orders to allow for social distancing and compliance with public health protocols to minimize the risk of COVID-19 exposure by jurors, court personnel, litigants, and the public.

C. The Seventh Amendment right to trial by jury must be fiercely protected, and courts must continue to provide equal justice under the law while departing from traditional procedures.

D. Remote jury selection by video conference (herein “remote jury selection”) in civil cases is permissible to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure so that litigants can access justice in a timely fashion while keeping all jurors, court personnel, litigants, and the public safe.

For civil matters, circuits may choose to utilize remote jury selection consistent with the guidelines established by the Court Operations During COVID-19 Task Force, and adopted by the Court (herein “Guidelines”) on October 27, 2020, available at http://illinoiscourts.gov/CircuitCourt/Remote_Jury_Information.asp.

E. Any remote jury selection must be conducted consistent with the constitutional rights of the parties and preserve constitutional public access.

F. Authorization for remote proceedings under Illinois Supreme Court Rules 45 and 241 is temporarily expanded to include remote jury selection for civil trials.

G. Remote jury selection in a given case requires the consent of all parties, unless the judge finds, after weighing the factors of public safety and the parties’ rights to access to

justice, that the case presents a compelling circumstance to proceed with remote jury selection absent parties' consent.

H. Circuits or counties may apply to the Court for permission to undertake a pilot project in which remote jury selection could be ordered by the judge without the parties' consent or a compelling circumstance.

I. Nothing in this Order limits the authority of circuits to adopt measures to protect health and safety that are more restrictive than this Order, as circumstances warrant. Circuits are encouraged to move toward conducting as much court business as can be done consistent with public health and safety, in the interest of the fair and timely administration of justice.

Temporarily Amended Rules 101, 102, 283, 286(a), 298, and 404

Rules 101, 102, 283, 286, 298, and 404 (governing summonses requiring an appearance on a specific date, applications for waivers of court fees, and applications for waivers of court assessments) are temporarily altered by an [M.R. 30370 of February 10, 2021](#), and an [M.R. 30370 of May 28, 2021](#), as follows:

1. With respect to Applications for Waiver of Court Fees pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/5-105 and Supreme Court Rule 298 and Applications for Waiver of Court Assessments pursuant to 725 ILCS 5/124A-20 and Supreme Court Rule 404 in all matters, including but not limited to civil, criminal, and quasi-criminal matters:

a. Applications for Waiver of Court Fees by persons who are exempt from e-filing under Supreme Court Rule 9(c) may be filed by United States Mail, third-party commercial carrier, in person, or utilizing an available dropbox, or other means, such as e-mail, if permitted by the local court. All other Applications for Waiver of Court Fees shall be e-filed.

b. Applications for Waiver of Court Assessments may be filed by United States Mail, third-party commercial carrier, in person, utilizing an available dropbox, or other means, such as e-mail or e-filing, if permitted by the local court.

c. Upon filing, the Clerk shall transmit an Application for Waiver of Court Fees or for Waiver of Court Assessments (hereinafter "Application") to the judge assigned to rule on it.

d. The court shall enter an order ruling on the Application on the basis of the information contained in the Application, without conducting a hearing, unless the court determines that the Application gives rise to a factual issue regarding the applicant's satisfaction of the conditions for a waiver under section 5-105(b) of the Code of Civil Procedure (735 ILCS 5/5-105(b)) or section 124A-20(b) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (725 ILCS 5/124A-20(b)).

e. If the court determines there is a factual issue regarding the applicant's entitlement to a waiver, the court shall enter an order (i) stating with specificity the nature of the issue, (ii) scheduling a hearing on the Application by telephone or video conference in accordance with Supreme Court Rule 45 and this Court's Policy on

Remote Court Appearances in Civil Proceedings, where applicable, and (iii) specifying any documents to be submitted in support of the Application at or before the hearing. The hearing on the Application for Waiver of Court Fees shall be scheduled promptly, with due regard for the need to provide reasonable notice to the applicant. The hearing on the Application for Waiver of Court Assessments should be held within 5 to 10 business days unless the defense asks for or agrees to a longer delay.

The court shall cause the clerk to serve the applicant with a copy of an order entered pursuant to paragraph c. or d. by e- mail (if the applicant consented, in the Application, to receive court documents by e- mail), or else by United States Mail at the address stated on the Application.

f. In accordance with Supreme Court Rules 298(b) or 404(b), if the court determines, with or without a hearing, that the conditions for a partial assessment waiver under 735 ILCS 5/5-105(b)(2) or 725 ILCS 5/124A-20(b)(2) are satisfied and if necessary to avoid undue hardship on the applicant, the court may allow the applicant to defer payment of assessments, costs, and charges; make installment payments; or make payment upon reasonable terms and conditions stated in the order.

