



NOTICE TO THE BAR

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**New York State
Unified Court System**

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**Hon. Paula L. Feroletto
Administrative Judge**

**For Immediate Release:
May 20, 2020**

ALLEGANY, CATTARAUGUS, CHAUTAUQUA, ERIE, NIAGARA COUNTIES PHASE 1 RETURN TO IN-PERSON OPERATIONS

Hon. Paula L. Feroletto, Administrative Judge for the Eighth Judicial District, announces that effective Thursday, May 21, 2020, the Courts in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Niagara counties will commence a Phase 1 Return to In-Person Operations. Throughout the COVID-19 public health pandemic the county courthouses in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Niagara counties have remained open and continued to hear essential matters. Over the past several weeks, operations expanded to virtual chambers conferences, a focused project on resolving pending fully submitted motions in Supreme and County Court as well as Family Court, and most recently an expansion that allowed filing of new motions.

In Phase 1, all Supreme and County Courts, Surrogate's Courts, Family Courts and City Courts will continue operations, as they are presently, and essential case matters will be heard through the virtual courtroom program. Chambers conferences will continue to be conducted through the virtual chambers model and it is expected that through the use of NYSCEF, EDDS, virtual courtrooms and virtual chambers there will continue to be limited foot traffic in our court facilities. Court security personnel will ensure proper PPE (masks, hand sanitizer) and spatial distancing for all members of the public entering the courthouse. Any member of the public who self-identifies as at risk of Covid-19 will be restricted from entering the courthouse.

Upon the courts' Phase 1 return to in-person operations commencing May 21, 2020, the courthouses in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Niagara counties will be exceptionally focused on ensuring the safety of all who enter our court facilities, including attorneys, members of the public, Judges and non-judicial employees. The phased return to operations model for Phase 1 is intended as an incremental approach for the expansion of court operations.

In Phase 1, Judges and chambers staff will return to the courthouse and additional clerical staff will be present to handle anticipated new filings. All Judges, non-judicial employees, and members of the public entering the courthouse will be expected to use appropriate PPE. On May 21, 2020, the Courts

will accept filings of new Supreme and County Court, Surrogate's Court, Family Court and City Court actions and proceedings with the exception of applications for landlord tenant evictions, mortgage foreclosures and default judgment motions. All filings must be made either through the New York State Courts Electronic Filing System (NYSCEF), where available, or through the Electronic Document Delivery System (EDDS). This includes attorneys filing orders to show cause in any NYS Court. In other words, all paperwork submitted by attorneys must be sent electronically. Information regarding both methods of filing or delivering documents to the court is available at www.nycourts.gov

All Town and Village Justice Courts Justices and Clerks may also return to work in their court facilities handling clerical matters and working on decisions. While the Town and Village Justice Courts will be open, there will be no calendars and foot traffic will not be encouraged.

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