

Return to In-Person Operations Plan Highlights

Phase I

May 18, 2020

Good News! Our region has met established bench-marks, triggering the first phase of a return to more in-person operations. Throughout this public health crisis, the courts have remained opened and, while limiting foot traffic, have continued to hear Essential Matters.

Over the past several weeks, courts have been steadily increasing cases handled and clearing up existing pending matters. Thanks to the dedication and hard work of our remarkable judges and court staff, we are ready to begin Phase I of the Return to In-Person Operations

We will begin a flexible, measured and steady return to in-person operations commencing on May 18, 2020. We will continue to ensure the safety of all who enter the Courthouses – Judges, Staff and the public by assuring that appropriate safety measures are followed.

- Judges and Chambers Staff in Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne and Yates Counties will return to their courthouses commencing May 18, 2020.
 - Use of appropriate PPE required
- On May 18, 2020, the Court will begin accepting filings in new matters by electronic means. On May 18, 2020, the Courts will begin accepting paper filings in new matters, where otherwise permitted.
- All County and City Courthouses in Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne and Yates Counties will be open and staffed. Cayuga County will open as appropriate following the Governor's opening of the New York Central Region.
- County Courthouse operations will continue as they are presently.
- Town & Village Court Justices and clerks may return to work in their courthouses handling clerical matters and working on decisions.
- Town & Village Courts will be open but there will be no calendars and foot traffic will not be encouraged.
- Security personnel to ensure proper PPE (masks, hand sanitizer) and spatial distancing for public who enter the courthouse
- Employees
 - Use of masks/gloves
 - Spatial distancing at work stations
 - Provisions for vulnerable employees

SUMMARY

7th Judicial District

Return to In-Person Operations Plan (“RIOP”)

Phase II

To Commence June 3, 2020

On May 18, 2020 (May 20, 2020 for Cayuga County) the 7th Judicial District implemented Phase I of the RIOP (summary attached). All measures included in Phase I of the RIOP to protect the health and safety of the employees, judges, litigants, lawyers and members of the public who enter the courthouses pursuant to the Amended Return to In-Court Operations Plan dated May 14, 2020 will continue and be enhanced during Phase II.

The goal of Phase II is to increase foot traffic in the courthouse in a gradual, measured manner so that the Court can begin to address matters that require an in-person appearance. The success on Phase II depends upon the Court’s ability to prioritize those matters that require an in-person appearance while continuing to maximize the use of virtual appearances.

- Phase II operates with certain presumptions:
 1. Essential Matters (except as follows in Number 2) will be conducted in-person and heard by the Assigned Judge.
 2. Criminal, Juvenile Delinquency and Mental Hygiene Law Proceedings pertaining to a hospitalized adult shall be virtual and heard by the Assigned Judge.
 3. Non-Essential matters shall be virtual and heard by the Assigned Judge.In all case types, a request to deviate from the presumption may be made to the Assigned Judge. If such request is granted, the Administrative Judge shall be notified.
- ADR shall be conducted virtually
- Steps shall be taken by staggering case types, court calendars and courtroom use, to reduce the number of court users entering the building at the same time and to reduce the number of court users congregating on any floor/at any courtroom.
- Non-judicial staffing levels may again be minimally increased to support necessary administrative functions such as adjournments/calendaring/chambers as well as to provide support for the increase in foot traffic into the courthouse. In-person court staff will rotate with non-reporting staff to work virtually.