

News Advisory

From the Rhode Island
Judiciary



Two county courthouses to close temporarily

March 31, 2020: The state courts tomorrow, April 1, will shut down two county courthouses in response to the COVID-19 public health crisis.

This morning, Rhode Island Supreme Court Chief Justice Paul A. Suttell signed an executive order closing the McGrath Judicial Complex (Washington County) in South Kingstown and the Murray Judicial Complex (Newport County) in Newport effective April 1.

The number of court hearings taking place has been significantly reduced statewide, but it is especially true in Washington County and Newport County. The closure is also an effort to conserve resources and critical supplies to combat the pandemic, according to the order. Emergency and essential matters in those two counties will be heard at the Noel Judicial Complex (Kent County), 222 Quaker Lane, Warwick.

Chief Justice Suttell also signed and issued a separate executive order limiting the number of personnel congregating in groups of more than five people, consistent with Governor Raimondo's directive on social distancing. Every effort will be made to adhere as closely to that directive as possible in courtrooms where emergency matters, such as criminal arraignments, call for more than five individuals to be present in a courtroom.

#