



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
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Greetings,

These are challenging times for everyone, including all staff of the Probate and Family Court and those of the other Trial Court Departments. I want to publicly thank the staff, the bar associations, and all our partners for working together to ensure that we are able to administer justice for those individuals who need us.

It is times like this, when society faces threats once thought unimaginable, that the rule of law is more important than ever. Because of the great dedication and sacrifices of our staff, we remain available to enter orders and enforce existing orders in emergency situations. If you have exceptional/exigent circumstances, you should contact your local court.

Parenting orders are not stayed during this period of time. In fact, it is important that children spend time with both of their parents and that each parent have the opportunity to engage in family activities, where provided for by court order. In cases where a parent must self-quarantine or is otherwise restricted from having contact with others, both parents should cooperate to allow for parenting time by video conference or telephone.

To help parents, and in turn so that parents can help their children, we have amended the mandatory parent education requirements. Information about this can be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/advisory/clarification-to-parent-education-procedures-in-section-h-1-of-probate-and-family-court>.

There is information on our website about co-parenting during this stressful and difficult time. The link is: <https://www.afccnet.org/Coronavirus>. In addition, the leaders of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts and the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers published these seven guidelines for parents who are divorced/separated and sharing custody of children during the COVID 19 Pandemic. They can be found at: <https://www.afccnet.org/Portals/0/COVID19Guidelinesfordivorcedparents.FINAL.pdf?ver=2020-03-17-202849-133> and on our website.

/s/ John D. Casey
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