

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY
COUNTY DEPARTMENT, CHANCERY DIVISION**

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2019-02

**SUBJECT: REMOTE VIDEO PROCEEDINGS PILOT PROGRAM
MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE CASES**

The Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Access to Justice (ATJ Commission) implements projects throughout the State of Illinois to enhance access to justice and improve the court user experience with a focus on removing barriers for self-represented litigants. The ATJ Commission also engages in programs to support and simplify the use of remote technology that can be used when appropriate to connect attorneys, interpreters, and litigants with the court system in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

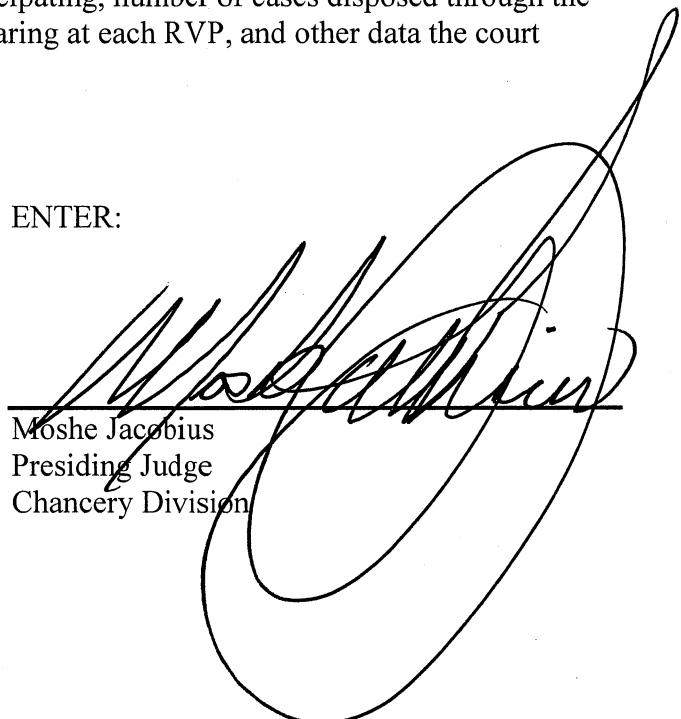
In an effort to maximize access to the courts and judicial efficiency, the Mortgage Foreclosure/Mechanics Lien Section of the Chancery Division will implement a pilot program for Remote Video Proceedings (RVP) in select mortgage foreclosure cases as allowed by Illinois Supreme Court Rules 185 and 241. Implementing a pilot program in conjunction with the ATJ Commission for a limited number of cases will allow the court the ability to conduct RVP hearings in an effort to gauge the feasibility and efficacy of such an initiative. This program allows the court to capture statistics and feedback from litigants and attorneys to determine the practicality of broader expansion throughout the Cook County Court system.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. Definition of "Remote Video Proceeding." A "remote video proceeding" (RVP) is a proceeding related to a contested mortgage foreclosure case conducted by two-way electronic audiovisual communication between the defendant, plaintiff, any witnesses (if applicable), and the court, in lieu of the physical presence of both parties in the courtroom. A RVP may take place with all parties located at different locations or one or more parties located in court and the other parties at remote locations.
2. Scope of the RVP Pilot Program and Eligible Cases. The RVP Pilot Program will be available for contested mortgage foreclosure cases assigned to Calendars 60 and 63. The RVP Pilot Program will begin on December 2, 2019. After six months of the RVP Pilot Program, the court will make a determination as to whether to continue the program, expand the program to the entire Mortgage Foreclosure/Mechanics Lien, or terminate the program.
3. Eligible Cases. Contested mortgage foreclosure cases assigned to Calendars 60 and 63 will be eligible for the RVP Pilot Program. When parties first appear before the judge, and the judge approves the case for RVP, an order will be entered assigning the case to the RVP Program and all parties will receive instructions for connecting to future RVPs. The judges assigned to Calendars 60 and 63 will set a weekly call time for RVP cases that allows for fifteen (15) cases per call. One or more parties may request to participate in an RVP when the parties first appear. The court may, in its discretion, order a case to the RVP Program or decline to allow RVPs in a case.

4. RVP Forms. If one or more parties request an RVP, and the judge deems the case is eligible, the parties will receive an Instruction Sheet and an Acknowledgment of Rights and Request for an RVP form to be completed and filed with the court at the time of the request.
5. Conduct at the RVP. An RVP is the same as an in-person courtroom hearing. Parties who fail to show up for the RVP, or fail to show up in a timely manner, risk the same consequences as a failure to appear at an in-person hearing in the courtroom. This requirement will not be in effect if there is proof of a technical malfunction. Judges may also choose to electronically sign orders pursuant to the Illinois Supreme Court Electronic Signatures Standard (in addition to signing a hard copy for the common law record) and make the orders available through the videoconferencing technology being utilized.
6. Authority of the court to require physical presence of plaintiff, defendant, or any witnesses. Nothing in this general administrative order is intended to limit the authority of the court to issue an order requiring any party to be physically present in the courtroom for any proceeding or portion of a proceeding where the court finds that circumstances require the physical presence of the plaintiff or defendant in the courtroom.
7. Collection of information and reports. Court staff will collect and evaluate information about the RVP Pilot Program and will prepare a report for the ATJ Commission at the end of the initial six-months. If the RVP Pilot Program continues, quarterly reports will be provided to the ATJ Commission. Data collected will include, but is not limited to, surveys from user experience, number of cases participating, number of cases disposed through the RVP Pilot Program, number of parties appearing at each RVP, and other data the court deems useful for evaluation.

ENTER:



Moshe Jacobius
Presiding Judge
Chancery Division

Date: September 10, 2019