

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
COUNTY DEPARTMENT — CHANCERY DIVISION

**JUDGE ANNA M. LOFTUS**  
**STANDING ORDER**

**General Chancery Calendar 15**

Richard J. Daley Center, Courtroom 2410, Chicago, IL 60602  
Effective September 1, 2021

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This Standing Order is applicable to all proceedings on cases assigned to Calendar 15. The purpose of this Standing Order is to establish general procedures to aid in the timely resolution of cases assigned to this calendar. Failure to comply with the provisions of this Order may result in sanctions, including matters not being heard, motions being stricken, default or dismissal, or other appropriate sanctions or consequences.

These procedures are of general applicability. If a specific matter before the Court presents circumstances that warrant modification of these general provisions, the case will be handled according to the specific need presented.

**Until further notice, all matters will be heard remotely, via Zoom.**

**Until further notice, all Motions must be noticed with the Calendar 15 hearing link.**

All Calendar 15 hearings may be joined at the following link:

<https://circuitcourtofcookcounty.zoom.us/j/95535573920>

The Meeting ID is **955 3557 3920**. No password is required.

Further information about remote hearings, how to operate the Zoom software, and alternative methods to access the hearings is available in the Remote Hearing Supplement to this Standing Order, available online at [www.cookcountycourt.org/JudgesPages/Loftus,AnnaM.aspx](http://www.cookcountycourt.org/JudgesPages/Loftus,AnnaM.aspx)

All court hearings are open to the public. In accordance with GAO 2020-05, every effort is to be made to ensure uninterrupted public access to court proceedings in these unusual times.

This Standing Order has been revised in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on judicial operations. It supplements the broader directives issued by Chief Judge Evans, applicable County-wide, and Presiding Judge Jacobius, applicable to the Chancery Division. Review the most recent General Administrative Orders for the most current information about court operations.<sup>1</sup>

Portions of this Standing Order have been tailored to the Covid-19 pandemic and remote operations. For inquiries outside the scope of the Standing Order, please email chambers staff.

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<sup>1</sup> Both sets of GAOs are available online. County-wide GAOs: [www.cookcountycourt.org/HOME.aspx](http://www.cookcountycourt.org/HOME.aspx)  
Chancery GAOs: [www.cookcountycourt.org/ABOUTTHECOURT/CountyDepartment/ChanceryDivision.aspx](http://www.cookcountycourt.org/ABOUTTHECOURT/CountyDepartment/ChanceryDivision.aspx)

## 1. COURT SCHEDULE

Matters are heard daily, on the following schedule:

9:15 a.m.	Routine Motions
9:30 a.m.	Motions
10:00 a.m.	Status, Clerk's Status, Case Management
10:30 a.m.	Hearings
10:45 a.m.	Emergency Motions
1:30 p.m.	Trials, Settlement Conferences

Initial motion dates are set by the Clerk of Court at 9:30 a.m. when a matter is spindled. Emergency motions are set by chambers as described below. The Court may set other contested or unusual matters at various other times, as scheduling permits.

## 2. COMMUNICATION WITH CHAMBERS

All litigation must take place through filed documents, be they pleadings, motions, memoranda, and so forth. Litigation by mail will not be tolerated.

Chambers staff is available to communicate regarding administrative and scheduling matters. Whenever possible (e.g., if communicating with email) such communication should include all parties to a case. Note that law clerks cannot give legal advice.

Email communication is strongly preferred, copying all parties on the email:

Chambers email: [calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov)  
Chambers phone: 312 603 6025

Chambers staff is working remotely, and the chambers phone is not monitored. For matters of urgency, please email instead.

Pursuant to General Administrative Order 2021-05, Part IV.B,<sup>2</sup> chambers staff may reach out to parties to determine the status of pending matters.<sup>3</sup> Parties who receive communication from law clerks concerning their cases are expected to timely respond, fully addressing the reason for the communication. Failure to respond to law clerks' communications may result in, among other things, the case not being heard.

