

More Judicial Updates on COVID-19

COVID-19 Response Resource Center: Timely Counsel for your Business

By Daniel Adams on 03.19.2020

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North Carolina's courts have taken further steps to address the impact of COVID-19 on the court system.

North Carolina Supreme Court

The Supreme Court will not be holding travel sessions in April or May. Cases previously scheduled for April or May may still be heard, at the litigants' option:

1. Via WebEx the week of May 4 at a specific date and time set by the Court,
2. At a later date, or
3. The matter may be decided on the briefs

North Carolina State Trial Courts

Today, Chief Justice Beasley extended the deadline for all trial court filings and periods of limitation in civil, criminal, estates, and special proceedings to the close of business on April 17, 2020. The order does not apply to filings due in the appellate courts. Her order is [here](#).

North Carolina Federal Trial Courts

Both the MDNC and EDNC have issued standing orders continuing civil and most criminal proceedings to a date uncertain past April 16 and May 1, respectively. I have not yet seen a similar order out of the WDNC.

MDNC:

- Civil jury trials scheduled between now and April 16 are continued
- Criminal cases also are continued until after April 16, with further continuances to be issued as necessary and appropriate

- Sentencings and supervised release/probation violations will be continued past March 31 (or not) at the discretion of the individual presiding judge
- “Exceptional cases that may be considered for exemption from a continuance include those where a defendant may be considered to have served or over-served sentence”
- Individual judges may take such actions as lawful and appropriate to ensure fairness of the proceedings, the rights of the parties, and the protection of the public; in particular, Magistrate Judges may preside over initial appearances
- Grand jury proceedings for March are cancelled
- All other deadlines remain in effect

EDNC:

- Civil and criminal jury trials scheduled between now and May 1 are continued
- All other proceedings are subject to the discretion of the individual presiding judge
- Grand jury proceedings will continue
- Magistrate judges will continue to preside over other criminal matters, including initial appearances, arraignments, detention hearings, and the like, but will consider using video conferencing as appropriate and available

Brooks Pierce is dedicated to keeping our clients fully informed during the COVID-19 crisis. For more information, please visit our [COVID-19 Response Resources](#) page.