



State of Illinois
Circuit Court of Cook County

Chambers of
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PRESS RELEASE
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Chief Judge Evans extends postponement of most court cases, orders video appearances systemwide

CHICAGO (MARCH 30, 2020) – Chief Judge Timothy C. Evans today entered an order that extends the postponement of many criminal and civil cases in the Circuit Court of Cook County through May 18.

The order also expands the use of videoconferencing for all court proceedings deemed necessary or emergencies during this time. The Office of the Chief Judge has been working with the justice system stakeholders – the sheriff, clerk, state’s attorney and public defender – on this increased use of video appearances.

Currently, all jail detainees with bail hearings at the Leighton Criminal Court Building appear in court via video. Video has also been used in several other areas of the court. The court anticipates more use of video every day, and all matters will be conducted via video no later than April 16.

Chief Judge Evans’ order also closes three court facilities from April 6 through May 18: the Chicago branch courts at 5555 W. Grand Ave., 727 E. 111th St. and 3150 W. Flournoy St. Any emergency matters in those cases will be heard at the Leighton Criminal Court Building.

“As we continue to monitor the spread of the coronavirus, these actions are needed to protect public health,” Chief Judge Evans said. “Our system of justice must continue to hear all necessary and urgent matters, and today’s order balances access to justice with the need for social distancing. I commend

everybody in the justice system for carrying out their respective missions during this unprecedented time. Though the days ahead present more uncertainty than clarity, we will perform our respective duties safely and effectively.”

Chief Judge Evans considered closing the five suburban courthouses and consolidating all suburban matters into the Leighton Criminal Court Building. But after consulting with Dr. Emily Landon of the University of Chicago Medical Center and the Executive Committee of the court, it was determined that decentralized court operations are in everybody’s best interest to prevent an increased risk of spreading the coronavirus at one centralized location.

Today’s order amends Chief Judge Evans’ March 13 order that similarly allowed emergency matters to proceed in the Circuit Court of Cook County and postponed most cases until April 16. Chief Judge Evans’ new order continues his prior moratorium on evictions or foreclosures, and none will be allowed during this time.

Just like the order entered on March 13, today’s order means that no jury trials in criminal or civil matters would begin until after May 18. Individuals who have been summoned to jury duty through May 18 should not report for jury duty. They will receive a new date for service.

The court will continue to monitor the pandemic and make more announcements as needed.

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