

Standard Operating Procedures for Paul E. Cozza
During the Fifth Judicial District Emergency Operations Plan

March 3, 2022

As of March 7th, 2022, the Court will return to in-person hearings. All parties will be expected to appear in-person unless authorized by the Court to participate remote or unless otherwise specified below.

The following types of hearings shall remain fully remote unless an in-person hearing is requested:

- Show up termination of parental rights hearings only when they are scheduled without an associated permanency review hearing.
- Adoption hearings, unless the adoptive family requests an in-person hearing
- Any dependency or delinquency proceeding where all parties have agreed to a continuance in advance of the hearing. If there is an unrepresented litigant in the case, that litigant must be able to participate via advanced communication technology (Microsoft TEAMS) and attend the hearing virtually. All other requests for continuances should be made by motion.
- Other proceedings or hearings as determined by this court.

All attorneys and persons appearing before Judge Cozza should comply with the following:

1. Download and be familiar with Microsoft TEAMS technology. It is critical for the Court to have the email addresses and cell phone numbers of the parties and lawyers, whenever possible. In the event of a technology failure you will be contacted.
2. Motions for Delinquency, Dependency and Termination of Parental Rights cases must be emailed to judicial staff in advance of the hearing. Please use the case

name in the subject line of any email sent to judicial staff. Motions should be sent to CostaR2@alleghencourts.us and SHolt@alleghencourts.us.

3. Counsel should be aware that if they intend to call witnesses and/or have their clients participate in the proceedings virtually, that it is their responsibility to forward the Microsoft TEAMS invite. Please note that Judge Cozza schedules an “Attorney Meeting” on each day that he hears Delinquency and Dependency court matters. This is a brief meeting in which the court will attempt to resolve issues, grant or deny continuance requests and hear motions. On days when the court is hearing dependency cases, the attorneys will be expected to attend a TEAMS meeting at 8:30AM. On days when the court is hearing delinquency cases, attorneys and probation officers will be expected to attend a TEAMS meeting at 8:45AM. Attorneys should not forward this invitation to their clients or witnesses.
4. The court will continue to allow certain witnesses to attend via phone or through Microsoft TEAMS. Any medical professional, or representative from the Allegheny Health Department may appear virtually or over the phone.
5. Counsel should be prepared to have any exhibits that they intend to enter into evidence during the proceeding scanned in a PDF format and properly labeled as an Exhibit. Counsel and parties should also be prepared to email the exhibit as an attachment during the proceeding, if admissible, to SHolt@alleghencourts.us and CostaR2@alleghencourts.us. Counsel for Termination of Parental Rights hearings may submit proposed stipulations and exhibits to SHolt@alleghencourts.us in advance of the hearing.
6. Pre-Trial Statements should be emailed to SHolt@alleghencourts.us.
7. If you would like to request permission for a party to attend a hearing remotely, or have any technical difficulties, immediately email the court’s judicial staff at the following email addresses:
CostaR2@alleghencourts.us
SHolt@alleghencourts.us

Custody, Support, and other Domestic Relations Matters

1. The Court will entertain non-emergency Family Division Motions on the monthly scheduled date. All Motions must be sent in advance of presentation to the judicial staff at the following email addresses: CostaR2@alleghenycourts.us and Sholt@alleghenycourts.us. Please indicate the date of intended presentation and include the case caption in the subject line. Parties will be expected to appear in-person for Motions hearings unless given prior permission to attend remotely.
2. Any domestic relations issue where the parties are seeking a consent order, the parties may contact judicial staff at the email addresses listed above and the copy of any Consent Motion shall be attached to that email and include the case caption in the subject line. The Motion shall include a proposed order in WORD. If all of these conditions are met, the Court will enter an Order and email copies of the Order to counsel and/or the parties. It is the responsibility of the filing party to file a copy of the order at the Department of Court Records.
3. Emergency Domestic Relations Motions shall be e-mailed to the Court at the following email address: CostaR2@alleghenycourts.us and SHolt@alleghenycourts.us. The party presenting the Motion must copy opposing counsel or the pro se litigant on the email and indicate their position.
 - If a party consents to or does not object to the Motion, the Court will enter an order and email the copies of the Order to counsel and/or the parties. The Court will file the original Order with the Department of Court Records.
 - If a party does not consent to or opposes the Motion, the Court will schedule argument on the Motion using TEAMS. The Court and the parties shall follow the protocol for remote hearings as set forth above.

- If the Court determines the motion is not an emergency, the Court will direct counsel and/or the party to notice and present the Motion on the Court's designated Motions day.

Self Represented Litigant Motions

1. All self-represented (pro se) litigant motions for all domestic relations matters must be sent through the PRO SE MOTIONS PROGRAM. This is to ensure that the motions are in proper form (including proposed orders in Word) and there has been proper service to all opposing parties.
2. As per above, unless the matter is deemed an emergency by the Court, all Pro Se Motions should be scheduled on the Court's designated pro se motion calendar date.

Custody Conciliations

The Court will be conducting all conciliations through TEAMS.

Should you have any questions about these Standard Operating Procedures or questions about scheduling, please contact judicial staff at the email addresses below:

Judicial Secretary
Roxanne Costa
CostaR2@alleghenycourts.us

Judicial Law Clerk
Sarra Holt Terry
SHolt@alleghenycourts.us