



# PRESS RELEASE

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**New York State  
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Lawrence K. Marks  
Chief Administrative Judge**

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## **Virtual Court Operations to Commence in NYC Mid-week**

*New York State Courts Remain Open for Business,  
Maintaining All Essential and Emergency Proceedings*

**NEW YORK**—Extraordinary times like these call for extraordinary measures. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the New York State court system is instituting various temporary measures to reduce courtroom density and stem the spread of the Coronavirus. Chief Judge Janet DiFiore and Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence K. Marks today announced that beginning on Wednesday, March 25, 2020 and Thursday, March 26, 2020, virtual court operations will commence, respectively, in New York City Criminal Court and New York City Family Court.

“As we continue to calibrate court operations to meet the continually challenging and changing operational environment, the New York State court system remains open for business, maintaining essential and emergency operations. In order to help reduce the spread of the virus and to further protect Judges, court staff, attorneys, litigants and the public, by mid-week essential functions of New York City Criminal Court and New York City Family Court will commence virtual operations,” said Chief Judge DiFiore.

## **New York City Criminal Court**

Effective March 25, 2020, New York City Criminal Court will move toward its second phase of videoconferencing arraignments. Under this phase, all parties will participate in court proceedings by videoconferencing using Skype for Business. While the arraignment part will be open to the public, uniformed staff will monitor and may limit access to the arraignment part's audience space to maintain social distancing in accordance with public health authorities' guidelines.

All arraignments will be virtual, with the Judge, prosecution and defense attorney and defendant all from remote locations.

Non-COVID-19-involved defendants—those who have not tested positive for COVID-19 or are not in a high-risk group—will be brought to the central booking location in Bronx, Kings, New York and Queens Counties and will participate via video link in those locations. Richmond County defendants will be brought to NYPD holding cells at 26 Central Avenue to participate in video arraignment there.

COVID-19-involved defendants—those who have tested positive for COVID-19 or are in a high-risk group—will be detained pre-arraignment to participate in video arraignments as follows: Midtown Community Court for Bronx and Manhattan arraignments; and Red Hook Community Justice Center for Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island arraignments.

## **NYC Family Court:**

Effective Thursday, March 26, 2020—in order to mitigate and contain the ongoing spread of coronavirus while at the same time continuing to provide critical emergency relief to the children and families the court serves—the New York City Family Court will hear by remote video appearances and/or by telephone the following matters:

- Child-protective intake cases involving removal applications
- Newly-filed juvenile delinquency intake cases involving remand applications
- Emergency family offense petitions
- Writ applications where there is a court order of custody or parenting time

Additionally, due to the suspension of civil statutes of limitation by the Governor's executive order 202.8, effective immediately, all new Court filings, either e-filed or hard copy, that are not essential matters, will NOT be accepted.

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