

Supreme Court: Courts remain operational with some limitations in service; Supreme Court cancels March 18 oral argument

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Madison, Wis. (March 17, 2020) – The Wisconsin Supreme Court, Court of Appeals and Circuit Courts remain operational but with reduced calendaring sufficient to accommodate high priority cases. Wisconsin state court system administrative offices in Madison will continue to carry out essential functions with limited staff, but those offices will be temporarily closed to the public from March 18 through at least April 3, Director of State Courts Randy R. Koschnick announced today.

These steps are being taken to help contain the spread of COVID-19, which Gov. Tony Evers declared a statewide public health emergency on March 12 and for which he provided further restrictions March 17.

“Our highest priorities at this time are to make sure courts are operational in order to maintain the rule of law and to protect the health of the public and court staff. The quickest and most effective way to do that is to reprioritize court cases and to reduce person-to-person contact,” Koschnick said.

The Supreme Court has canceled oral arguments that were scheduled for March 18 in the Supreme Court Hearing Room at the Capitol, as well as a public hearing on a

rule petition that was scheduled for April 2. Those activities will be rescheduled at later dates.

The Court today issued an order extending filing deadlines and tolling filing time periods in some appellate case types. A copy of the order is available [here](#).

A number of circuit courts throughout the state have adjusted some calendars and procedures as a result of COVID-19 precautions. As a convenience, the court system is listing announcements of those changes by county on its website, www.wicourts.gov, under a tab labeled "COVID-19." However, attorneys or litigants with questions about a particular upcoming court activity or appearance should contact the clerk of circuit court in the appropriate county.

At the county level, the circuit courts' electronic filing system, [eFile](#), remains available for filing court documents and case processing. At the appellate level, the office of the Clerk of Supreme Court and Court of Appeals in Madison will remain open to accept appellate case filings.

Some state court administrative offices will be closed to the public, Koschnick said. Some routine administrative business activities may be temporarily curtailed or delayed as a result of the changes, but the court system will continue to carry out all time-sensitive functions, Koschnick said. These offices will continue to respond to email and phone inquiries.

State court system administrative employees in Madison whose duties are considered critical to maintain day-to-day operations during the public health emergency will either continue to report to work, or work remotely.

Offices closed to the public and with limited services include:

Board of Bar Examiners	608-266-9760
Children's Court Improvement Program	608-261-0692
Communication Services	608-261-6640
Consolidated Court Automated Programs	608-267-3728
Court Operations	608-266-3121
David T. Prosser Jr. State Law Library	800-322-9755
Including Dane and Milwaukee County Libraries	

Management Services	608-266-3501
Medical Mediation Panel	608-266-7711
Office of Judicial Education	608-266-7807
Office of Lawyer Regulation	608-267-7274

Previously scheduled public meetings, conferences and educational sessions involving the above listed offices are canceled through May 11 consistent with the Governor's state of emergency declarations of March 12 and March 17. Information about whether these activities will be rescheduled after that date will be available in the future through those offices.

A phone directory of clerks of circuit courts can be found [here](#). Additional information may be available on a county clerk of circuit court [website](#). Court calendar information about any particular circuit court case may also be found on the [Wisconsin Circuit Court Access website](#). Calendar information about appellate cases can be found on the [Supreme Court and Court of Appeals Access](#) website.

The Supreme Court, the Director of State Courts, judges, and court administrators will continue working with other branches of government and public health agencies at the federal, state, and county level to monitor developments to determine whether additional steps are necessary.

More information about COVID-19, including recommendations to help prevent spread of the virus is available from the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).