



STATE OF ILLINOIS
CIRCUIT COURT
22ND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
McHENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS



March 13, 2019

For Immediate Release

FROM: The Chambers of Chief Judge James S. Cowlin

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The 22nd Judicial Circuit Remains Open, Continues to Evaluate the Current COVID-19 Situation, and Implements Precautions

(Woodstock, IL) The 22nd Judicial Circuit of McHenry County and the Michael J. Sullivan Judicial Center remains open and the Court will continue to perform court related functions. This morning the Court formally activated the 22nd Judicial Circuit Pandemic Continuity of Operations Plan. Upon activation, the Court has taken steps to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus, while continuing to perform essential and statutorily mandated functions. The following measures have been implemented:

- The 22nd Judicial Circuit remains in constant contact with local emergency and health related agencies in order to continually evaluate the COVID-19 situation.
- All communication related to the functions of the 22nd Judicial Circuit should be directed to the Trial Court Administrator at 815-334-4385.
- The Court is implementing a plan to reduce the number of people coming to the courthouse for court appearances.
- It is possible for attorneys and litigants to appear for civil via video or telephonic means. CourtCall is a service which the Court uses for video and telephonic appearances. If you are interested using this service, please call 1-888-882-6878 and provide your name, case number and judge who is hearing your case. Video and telephonic appearances are limited to status, non-evidentiary and uncontested matters only.
- If you have a court date and are ill, please consider take the following steps:
 - Contact your attorney or opposing side to determine if an agreed continuance can be obtained and submitted to the Court.
 - If there is no agreement, contact Court Administration at 815-334-4385 and advise that you are not able to attend court due to illness. You will need to provide your

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name, case number, and judge assigned to your case. Representatives of Court Administration will notify the Circuit Clerk's Office and Judge of your inability to attend. Judges will consider on a case-by-case basis whether a continuance will be granted. You may visit the Clerk of the Circuit Court's website at <https://www.mchenrycountyil.gov/county-government/departments-a-i/circuit-clerk> to check the status of your case and future court date, or you call the Circuit Clerk's Office at 815-334-4190.

- A trial by jury is a constitutional right and as such, a court cannot function without jurors. Therefore, the 22nd Judicial Circuit will continue to summons jurors. The Court is implementing a plan to reduce the number of jurors summoned in order to reduce congestion.
 - If you have been summoned for jury duty and are ill, please contact the McHenry County Jury Commission at 815-334-4390. Please provide your name and juror identification number and members of the Jury Commission will attempt to accommodate your situation.
- All courthouse tours or school visits are cancelled until further notice.
- The Early Resolution Program for Self-Represented Litigants is suspended until further notice.
- The Court will continue to perform marriages. However, the Court may cancel marriage ceremonies without advance notice. The Court encourages couples to limit the number of people attending the ceremony.
- The Department of Probation and Court Services will explore opportunities to meet the needs of their clients, while reducing the number of in person meetings through the use of technology.
- Employees of the 22nd Judicial Circuit are not to report to work if they are feeling ill.
- Communications from the Court will be sent from the Office of the Trial Court Administrator via press releases, the 22nd Judicial Circuit Facebook Page, Twitter (@22ndJudCircuit) and 22nd Judicial Circuit website at <http://22ndCircuitIllinois.org>.
- The McHenry County Bar Association Attorney Help-Desk, located in the courthouse, is temporarily suspended. You may contact the McHenry County Bar Association at 815-338-9559 for further information.

This unprecedented situation presents unique challenges to the 22nd Judicial Circuit's normal operating procedures. Court leadership will continue to work with state and local officials to monitor the situation and make changes as necessary and communicate those changes to members of the public, other branches of government, and judicial partners. We ask for your cooperation and patience as we work to minimize the risk to those utilizing the services of the Court, while we continue to perform our essential and mandated functions.

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