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**October 2, 2020**

**Delaware Courts move to a modified Phase 3 of reopening plan;  
Chief Justice extends judicial emergency to Nov. 4, 2020**

*The modified Phase 3 reopening will allow the resumption of jury trials and increase in staffing and the number of people allowed in courtrooms and court facilities*

On Friday, Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr., in consultation with the other Justices of the Delaware Supreme Court, signed an order extending the judicial emergency to Nov. 4, 2020 and moved the courts to a modified Phase 3 of the Courts' reopening plan.

The modified Phase 3 reopening, which goes into effect on Monday, Oct. 5, 2020, will allow jury trials to resume as set forth in a report by the Courts Reopening Committee in August (available online here: <https://courts.delaware.gov/aoc/docs/juryreopening.pdf>). The move to a modified Phase 3 will increase the number of people allowed in court facilities up to 75 percent of capacity, increase the level of court staffing and increase the number of people allowed in courtrooms. COVID-19 screening at court entrances, social distancing and mandatory mask rules will remain in place, among other health safety precautions, and the use of video and audio technology is still encouraged when possible.

The Delaware Courts continue to monitor the pandemic both nationally and in Delaware and consult with experts about best practices to control the spread of COVID-19. Chief Justice Seitz said the judiciary recognizes that if circumstances change for the worse, the Court could reevaluate the move to a modified Phase 3. According to the Chief Justice, the health and safety of all those who work in or visit Delaware court facilities is the first priority.

This is the seventh 30-day extension of the emergency declaration since the Chief Justice first declared a judicial state of emergency on March 16, 2020. The latest order extending the emergency can be found here: <https://courts.delaware.gov/rules/pdf/COVIDorder11.pdf>.

The Delaware Courts continue to provide the public and members of the Bar with regular updates on changes to court operations on the Court's COVID-19 response page: <https://courts.delaware.gov/aoc/covid-19>. The Courts' four-phase reopening plan, released in May, is available here: <https://courts.delaware.gov/aoc/courtsreopeningplan.pdf>.

**For the latest information on COVID-19 please visit the State of Delaware's informational website on COVID-19 at: [de.gov/coronavirus](https://de.gov/coronavirus). Anyone with a question about COVID-19, whether related to medical or social service needs, should call Delaware 2-1-1. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can text their ZIP code to 898-211. Hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Questions can also be submitted by email at [DPHCall@delaware.gov](mailto:DPHCall@delaware.gov).**