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**Supreme Judicial Court Issues New Order
On Court Operations and Reopening Courthouses**

BOSTON, MA – The Supreme Judicial Court [today issued an updated order](#) regarding the operation of Massachusetts state courts and courthouses during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The order will go into effect [July 1, 2020](#). A summary of the key provisions of the new order can be viewed [here](#).

Under the new order, courthouses will physically reopen to the public for limited purposes, including some in-person proceedings, on [July 13, 2020](#), but courts will continue to conduct most business virtually. The number of in-person proceedings will further expand during a second phase beginning on [August 10, 2020](#). In advance of each phase, the Trial Court departments will identify the new matters they will be addressing in person on the [court system's COVID-19 webpage](#).

Until [July 13](#), clerks', registers', and recorder's offices will continue to conduct business virtually, except in certain emergency situations. Beginning on [July 13](#), all of these offices will physically reopen to the public, while still endeavoring to conduct business virtually as much as possible.

When courthouses reopen on [July 13](#), entry will be limited to persons attending in-person proceedings, persons conducting business with a clerk's, register's, or recorder's office, persons meeting with probation, and persons conducting business at other open offices in the courthouses. Persons seeking to enter will be screened to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Beginning on [July 13](#), cell phones will be permitted in all courthouses, subject to compliance with certain rules set forth in a new Trial Court policy ([Trial Court Emergency Administrative Order 20-10](#)). The new policy will be posted on the court system's COVID-19 webpage and at the entrance to each courthouse.

Jury trials in both criminal and civil cases in state courts continue to be postponed to a date no earlier than [September 8, 2020](#). Starting [July 13](#), judges may begin to schedule civil and criminal bench trials. No new grand jury can be empaneled prior to [September 8](#), unless the Supreme Judicial Court so orders. Existing grand juries are extended until the date of that new empanelment or the date of the [October 2020](#) empanelment in the relevant judicial district, whichever occurs first.

All orders, standing orders, guidelines, and notices issued by any court department or appellate court in response to the pandemic, as well as all amendments, modifications, and supplements are posted upon issuance on the [court system's COVID-19 webpage](#).

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