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James M. Biernat Jr., Chief Judge  
16th Judicial Circuit Court,  
Macomb County Probate Court,  
42nd District Courts

News



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## *For Immediate Release*

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# Courts Move to Phase IV of Reopening Plan

On Monday, June 21, the State Court Administrative Office moved all courts in the State to Phase 4 of their four-phase Return to Full Capacity Plan. The pertinent Local Administrative Orders restricting court activities, including jury trials, were administratively closed and rescinded, and replaced by directives that all Court's comply with local county health department directives and MIOSHA requirements. MIOSHA, in turn, removed the majority of its mandatory restrictions as well.

Consistent with the Macomb County Health Department and MIOSHA, masks, social distancing, capacity limitations, and health screening will no longer be *required* to enter the County Courthouse, the Old County Building (location of Friend of the Court, the Juvenile Division, and the Legal Self-Help Center), 42-1 District Court, and 42-2 District Court. Individual judges retain the discretion to require masks, and any person who wishes to continue to wear a mask will be allowed to do so. Masks will continue to be provided if necessary or requested. Protective measures have been implemented, including installation of hand sanitizing stations, protective shielding, and physical barriers within court areas.

Individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 or who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should contact the Court for further instructions. Individuals who have recently tested positive for COVID-19 or who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should not enter the building.

Chief Judge James Biernat and court officials will continue to monitor local COVID-19 data and adjust plans related to staffing and public access to court facilities, as needed.

### **16th Judicial Circuit Court (including Juvenile Division)**

The 16th Judicial Circuit Court has resumed in-person proceedings. While proceedings are still being conducted virtually to the maximum extent possible, in-person proceedings, including jury proceedings, are now permitted and are resuming at the 16th Judicial Circuit Court.

Scheduling matters onsite or remotely will be determined by each individual judge, and will be reflected in hearing notices and on the judge's webpage. See:  
<https://circuitcourt.macombgov.org/CircuitCourt-Judges>

In-custody matters will continue to be conducted remotely unless an in person hearing is necessary.

The Circuit Court, including the Juvenile Division, the Macomb County Legal Self-Help Center, and the County Clerk's Office are open from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. The Turning Point PPO Office is open from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

### **Macomb County Friend of the Court**

The Macomb County Friend of the Court will continue to conduct Referee hearings and motions, investigations, and enforcement hearings remotely to the greatest extent possible. The Friend of the Court office is open to the public from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday. The office is open for walk-ins for child support enforcement, interstate, and medical enforcement from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, and from 1:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday. Inquiries regarding the enforcement of parenting time should be made via email, mail, or fax. The Friend of the Court drop box is available in our lobby from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for all Friend of the Court documents, but no cash payments. Payments can be made in our cashiers department from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information please visit [friendofthecourt@macombgov.org](mailto:friendofthecourt@macombgov.org).

### **Macomb County Probate Court**

The Macomb County Probate Court will continue to process emergency petitions remotely, new filings or pleadings to be filed can be mailed to the court or dropped off to a drop box on the 5th Floor of the Courthouse. Additionally, the office will be open to the public from 1:30 pm -4:30 pm daily. If pleadings are left with a clerk, they will be date stamped as received only, nothing will be processed at that time. Judge Sandra Harrison will be conducting in-person hearings effective immediately. Please check our website for further information.  
<https://probatecourt.macombgov.org/>

### **42-1 District Court - Romeo**

The 42-1 District Court has resumed in-person hearings; virtual appearances will be used for many proceedings going forward, such as informal traffic hearings and prelims on landlord-tenant matters. In-person hearings will be scheduled beginning in July for other proceedings, including jury trials. In-custody matters will continue to be conducted remotely unless an in person hearing is necessary. Notices for hearings will clearly indicate the type of appearance required. The Court hours are 8 to 4:30, closed from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm. For payment options and other court information, please see our website at <https://42romeo.macombgov.org>.

### **42-2 District Court - New Baltimore**

The 42nd District Court has resumed in-person proceedings, with the exception of landlord-tenant cases which will be conducted virtually. In-custody matters will continue to be conducted remotely unless an in person hearing is necessary. Virtual hearings will be granted upon request. Hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For your convenience, the court remains open during the lunch hour between 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. There is an after hour drop box located in front of the courthouse for any court documents or payments.