

MARCH 23, 2020 UPDATE FROM CIRCUIT COURT

One week after the emergency shutdown, the Circuit Court remains open for matters deemed essential under Chief Judge Barbera's March 16 order. We are staffed by 2-3 judges (depending upon the dockets), hearing emergency criminal, civil, family, and juvenile detention matters. Any necessary hearings are held remotely, usually by telephone, with video for matters involving the local detention centers. Please understand that we are considering only truly emergent matters, and requests for relief that do not rise to that level will not be granted.

Any final protective order hearings resulting from temporary orders issued by this court are also being heard, although they are limited in number. Counsel should keep in mind that because we are a non-MDEC county, our ability to handle motions and related filings is limited and not comparable to what MDEC counties are able to do. We are working to find ways to have some of these matters handled remotely, and will keep you updated on new developments. While new filings are accepted, we have limited capability to promptly open new cases and issue scheduling orders.

Persons other than media are not permitted in the courthouse except in limited circumstances, and though our clerk's office is closed to attorneys and the public, we are conducting business by telephone. Filings can be made by regular mail and via the dropbox located on the Maryland Avenue side of the North Tower. Our land records department is accommodating the public with dropbox pickups at 10:00 a.m., noon, and 2:00 p.m. daily.

We are striving to maintain essential services with a minimum of staff, as recommended by Governor Hogan and Chief Judge Barbera. Please bear with us as we go through this crisis. I wish you and your families good health.

Robert A. Greenberg

Administrative Judge