

NOTICE TO THE BAR

MASS TORTS – PROPOSED TERMINATION OF MASS TORT DESIGNATION AND CENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT OF TOBACCO LITIGATION

By order of October 14, 1997 the Supreme Court designated the state-court tobacco litigation as a mass tort and assigned it to the Middlesex Vicinage for centralized case management. The events in the intervening years included a removal of the remaining state litigation to federal court and its subsequent remand back to state court. Superior Court Judge Jamie Happas, the current designated mass tort judge in the Middlesex Vicinage, in accordance with the provisions of the “Revised Mass Tort Guidelines and Criteria for Designation” (Directive #10-07) and Rule 4:38A, has reported to the Administrative Director of the Courts that the bulk of this litigation has been concluded, with one four-plaintiff case only remaining. Judge Happas further reports that the centralized management of the remaining tobacco cases is no longer necessary and thus recommends that the mass tort designation of those cases should be terminated. Finally, Judge Happas also recommends, in accordance with the Guidelines, that the remaining unresolved case be returned to the original county of venue.

This Notice is to advise of the proposed termination of the mass tort designation of the tobacco litigation. Any comments on or objections to this application must be submitted in writing, with relevant supporting documentation, to the Administrative Director of the Courts, P. O. Box 037, Trenton, NJ 08625-0037, by February 29, 2008. Once this comment period has closed, the proposed termination of the mass tort designation will be submitted to the Supreme Court for its consideration and action.

Philip S. Carchman, P.J.A.D.
Acting Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: January 22, 2008

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