


NOTICE TO THE BAR

JURY -- GUIDANCE AS TO VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON JURY SELECTION;
PUBLIC ACCESS TO JURY TRIALS

The Supreme Court in the attached March 18, 2022 Order has provided further guidance as to the process for jury selection, which will continue to begin in a virtual format, as well as options for public access to virtual and in-person jury trials.

Questions should be directed to the Office of the Administrative Director of the Courts at (609) 376-3000.



Glenn A. Grant
Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: March 18, 2022

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

The Supreme Court throughout the COVID-19 pandemic has adjusted jury protocols in order to support the health and safety of jurors and all participants. Consistent with its commitment to safeguard public health, the Court in its March 9, 2022 Order continued the requirement that jury selection begin in a virtual format. The Court in this Order provides further guidance as to that provision.

Accordingly, it is hereby ORDERED that effective immediately and until further order:

1. Jury selection for all trials shall continue to begin in a virtual format in the presence of the attorneys and parties. In criminal cases, the exercise of peremptory challenges shall continue to be conducted in person. Grand jury selections shall also continue to begin in a virtual format.
2. The initial virtual phase of selection shall continue to include an opportunity for all prospective jurors to request dismissal, excusal, or deferral, including as to any COVID-related or other concerns about reporting in person.
3. After that initial virtual phase, and before the in-person exercise of peremptory challenges in criminal cases, the court shall have

discretion to determine whether to continue jury selection in a virtual format or to transition to an in-person format. In making such a determination, the court shall consider the ongoing prioritization of criminal trials involving detained defendants; relevant public health factors, including regional COVID-19 levels; and available resources to support virtual and in-person proceedings.

4. The Assignment Judge shall have discretion as to the method or methods of public access to jury trials, including in-person criminal and civil jury trials and virtual civil jury trials. Such options for public access include in-person observation within the trial courtroom; in-person observation from overflow rooms; and virtual observation through private feed or public livestream.
5. This Order supersedes any inconsistent provisions of the Court's May 11, 2021 Order.
6. The Court may adjust the provisions of this Order based on changes in COVID-19 community levels or revised public health guidance.

For the Court,



Chief Justice

Dated: March 18, 2022