

SUPREME COURT OF VERMONT  
OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

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**TO:** Members of the Vermont Bar

**FROM:** Patricia Gabel, Esq., State Court Administrator

**RE:** Eighth Amendment to A.O. 49 – Declaration of Judicial Emergency and Changes to Court Procedures, Amendment to PG-12 Administrative Directive (Authorization of Electronic Filing in the Judicial Bureau), Attorney Relicensing Information, Odyssey Electronic Filing & Other Important Info, and Miscellaneous Information

**DATE:** April 21, 2020

For your information, please find:

- [AO 49 Amendment - Declaration of Judicial Emergency and Changes to Court Procedures 4-21-20](#)
- [Amendment to PG-12 – Authorization of Electronic Filing in the Judicial Bureau](#)
- *Notice to Attorneys Due to Renew Licenses in 2020*
- *Odyssey Electronic Filing & Other Important Info*
- *Updated Court Forms*
- *Obligations Under A.O. 41*
- *eCabinet Registration*

## **I. PROMULGATED RULE AMENDMENT**

- a. [AO 49 Amendment - Declaration of Judicial Emergency and Changes to Court Procedures 4-21-20](#)*

**This Order was promulgated on April 21, 2020; effective immediately.**

This order further amends A.O. 49, which declared a Judicial Emergency on March 16, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The order amends ¶ 3 regarding the suspension of nonemergency hearings in the Superior Court. In the list of proceedings excepted from the general suspension of hearings, the order now includes certain emergency hearings involving the modification or enforcement of parent-child contact in domestic and juvenile cases.

The order amends ¶ 5 regarding remote participation in hearings to provide trial courts with greater flexibility in presiding remotely through remote audio or video technology, and in setting hearings with remote audio or video participation. The amendment recognizes that the present Judicial Emergency warrants suspension of the notice and timing requirements relating to video

hearings pursuant to V.R.C.P. 41.3(c), V.R.P.P. 41.3(c), and V.R.F.P. 17 (incorporating V.R.C.P. 41.3 for certain family proceedings). It authorizes courts to hold hearings, both evidentiary and nonevidentiary, in civil, probate, and most family division cases by remote audio technology. It authorizes courts in the criminal division to hold certain nonevidentiary proceedings by remote audio means where the presence of the defendant is not required by V.R.Cr.P. 43. And it authorizes courts to hold evidentiary proceedings in the criminal division by remote means upon agreement of all parties.

Finally, the order amends ¶ 7, which relates to access to court buildings, to require all individuals who enter Judiciary buildings to wear cloth masks. Masks must be worn in public areas, including the courtroom, in nonpublic areas shared in common with others, and in nonpublic workspaces when other people are nearby. The masks may be made of cloth and should cover the individual's mouth and nose.

More information regarding COVID-19 and court operations can be found at <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/news/information-regarding-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-and-court-operations>

*b. [Amendment to PG-12 – Authorization of Electronic Filing in the Judicial Bureau](#)*

**This Order was promulgated on April 20, 2020; effective immediately.**

The Court Administrator has amended Directive PG-12, which authorized electronic filing in the Judicial Bureau to commence on April 27, 2020, to clarify who is required and permitted to electronically file in the Judicial Bureau. The amended directive requires all attorneys representing clients to electronically file. Filers, who are not attorneys representing a party, may file nonelectronically or may elect to file electronically. Once a party elects to efile in a case, the party must continue to do so until the court grants a request to discontinue.

## **II. MISCELLANEOUS**

**NOTICE TO ATTORNEYS DUE TO RENEW LICENSES IN 2020:** In light of the impact of COVID-19 on Office of Attorney Licensing processes, attorneys renewing their license for the 2020-2022 reporting period must renew using the online license renewal portal (which will be opening in May). Absent extraordinary circumstances, paper renewals will not be accepted.

*a. [Odyssey Electronic Filing and Other Important Information](#)*

Odyssey is now operational in the Orange, Windsor, and Windham trial courts and the Judicial Bureau. Electronic filing began in these trial courts on April 20, 2020 and will begin for the Judicial Bureau on April 27, 2020. Please use the following links to access the Odyssey case management programs and for more information.

- **Odyssey File & Serve.** Odyssey File & Serve is the platform through which you will electronically file with the courts. To access Odyssey File & Serve, please visit <https://vermont.tylerhost.net/>. This page contains user guides in the lower left-hand corner. They include instructions on how to register and use the File & Serve. Please note that docket specific filer guides will be posted in the near future on the judiciary's main website.
- **Odyssey Public Portal.** The Odyssey Public Portal allows you to view your case files. To access the portal, please visit <https://publicportal.courts.vt.gov/Portal/>. Before you can view your case files, you must first register in the portal and then request elevated access. The

Public Portal User Guide contains instructions on how to register and request elevated access. You can read the user guide via this link:

<https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/sites/default/files/documents/VT%20Public%20Portal%20User%20Guide%20v8.pdf>. For full information on how to use the portal, please visit <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/public-portal>.

- **FAQ.** Please visit <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/odyssey> for answers to frequently asked questions and updates about the project.

*b. Court Forms*

Court forms are constantly being updated. Please refer to the judiciary website for the most up-to-date forms, <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/court-forms>.

Please use the link below to report any form question, concern or issue <http://www.vermontjudiciary.org/website-feedback-form> or you can access our Website Feedback program at the bottom of each web page.

*c. Obligation under A.O. 41*

Attorneys are reminded that an “attorney must report to the State Court Administrator within thirty days any change of the office mailing or electronic mail address” and that “[n]otice sent to a reported address is sufficient even if not received by the attorney because of failure to report the proper address or failure of delivery not caused by the court.” A.O. 41, § 4(c); see A.O. 44, § 1.

Please email those changes to [JUD.AttyLicensing@vermont.gov](mailto:JUD.AttyLicensing@vermont.gov). Your cooperation is very much appreciated.

To ensure you continue to receive these emails, please add [JUD.AttyLicensing@vermont.gov](mailto:JUD.AttyLicensing@vermont.gov) to your Safe Senders list.

*d. eCabinet Registration*

**Administrative Order No. 44** requires attorneys in active status to register up to three email addresses in **eCabinet** for purposes of receiving notices of hearing and other documents. *You may include staff email addresses in the three email addresses that you specify. eCabinet registration is required whether you practice in court or not.*

If you have already registered in **eCabinet**, the email address(es) you provided as part of that process will be used.

If you have not already registered in **eCabinet**, please go to <https://efiling.eservices.crt.state.vt.us/>, click **Register Now**, and follow the simple prompts. Attorneys will need their attorney license numbers to register. Helpful information about the Attorney Email Registration process is also available on the *Electronic Filing* page of the judiciary website at <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/electronic-access/electronic-filing>. Please contact [jud.helpdesk@vermont.gov](mailto:jud.helpdesk@vermont.gov) or call the Helpdesk at 802-828-4357 with any questions in the meantime.

You are also reminded that you are required to update the email address(es) and other contact information you have registered as soon as there are any changes, including changes to staff email

addresses you may have included with your registration. To revise the information, please go to <https://efiling.eservices.crt.state.vt.us/>, log into **eCabinet**, click “**Account**,” choose “**My Profile**,” and make the necessary changes to your contact information.

Notification to [JUD.AttyLicensing@vermont.gov](mailto:JUD.AttyLicensing@vermont.gov) or in **eCabinet** of a change to your contact information does not automatically notify the other. It is your responsibility to notify both. If you are a member of the Vermont Bar Association, you will also need to separately notify the VBA.