2. With respect to the temporary amendments to Supreme Court Rules 101, 283, and 286(a) regarding summonses requiring appearance on a specified day (issued on August 27, 2020 and amended on September 23, 2020), all provisions are hereby vacated and replaced with the following:

a. Supreme Court Rule 101(b)(1) is hereby amended as follows:

In an action for money not in excess of \$50,000, exclusive of interest and costs, or in any action subject to mandatory arbitration where local rule prescribes a specific date for appearance, the summons shall require each defendant to appear, either in person or remotely, on a day specified in the summons not less than 40 or more than 61 days after the issuance of the summons (see Rule 181(b)), and shall be prepared by utilizing, or substantially adopting the appearance and content of, the form provided in the Article II Forms Appendix. The court shall make every reasonable effort to accommodate the defendant appearing via telephone or video conference.

b. Supreme Court Rule 102(b) is hereby amended as follows:

No summons in the form provided in paragraph (d) of Rule 101 may be served later than 30 days after its date. A summons in the form provided in paragraph (b)(1) of Rule 101 may not be served later than 21 days before the day of appearance. A summons in the form provided in paragraph (b)(2) or (b)(3) of Rule 101 may not be served later than three days before the day of appearance.

c. Supreme Court Rule 102(d) is hereby amended as follows:

The officer or person making service shall make a return by filing proof of service immediately after service on all defendants has been had, and, in any event, shall make a return: (1) in the case of a summons in the form provided in paragraph (b)(1) of Rule 101, not less than 21 days before the day of appearance; (2) in the case of a summons in the form provided in paragraph (b)(2) or (b)(3) of Rule 101, not less than three days

before the day of appearance; (3) in other cases, immediately after the last day fixed for service. If there is more than one defendant, the proof of service may be filed immediately after service on each defendant. The proof of service need not state whether a copy of the complaint was served. A party who has placed a summons with an officer or other person who is authorized to serve process, but who does not have access to the court filing system, shall file the proof of service obtained from the officer. Failure to return the summons or file proof of service does not invalidate the summons or the service thereof, if had.

d. Supreme Court Rule 283 is hereby amended as follows:

Summons in small claims shall require each defendant to appear on a day specified in the summons not less than 40 ~~14~~ or more than 61 ~~40~~ days after issuance of the summons (see Rule 181(b)) and shall be in the form provided for in Rule 101(b) in actions for money not in excess of \$50,000.

e. Supreme Court Rule 284(c) is hereby amended as follows:

The return receipt, when returned to the clerk, shall be filed by the clerk. If the receipt shows delivery at least 21 days before the day for appearance, the receipt shall constitute proof of service.

f. In accordance with Supreme Court Rule 101(g), the use of the wrong form of summons, either before or after the effective date of this order, shall not affect the jurisdiction of the court.

3. With respect to the provisions of Supreme Court Rule 101 regarding all summons issued in civil cases in Illinois:

a. All summonses issued in civil cases may include additional information relating to local courthouse access & procedures as provided by order of the circuit's chief judge.

b. In addition to the requirements set forth by Supreme Court Rule 101(a), language that must be contained in all summonses issued in civil cases in Illinois is hereby amended as follows:

“You may be able to attend this court date by phone or video conference. This is called a 'Remote Appearance.' Call the Circuit Clerk at or visit their website at to find out how to do this.

E- filing is now mandatory with limited exemptions. To e- file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider.

If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/faq/gethelp.asp> or talk with your local circuit clerk's office. If you cannot e-file, you may be able to get an exemption that allows you to file in-person or by mail. Ask your circuit clerk for more information or visit www.illinoislegalaid.org.

If you are unable to pay your court fees, you can apply for a fee waiver. for information about defending yourself in a court case (including filing an appearance

or fee waiver), or to apply for free legal help, go to www.illinoislegalaid.org. You can also ask your local circuit clerk's office for a fee waiver application.”

4. Paragraphs 1 and 3 of this order are effective immediately, and paragraph 2 of this order is effective 60 days from the entry of this order. This order shall remain in effect until further order of this Court.

Temporarily Amended Article VII, Part A, Admission to the Bar

Article VII, part A, of the Illinois Supreme Court Rules is altered by an [M.R. 30370 of May 1, 2020](#), as follows:

That Supreme Court Rules governing the administration of the Illinois bar examination are temporarily relaxed until further order of the Court to the extent necessary to allow the Illinois Board of Admissions to the Bar the flexibility to prepare for and administer a bar examination in a manner that maintains the health and well-being of all applicants and others involved with the administration of the bar examination.