



STATE OF NEW YORK
UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM
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NANCY M. SUNUKJIAN
Director
Office of Justice Court Support

To: All Town and Village Justices

From: Hon. Vito C. Caruso *VCC*
Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for courts outside NYC

Re: Justice Court Operations

Date: May 6, 2020

In preparation for expanding court operations for Justice Courts beyond essential matters (ie: after-hour arraignments and the issuance of orders of protection), the following procedures and protocols have been developed to prepare for an eventual return to regular court operations.

The Justice Courts will continue to remain closed to the public until further notice.

If the municipality has provided VPN-remote access, where possible court clerks should work virtually from home. Subject to review and consideration by the District Administrative Judge regarding the need to have more than one clerk access the court facility, authorization is granted for one court clerk at a time (or a judge with no court clerk) to return to the court facility in a limited capacity. The following tasks may be performed at the court facility:

Mail and court file processing:

- For any court that placed a hold on its mail delivery with the Postal Service, such hold may now be rescinded.
- Mail should be processed as soon as possible upon return to the court facility.
- All monies received, including online payments, should be receipted and deposited with banking institutions as soon as possible. Court clerks will not under any circumstances bring any monies home or otherwise outside the court facility for processing other than for immediate deposit.

- Any other file work that can be safely processed while at the court facility.

Data entry within The CourtRoom program:

- Clerks should prioritize and perform data entry of any after-hours proceedings conducted since March 16, 2020.
- All Criminal Disposition Reporting should be completed as soon as possible.
- Any necessary WebDVS entries should be done as soon as possible.
- Clerks should process all recently filed or pending vehicle and traffic matters.

The Unified Court System's willingness to lift the restrictions on Justice Court operations for court clerks is conditioned upon the clerks observing the following recommended practices:

- Court clerks should not report to work if ill or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Signs should be placed where visible to municipal staff and court users indicating that public access to the courtroom and court clerk's office/window is prohibited.
- Social distance (minimum of 6 feet) should be maintained from other municipal employees within the court complex. If a court clerk needs to be within six feet of a co-worker, face masks or other similar protective face covering should be utilized.
- Frequent and thorough hand washing is encouraged, as is routine use of hand sanitizers or alcohol disinfectant wipes.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be utilized at the court clerk's workstation, when possible.
- Routine cleaning of surfaces, equipment, and workstation is encouraged, before and after work sessions, using appropriate cleaning and disinfection methods.
- Discourage court clerks from using other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work equipment, unless appropriately cleaned and disinfected.

Thank you for your cooperation during this difficult time. If you have any questions or otherwise require assistance in complying with these practices and protocols, please contact OCA's Office of Justice Court Support at 1-800-232-0630 or ResourceCenter@nycourts.gov.

c: Hon. Janet DiFiore
Hon. Lawrence K. Marks
District Administrative Judges Outside NYC