

SUPREME COURT OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

PATRICIA GABEL, ESQ.
State Court Administrator
patricia.gabel@vermont.gov



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

DATE: May 14, 2020

For your information, please find:

- [*AO 49 Amendment - Declaration of Judicial Emergency and Changes to Court Procedures 5-13-20*](#)
- *Notice Regarding Expansion of Court Operations*
- *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

[*AO 49 Amendment - Declaration of Judicial Emergency and Changes to Court Procedures 5-13-20*](#)

This Order was promulgated on May 13, 2020; some provisions effective June 1, 2020 and some 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 ¶ 2 to extend the judicial emergency until September 1, 2020.

The order amends ¶ 3, effective June 1, 2020, to lift the suspension of nonemergency hearings in the superior court and provide instead that jury trials are suspended in criminal cases until September 1, 2020, and in civil cases until January 1, 2021. The order removes ¶ 4, effective June 1, 2020, to lift the suspension of proceedings in the judicial bureau. Because nonemergency matters will no longer be suspended, effective June 1, 2020, the order removes ¶ 11, which provided discretion to Superior Judges to hold hearings in nonemergency matters.

Finally, the order adds ¶ 19, to allow attorneys, who are due to relicense June 30, 2020 and face financial hardship due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, to defer payment until September 1, 2020.

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. NOTICE REGARDING EXPANSION OF COURT OPERATIONS

Although the Court has continued the Judicial Emergency until September 1, 2020, the Court is also taking measures to expand judicial operations in a responsible manner in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. A committee, Chaired by Associate Justice Harold Eaton, was formed at the request of Chief Justice Paul Reiber to make recommendations to the Court about a transition back to full operations. The Report addresses the opportunities and constraints posed by Judiciary budget issues, technology needs, staffing, and facilities in a time of social distancing. More information about the expansion of judicial operations and the full report are available on the judiciary website at <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/about-vermont-judiciary/blueprint-expansion-court-operations>.

III. 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 <https://secure.vermont.gov/courts/licensing/>. 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. 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/ofswab>. 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. Your cooperation is very much appreciated.

To ensure you continue to receive these emails, please add 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 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 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.