

April 2022

# Circuit Court for Baltimore County Resumption of Normal Operations



Honorable Ruth A. Jakubowski  
Administrative Judge



# CIRCUIT COURT

## RESUMPTION OF NORMAL OPERATIONS



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In light of Chief Judge Joseph M. Getty's Fifth Administrative Order Lifting the COVID-19 Health Emergency as to the Maryland Judiciary issued on March 28, 2022, Maryland Courts will resume normal operations on April 4, 2022.

As we return to normal operations, the changes implemented in Phase V will continue.

### General Guidance

- The courthouse will continue to be open to the public.
- Masks wearing will be optional and will not be required for anyone entering the courthouse.
- The Clerk's Office will continue open to the public.
- Appointments will still be required in the Licensing Department for civil marriage ceremonies.
- The Self-Help Office will remain closed for in-person meetings until the Law Library re-opens to the public.
- The Self-Help Office will continue to operate remotely with appointments available through its website.
- The law library is currently undergoing construction and is closed temporarily. The Law Library's availability status can be found on:  
<https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/go/lawlibrary>

## CRIMINAL

### Resumption of Jury Trials

- Criminal jury trials will continue to be held.
- All jury selection will take place at the American Legion, located at 125 York Road, Towson, MD beginning at 9:00 a.m.
- Jury selection will be conducted by the trial judge or his/her designee. Once selected, the jury will be assigned to a specific courtroom and instructed to report to the courthouse either the same day or the following day. The jury will be sworn in when the trial commences in the courthouse.
- All specially assigned cases have been scheduled for trial.
- Back up cases have also been selected. If the back up case does not proceed on the first day of trial, it will remain on the docket for an additional day. If the back up case cannot be reached, a postponement should be requested before the Criminal Administrative Judge.
- Cases from the felony or misdemeanor dockets for which a request for jury trial is made should be ready for trial in case the designated primary and backup case do not proceed.
- Counsel must file voir dire and trial exhibits through MDEC at least two days prior to the trial date.

### Non- Jury Trial Related Matters

- Criminal dockets will continue to proceed as scheduled at 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 1:30 p.m.
- Criminal motions will be set on dockets primarily in the afternoon.
- Contested juvenile waiver motions will be set on specialized dockets every other Friday.
- Non- jury trials will continue to be held.
- Plea dockets will be held on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. Counsel wishing to schedule a plea hearing should contact the Criminal Case Manager, Brittany Jackson, at 410-887-2853 or [brittany.jackson@mdcourts.gov](mailto:brittany.jackson@mdcourts.gov).
- VOP bench warrant hearings will continue to be heard on the video bail docket on the next court day after pickup. If the defendant is released, the video bail judge will coordinate a VOP hearing date with the assigned judge's chambers. If the defendant is not released, the video bail judge will advise the assigned judge so chambers can schedule a hearing.
- The Criminal Administrative Docket, which consists of the daily video bail and bench warrant hearings and postponements, will continue to be held before the criminal postponement judge.

## FAMILY

### General

- Trials and hearings already scheduled as remote proceedings will be heard remotely.
- Newly scheduled trials and hearings will be conducted IN PERSON.
- The Office of Family Support Services will be transitioning back to in person services.
- The Baltimore County Visitation Center will be open.
- Requests for remote trials and hearings may be made but will only be granted for good cause.

### The following hearings and conferences will continue to be held remotely:

- Scheduling conferences
- Pre-hearing contempt conferences
- Mediation (In person mediation is available, upon request)
- Uncontested divorce hearings
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status hearings
- Adoptions
- Guardianships will remain remote with the exception of subpoena hearings.

### Settlement Court:

- Conferences will continue to be held remotely.
- In person settlement conferences will resume on **May 2, 2022**. At that time, requests for remote settlement conferences may be filed, but will only be granted for good cause.

## CIVIL

### Resumption of Jury Trials

- Civil jury trials will continue to be held.
- All jury selection will take place at the American legion, located at 125 York Road, Towson, MD, beginning at 9:00 a.m.
- Specially assigned protracted cases (i.e. medical malpractice cases) will proceed on their assigned trial dates. The trial judge or his/her designee will conduct jury selection on the first day of trial. The trial will start at the courthouse immediately following jury selection. Once selected, the jury will be assigned to a specific courtroom and instructed to report to the courthouse immediately. The jury will be sworn in when the trial commences.
- Other civil trials (i.e., 1-2-day auto torts) will be assigned to a judge the day before the trial date. Counsel will receive notification that their case will proceed to trial. Jury selection will take place on the morning of the first day of trial at the American Legion. The trial will start at the courthouse immediately following jury selection. Jurors will be instructed to report to the courthouse after selection. Jurors will be sworn in when the trial commences.
- Backup cases (standby) will also be identified. Backup cases that do not proceed on the first day of trial will remain on the standby docket for an additional day. If the backup case is not reached, a postponement should be directed to the Lead Civil Judge.

### Non-Jury Trial Related Matters

- All motions, administrative appeals, district court appeals, and other civil matters will remain on the dockets as scheduled.
- Afternoon dockets will continue in civil cases.
- All bench trials will proceed as scheduled.
- Civil settlement conferences will continue to be held remotely.
- In person settlement conferences will resume on **May 2, 2022**. At that time, requests for remote settlement conferences may be filed, but will only be granted for good cause.

## JUVENILE

### General

- Initial detention hearings will continue to be held remotely until further notice.
- All delinquency matters other than initial detention hearings will now be presumed to be IN PERSON subject to advance requests for hybrid or remote proceedings.
- Requests for remote hearings should include details for the judicial officer's consideration.
  - Delinquency dockets before magistrates will continue with morning sessions handled IN PERSON until further notice.
  - Contested hearings may be specially scheduled and will be presumed to be IN PERSON subject to advance requests for hybrid or remote proceedings.

## CINA

### General

- All cases will be heard remotely until further notice, subject to an advance request for hybrid or in person hearing. Requests for in person hearings should include details for the judicial officer's consideration.
- TPR Hearings will be scheduled and may be remote, hybrid, or in person as is appropriate for the particular case and judge. Please contact your assigned judge in advance for instructions.

## CHILD SUPPORT

### General

- Establishment cases will continue to be heard in G-10. Cases will be heard on Monday – Thursday. Dockets will be staggered between 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- DNA testing will continue on alternating Mondays.
- Contempt hearings will continue before magistrates. Dockets will be held every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday plus alternating Mondays between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
- The Office will collect child support money every Tuesday and alternating Mondays from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- Bail reviews will continue on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursday and Fridays at 2:00 PM before the chambers judge. Bail reviews will be conducted on Tuesdays at 11:00 AM before Judge Hennegan.