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From: Patricia Foley Burke <patriciafoleyburke@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 2:43 PM
To: Comments Mailbox
Subject: [External]Continuation of Court Functions Post Covid-19 via zoom

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Dear Chief Justice Rabner: Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments regarding the above. As a trial attorney I write in strong support of continuing as many court functions (including municipal court) via zoom as possible .. Necessity is the mother of invention and I believe the NJ Courts adapted very well despite challenging circumstances. The expansion of online filings was very helpful and I believe should be further expanded so that all types of matters may be filed on e-courts with proper safeguards for privacy interests in family matters etc.

Personally I would support continued Supreme Court and Appellate argument via zoom although in particular for Supreme Court arguments it may lose a bit of the grandeur of having to appear in person in Trenton. My son appeared via zoom in the matter of Kathleen Delanoy vs. Twp of Ocean from Bald Head Island, N.C. and the format worked well. I also support the continued live stream of all Appellate and Supreme Court arguments even when held in person. Watching the arguments is a real teaching tool for lawyers and provides greater access to the justice system for the litigants and for the public.

Remote proceedings before town councils, zoning and planning boards has been particularly helpful. Now all interested parties can appear remotely and all documents are available on the township websites.

Remote appearances also help the environment and are more economical. No more racing to the court house, trying to find parking and then sitting around waiting often time for hours for your conference or motion to be heard.

The only proceedings which are still better served in person are jury trials. The attorneys really need to read the jury. Hopefully some aspects will remain like allowing the experts to testify remotely and fact witnesses who perhaps do not live in the area.

The only downside is for the new and younger lawyers. Being in the Courthouse allows the attorneys to be together and get to know one another. Thankfully at my age this is not a problem but I see it as a negative for younger attorneys.

Finally, while not the subject for comment- let's return voir dire to the attorneys!!

Respectfully submitted,

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