

**SUPREME COURT OF VERMONT  
OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR**

**PATRICIA GABEL, ESQ.**  
State Court Administrator  
[patricia.gabel@vermont.gov](mailto:patricia.gabel@vermont.gov)



[www.vermontjudiciary.org](http://www.vermontjudiciary.org)

**Mailing Address**  
Office of the Court Administrator  
109 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05609-0701

**Telephone** (802) 828-3278  
**FAX:** 802 828-3457

TO: Members of the Vermont Bar

FROM: Patricia Gabel, Esq., State Court Administrator

RE: Fourteenth Amendment to Administrative Order No. 49 – Declaration of Judicial Emergency and Changes to Court Procedures & Miscellaneous Information

DATE: August 20, 2020

For your information, please find:

- [\*AO 49 Amendment - Declaration of Judicial Emergency and Changes to Court Procedures 8-20-20\*](#)
- *Odyssey Electronic Filing & Other Important Info*
- *Updated Court Forms*
- *Obligations Under A.O. 41*
- *eCabinet Registration*

## **I. PROMULGATED RULE AMENDMENT**

[\*AO 49 Amendment - Declaration of Judicial Emergency and Changes to Court Procedures 8-20-20\*](#)

**This Order was promulgated on August 20, 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.

Paragraph 2 of A.O. 49 is amended to extend the judicial emergency to January 1, 2021 in recognition of the fact that the continuing and dynamic nature of the pandemic will continue to impact court operations and to require ongoing changes to court operations and rules.

The order also amends ¶ 7, regarding access to court buildings, to allow entry to individuals participating in proceedings other than hearings, for example case manager conferences.

[Appendix A](#) referred to in ¶ 21 of A.O. 49, which concerns compliance with the Federal CARES Act in eviction actions, is amended to clarify that the required notice to vacate must give thirty days of notice.

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>

## II. MISCELLANEOUS

### *a. Odyssey Electronic Filing and Other Important Information*

The Addison, Bennington, Chittenden and Rutland trial courts and Environmental Division will begin using Odyssey starting September 1st, with electronic filing to commence on or about October 19th. Odyssey and electronic filing are already operational in the Orange, Windsor, and Windham trial courts and the Judicial Bureau. Please use the following links to access Odyssey electronic filing and portal systems and for more information.

**Odyssey File & Serve.** Odyssey File & Serve (OFS) is the platform through which you will electronically file with the courts. To access Odyssey File & Serve, please visit <https://vermont.tylerhost.net/ofsw eb>. This page contains user guides in the lower left-hand corner. They include instructions on how to register and use OFS.

For information about OFS processing fees and for docket specific user guides, please visit <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/electronic-access/electronic-filing>.

**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.

### *Efiling Training Opportunities*

**Register for a live e-filing training webinar.** Starting September 10, 2020, Tyler Technologies will offer online training session on how to electronically file documents using Odyssey File & Serve. These sessions are offered for free and registration is open to all, including attorneys, firm administrators, self-represented litigants, and state agency employees. To register please click here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/7806326256261273102>

**Watch a pre-recorded e-filing training webinar.** The judiciary's NG-CMS project team recorded a demonstration of how to use Odyssey File & Serve that you can view here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ke2ouMDK4VQ&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ke2ouMDK4VQ&feature=emb_title). You may also watch a pre-recorded webinar by Tyler Technologies, by visiting <https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/5669820132306504203> and registering.

**Practice setting up your firm and submitting filings.** Do you want hands on practice using the system? Create your firm, register users and begin filing practice cases in the Vermont "Stage" environment. Be sure that the web address you're using includes the word "stage" (<https://vermont-stage.tylerhost.net/ofsw eb>). The Stage environment is available any time. Please note that submissions will only be reviewed periodically, so you may not get a timely response on whether your practice submissions have been accepted. The Stage environment is available now only for

familiarity and direct hands-on experience and is not a substitute for registering on the actual e-filing site when you are ready.

**Read Vermont specific e-filing guides.** The Vermont Judiciary's website includes several e-filing guides to help you navigate Odyssey File & Serve. Visit <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/electronic-access/electronic-filing> and click on Odyssey File and Serve User Guides to view the most updated versions.

### **Important Notice about Court Operations During Phase III Odyssey Roll Out in the Addison, Bennington, Chittenden, and Rutland Trial Courts and Environmental Division**

In preparation for the Phase III Odyssey roll out, the Addison, Bennington, Chittenden, and Rutland trial courts and the Environmental Division will be closed to the public on several dates during the months of August and September. Below is a schedule of court closures and information about court operations during these dates.

#### **The courts will be closed according to the following schedule:**

- **All courts in these units will be closed from Monday August 31<sup>st</sup> through Monday September 7<sup>th</sup>. Operations will resume on Tuesday September 8<sup>th</sup>.**
- **Addison Criminal, Probate, and Family** will be closed Friday August 7<sup>th</sup>, Friday August 14<sup>th</sup>, Thursday August 20<sup>th</sup>, and Friday August 28<sup>th</sup>.
- **Addison Civil** will be closed Friday August 7<sup>th</sup>, Friday August 14<sup>th</sup> and Thursday August 20<sup>th</sup>.
- **Bennington Civil and Probate** will be closed Friday August 7<sup>th</sup>, Friday August 14<sup>th</sup>, Friday August 21<sup>st</sup>, and Friday August 28<sup>th</sup>.
- **Bennington Criminal and Family** will be closed Tuesday August 11<sup>th</sup>, Thursday August 20<sup>th</sup>, and Tuesday August 25<sup>th</sup>.
- **Chittenden Unit** will be closed Friday August 14<sup>th</sup>, Friday August 21<sup>st</sup>, and Friday August 28<sup>th</sup>.
- **Rutland Civil and Probate** will be closed Friday August 14<sup>th</sup>, Thursday August 20<sup>th</sup>, and Thursday August 27<sup>th</sup>.
- **Rutland Criminal** will be closed Thursday August 13<sup>th</sup>, Friday August 21<sup>st</sup>, and Friday August 28<sup>th</sup>.
- **Rutland Family** will be closed Wednesday August 12<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday August 18<sup>th</sup>, and Tuesday August 25<sup>th</sup>.
- **Environmental Division** will be closed Friday August 21<sup>st</sup> and Thursday August 27<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Court users should know that on these dates:**

- Units will only hold emergency hearings. This includes criminal lodgings, relief from abuse cases, stalking cases, juvenile emergency custodial orders and mental health emergencies.
- Judges from other units or retired judges may sit on these emergency hearings remotely.
- Any non-emergency hearings currently scheduled for this period will be rescheduled.
- Individuals can still call or email the courts, though some calls will be directed to the Information Center first.
- Individuals can still deposit paperwork at the courts' drop boxes and pick up court forms at court entrances.

The Phase III roll out encompasses staff and courts from seven buildings across four counties. Court staff, finance staff, and RIS staff will be managing data conversion, performing manual data entry, and scanning paper files into Odyssey. This dedicated time is essential to ensure a successful

transition onto the new case management system. We appreciate your patience and consideration during this time.

*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.