

**MESSAGE REGARDING RETURN TO PHASE III OF COURT REOPENING IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR
MONTGOMERY COUNTY (11/17/20)**

As the COVID-19 pandemic worsens, and in an effort to protect the health and welfare of courthouse employees and other persons who use the building, the Circuit Court has instituted several new procedures which are effective immediately. In addition to changes in procedures related to the suspension of jury trials and the temporary change in policy regarding criminal pleas which were described in the Message to the Bar dated November 13, 2020, the following information is provided to court users:

- Court staff has been reduced considerably, in order to keep the building population to a minimum; this may have some minimal effect on services.
- The Family Law Self-Help Center will now provide telephonic services only, with no in-person visits. Calls are received Monday through Friday between 8:30am and 4:00pm at 240-777-9079.
- The Law Library is available to assist researchers remotely. Library staff will respond to inquiries from 8:00am – 4:30pm, Monday through Friday, at lawlibrary@mcccourt.com or 240-777-9120.
- Attorneys and others who wish to view court files must do so by completing the request form on the court website, and copies will be made. There will be no in-person viewing of files, even by persons who may otherwise be in the courthouse for hearings or other proceedings.
- The Maryland Avenue entrance to the building will return to the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., for members of the public and employees. The Monroe Street entrance is open only to employees during those same hours.
- If you have an upcoming hearing, you may wish to check the court website to ascertain whether your hearing will be held virtually or in-person.
- If you are filing a new suit (which must be done by regular mail or in the Maryland Avenue dropbox), please be sure to provide your email address for the benefit of the court and opposing parties. Thereafter, electronic filing is both permitted and encouraged, and email addresses should continue to be placed on the filing.
- When participating in a remote proceeding, you agree that you will not record, broadcast or forward any portion of the trial, hearing or proceeding. This prohibition applies to the use of television, radio, and photographic (including screen shots), or recording equipment. You also agree that you will not share the link to the trial or hearing with or forward or disseminate the link to any other person or entity. Violation of these terms may result in your being held in contempt of court and/or sanctioned.

These new policies will remain in effect until further notice. The court regrets the inconvenience that may be caused to the Bar and the public by these changes. For additional information, please consult the court website at montgomerycountymd.gov/cct. Thank you for your cooperation in these matters.

Robert A. Greenberg, Administrative Judge