

STATEMENT FROM CHIEF COURT ADMINISTRATOR PATRICK L. CARROLL III
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2020

The Judicial Branch last week implemented a mitigation plan that has greatly reduced the daily business at every court location statewide. Consistent with guidance we have received from the CDC and other public health officials, the next step in our mitigation plan is to further shrink the number of people in our facilities each day to further assist in the effort to halt the spread of COVID-19. Both Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson and I have concluded that it is necessary to implement the following unprecedented measures to protect the public, the bar, our employees and judges.

Effective Thursday, March 19, 2020, the Judicial Branch will implement these changes:

- One building in each of the 13 Judicial Districts will be designated as the location at which only Priority 1 functions (as defined in our Continuity of Operations Plan) will be handled.
- Juvenile Matters will be heard in the Hartford and Bridgeport juvenile courthouses.
- The Branch's Executive Directors will reach out to their respective employees to determine who will staff these locations and conduct all other vital functions such as information technology, human resources and payroll.
- All other staff will remain at home. Those whose jobs allow them to work at home will do so.

These are extraordinary times and require extraordinary measures. Our overarching challenge throughout the crisis has been to balance the constitutional obligation of the courts to remain open with protecting the health and safety of every individual who enters a state courthouse. Ultimately, we have determined that the plan announced today is the best option to achieve this balance.

As we implement these extraordinary measures to stem the spread of COVID-19, I am simultaneously asking each Judicial Branch employee to consider what they might be able to do, safely, within their own communities to aid in the concerted effort to fight COVID-19: donate blood; call the local food bank or homeless shelter to determine what can be contributed; offer to shop for elderly or sick neighbors; or mobilize groups of Branch employees to donate coffee, doughnuts or pizza to the health care workers in our hospitals. There is much that we can and should do as the Judicial Branch community – I've seen them all do it countless times before.