



The Circuit Court
for the Tenth Judicial Circuit of Michigan

DARNELL JACKSON
CHIEF JUDGE, SAGINAW COUNTY

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[Court Update to The Saginaw County Bar Association](#)

Well it has been an extremely challenging past fifteen months to say the least! We were forced to shut down the courthouse on Friday, March 13th, 2020, due to the Coronavirus. Since that time, we have managed as best we could to continue to provide court services to you, the members of the Bar and to the public at large. It has not been easy. Nor has it always been smooth. And I thank you all for your patience and understanding as we have attempted to navigate our way through this situation.

I am pleased to say that as of yesterday MIOSHA lifted the restrictions put in place to address the pandemic. What that means is that although the pandemic is not “over”, we can still reclaim some sense of normalcy in how we do legal business here in Saginaw County.

One of the good things to come out of the pandemic was that we were forced to utilize Zoom for court hearings. I say that recognizing that we all are probably a bit “Zoomed Out”. Yet it has proven to be a useful tool for getting certain things accomplished and it is here to stay.

What that means is that going forward we will return to conducting hearings in the courthouse, but we will also continue to handle many things via Zoom. Each judge will have the discretion to schedule their hearings in-person or via Zoom, depending on what they believe is the most appropriate way to do so. If you have a hearing that has already been scheduled via Zoom, follow that date and time. Unless you receive another notice from the court indicating a change. It is important for attorneys and litigants to pay close attention the notices of hearing from the court in order to know when to appear and by what means.

We anticipate beginning district court and circuit court **criminal** jury trials at the courthouse again starting in August. As we have indicated, we have quite a backlog of criminal matters to resolve first before we begin conducting civil jury trials. Realistically it may not be until some time next year before any civil jury trials take place.

Just as shutting down the courthouse was a challenge, so too is opening it back up. I am confident that in time we will be back to where we were in handling matters at the courthouse. But I also believe that we will never return to the way things were. I will do my best to keep you all apprised of any further developing information as quickly as possible. And ask for your continuing patience. Thanx.