

MESSAGE TO THE BAR FROM CIRCUIT COURT (6/12/20)

The first week of Phase II of the Circuit Court's reopening has gone smoothly, and we thank members of the Bar for their cooperation in making it a success. Please understand that our clerks' offices and the Assignment Office are still operating with limited staff, and they have been answering numerous phone calls and diligently working on rescheduling cases.

By the close of business on June 12, many attorneys will already have heard from judges or staff regarding cases that were set on the docket from June 8-July 31. By June 19, it is anticipated that the court's dockets for June 29-July 17 will be updated on the court website, and July 20-August 31 docket updates will be posted soon thereafter.

Should you have uncertainty about the status of a case scheduled to be heard from June 29-July 31, please contact chambers of the judge assigned to your case, or – if no judge has been assigned – contact the Assignment Office at 240-777-9000.

Because of future congested dockets, we strongly urge those with pending civil or family law cases to consider Alternative Dispute Resolution. Many of you have already done so, and a good portion of those cases have settled. If you would like further information on this process, please contact Special Magistrate Sarah Malik at smalik@mcccourt.com.

For criminal cases, please remember that until July 2 all active (non-retired) judges are plea-eligible, meaning they can hear agreed-upon pleas. If you feel an active judge can help you resolve a criminal matter, or you have already agreed upon a plea, please contact the chambers of that judge.

We anticipate that Zoom for Government will be our remote videoconferencing platform and will be in use by the end of the month. At that time, training for attorneys will be offered by the Bar Association. Information is also offered on the Zoom website, <https://zoom.us>.