



## MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Supreme Court Posts Approved Plans to Reopen Trial Courts**

*Step-by-step court plans are easily accessible online to residents statewide*

LANSING, MI, June 3, 2020 – The Michigan Supreme Court (MSC) has launched a [new webpage](#) to help residents statewide access reopening plans for their local trial courts. As required by [Administrative Order No. 2020-14](#), the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) must approve [Local Administrative Orders](#) for each court that include step-by-step plans for phased reopening. (On the [new page](#), visitors can click on their county to find each court’s administrative order.) As plans are approved, they will be posted on the page.

“As Michigan continues to reopen, our courts are also working to reopen their buildings safely by taking a consistent, phased approach that reflects local conditions,” said Chief Justice Bridget M. McCormack. “In response to the pandemic, Michigan’s judiciary has been leading the nation in opening the virtual doors of justice to everyone. By posting reopening plans online, we can now make sure that all residents know when court buildings will be open and for what purpose.”

Previously, the Court launched a convenient, real-time [Virtual Courtroom Directory](#) to help residents easily find and watch live court proceedings across the state. Features allow users to search courts where virtual hearings are being held, sort by judge or hearing officer, click on a county to view if a specific court is offering streaming abilities, and find a public calendar to virtual courtroom search results. Since it was launched on May 18, nearly 10,000 visitors have used the Directory nearly 15,000 times.

With videoconferencing systems in every courtroom, judges and other court officers have quickly moved to holding remote proceedings in virtual courtrooms. Currently, nearly 1,000 judges and other court officers have Zoom licenses and more than 200,000 hours of hearings have been conducted remotely since April 1.

In conjunction with AO No. 2020-14, the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) released detailed guidance: “[Return to Full Capacity, COVID-19 Guidelines for Michigan’s Judiciary](#).” This 23-page guide reflects advice published by the U.S. federal courts, the White House, the Centers for Disease Control, and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Similar to plans being followed by the federal court system, the guide identifies gating criteria to enter each of four phases in returning to full capacity

Visit the Supreme Court’s [COVID-19](#) webpage for additional information and resources. Further details regarding how reopening plans are developed and approved are available on the [Return to Full Capacity](#) page.

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