

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND

NINTH GENERAL ORDER REGARDING CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

This General Order regarding the continuity of operations is the ninth issued in response to the recent outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). In light of nearly 60% of Rhode Island residents receiving a first dosage of a vaccine and nearly 50% of Rhode Island residents fully vaccinated and the State of Rhode Island's continued diligent vaccination distribution, the Court finds the following:

1. The Clerk's Office in the U.S. Courthouse building at One Exchange Terrace will re-open to the public beginning June 1, 2021 from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM each Tuesday and Thursday to accept in-person filings. The Clerk of Court may further amend these operating hours as she deems appropriate based on the operational needs of the Court taking into consideration the health posture of the state of Rhode Island. The schedule will be clearly posted to the Court's website. The Clerk's Office in the portion of the John O. Pastore Building ("Pastore Building") occupied by the Court will continue to remain closed to the public until further notice.
2. All permanent employees are directed to return to the workplace on June 1, 2021 but may continue to periodically telework after consulting with their supervisor to determine adequate staffing levels to support the operational needs of the Court.
3. All persons entering the Courthouse and in public areas, elevators, bathrooms and courtrooms for any reason, shall at all times wear a face covering or mask that covers

their noses and mouths and shall adhere to the provisions of this Court's [General Order on Building Visitation and Access Restrictions](#).

4. All criminal petit jury selection and trials are continued to June 2021. The Court finds that the ends of justice served by ordering the continuance of all criminal petit juries outweighs each defendant's right to and the public's interest in speedy trial. Therefore, the time period of the continuances implemented by this General Order will be excluded under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A), subject to the entry of an order addressing the same by the presiding judge in each case.
5. The Court will continue with limited in-person civil trials and criminal hearings provided that all safety protocols established by the Task Force on Reopening the Court are satisfactory met.
6. The Court will continue to conduct criminal video and telephonic conferencing pursuant to the CARES Act and extends this authorization as outlined in this Court's [Amended General Order Regarding Criminal Matters During the Coronavirus Pandemic](#) dated March 30, 2020 for an additional 90 days. The Court will again review this authorization and determine whether to extend it after this 90-day period.
7. The U.S. Attorney may continue to convene the grand jury provided that all safety protocols established by the Task Force on Reopening the Court are satisfactory met. If a quorum cannot be reached due to the unavailability of the grand jury, the 30-day time period for filing an indictment is tolled as to each defendant until this General Order terminates. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3161(b).

This order will remain in effect until August 13, 2021, unless amended earlier.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

May 28, 2021

By the Court:

/s/ John J. McConnell Jr., Chief Judge