

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN RE:) ADMIN ORDER. No. 2020-0019
POSTPONEMENT OF RESUMPTION OF)
JURY TRIALS IN THE COURTS OF THE)
VIRGIN ISLANDS.)
_____)

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

WHEREAS, on September 8, 2020, this Court issued an Administrative Order to provide for gradual the resumption of all Judicial Branch operations, including the resumption of jury trials in the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands on November 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, in light of the emergency conditions posed by the novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”) within both judicial districts, this Court concludes that it is necessary to postpone the resumption of jury trials from November 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, in order ensure the continued health and safety of judicial officers, court staff, and the public;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that **beginning 12:00 a.m. on January 1, 2021**, jury trials may be held in-person at the discretion of a judicial officer with the approval of the Presiding Judge and the Administrator of Courts, provided that all phases of the trial, including jury selection, can be held while complying with social distancing protocols, federal and territorial public health regulations, and the policies adopted by the Judicial Branch Administrative Office. The period from March 17, 2020, through December 31, 2020, shall not be attributable to either party for purposes of any calculations pursuant to the Speedy Trial Clause of the U.S. Constitution or Rule 48(b) of the Virgin Islands Rules of Criminal Procedure. All aspects of the September 8, 2020 Administrative Order which do not relate to the resumption of jury trials, including any orders, directives, or other actions taken by the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court or the Administrator of Courts pursuant to that order, shall remain fully in effect.

It is further

ORDERED that the Virgin Islands Judicial Branch COVID-19 Task Force **SHALL BE RE-CONVENED** in order to submit, **on or before December 15, 2020**, a proposed plan, for consideration by the Supreme Court, for the resumption of jury trials in the courts of the Virgin Islands. It is further

ORDERED that copies of this order be directed to the appropriate parties.

SO ORDERED this 2nd day of November, 2020.

/s/ Rhys S. Hodge
RHYS S. HODGE
Chief Justice

ATTEST:

VERONICA J. HANDY, ESQ.
Clerk of the Court

By: /s/ Jessica Grant
Deputy Clerk

Dated: November 2, 2020

Copies to:

Justices of the Supreme Court
Judges & Magistrate Judges of the Superior Court
Judges & Magistrate Judges of the District Court
The Honorable Albert Bryan, Governor of the Virgin Islands
The Honorable Novelle Francis, President, 33rd Legislature
Nesha R. Christian-Hendrickson, Esq., President, V.I. Bar Association
Hinda Carbon, Executive Director, V.I. Bar Association
Denise Counts, Esq., Attorney General of the Virgin Islands
Samuel Joseph, Esq., Chief Public Defender
Regina D. Petersen, Administrator of Courts
Veronica J. Handy, Esq., Clerk of the Supreme Court
Tamara Charles, Clerk of the Superior Court
Glenda L. Lake, Esq., Clerk of the District Court
Supreme Court Law Clerks
Supreme Court Secretaries

In re: Postponement of Resumption of Jury Trials

Administrative Order

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