Communications with staff are for administrative matters only. Parties should not direct substantive requests to staff, or argue via email. Such communications are ethically problematic for all involved, and may result in sanctions. *See* David W. Inlander & Ronald D. Menna, Jr., *When A Courtesy Copy Email Is Not OK: Reflections on problematic courtesy copy emails to judges*, ILL. BAR. J., vol. 109, at 13 (June 2021)

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<sup>2</sup> Available online:

[www.cookcountycourt.org/Portals/0/Chancery%20Division/General%20Administrative%20Orders/GAO%202021-05%20COVID-19%20%20\(Part%2015\)%20%20General%20Chancery%20and%20Mechanics%20Lien%20Amended.pdf](http://www.cookcountycourt.org/Portals/0/Chancery%20Division/General%20Administrative%20Orders/GAO%202021-05%20COVID-19%20%20(Part%2015)%20%20General%20Chancery%20and%20Mechanics%20Lien%20Amended.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Attorneys are required to include their service email address on all pleadings. ILL. SUP. CT. R. 11(d).

### 3. MOTION PRACTICE

All motions must be filed and noticed for hearing, except as described below.

#### 3.0. Motion Practice During Remote Judicial Proceedings

Until further notice, all matters are being held via Zoom, and chambers staff is working remotely. Please note these additional notice requirements carefully.

All Notices of Motion must contain the Calendar 15 Zoom hearing link and Meeting ID (<https://circuitcourtofcookcounty.zoom.us/j/95535573920> and 955 3557 3920, respectively), in addition to complying with local notice rules. *See* General Administrative Order 2021-05, Part II.B. Because all hearings are remote, a Notice of Motion that identifies the courtroom alone is not sufficient to give the recipient notice of how to join the hearing.

All Motions must be sent to chambers staff at [calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov) at least five court days before their presentment date. **If a matter is set for briefing, copies of all briefs are due at the time the Reply is filed.**

The only exceptions are routine, emergency, and agreed orders as described below. This is because chambers staff has limited access to the Clerk of Court's electronic docket. **Unless a party informs the Court of the pendency of a Motion, it will not be called.** Consider this extra incentive to conform to the Court's five-day courtesy copy requirement.

#### 3.1. Routine Motions

Routine motions should be filed, but not spindled, and emailed to chambers at [calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov), copying all participating parties to a case as appropriate, and including a draft order in Word format. If no objection is received, the order will be entered within a few days' time.

If all parties consent to a motion, or if the motion is not opposed, consider sending an agreed order instead, for faster turnaround.

The following motions are considered routine:

- Motions to appoint a special process server;
- Motions for entry of stipulated protective orders;
- Motions to vacate technical defaults and for leave to file an Appearance or responsive pleading;
- Motions for leave to file any responsive overdue pleading;
- Motions for leave to file an amended Complaint;
- Motions for leave to appear as additional counsel, or to substitute counsel by agreement; and
- Motions to amend deadlines in a briefing schedule, where such amendments do not affect the ultimate hearing date.

#### 3.2. Emergency Motions

Emergency motions are motions where the movant seeks immediate relief, bypassing some combination of the regular motion call, the Clerk of Court's spindling procedures, the notice and

timing requirements of the Illinois Supreme Court Rules, or applicable Cook County Local Rules. Emergencies arise in situations that (a) are not reasonably foreseeable, and (b) threaten irreparable harm if unaddressed prior to the next available court date. Emergencies are not created by a party's failure to seek timely relief.

It is the Court's experience that genuine emergencies are rare.

A party seeking to present an emergency motion must email chambers staff at [calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov) by **2:00 p.m. the day before the matter is sought to be heard**. Motions emailed to chambers after 2:00 p.m. are generally ineligible for hearing on the following court day.

Movant must email file-stamped copies of the Motion and any relevant pleadings. The Motion must set forth the emergency basis for the matter. Movant must be prepared to explain the nature of the emergency, the basis for emergency relief, the relief sought, and the party's plans to notice the other parties, or good cause to not do so.

If a matter is deemed to be an emergency, a presentment date will be set. Movant will be required to notice the matter as directed.

### **3.3. Regular Motions**

Motions in all cases are heard starting at 9:30 a.m. Motions must be spindled through the Clerk of Court. Courtesy copies of all motions must be emailed to chambers staff at [calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov) at least five court days before the matter is set to be heard. If a motion has been set for a hearing, courtesy copies are due on the date the Reply is filed.

Failure to tender courtesy copies may result in the matter not being heard.

Motions may be freely piggybacked to existing court dates. Piggybacked motions must be noticed, as any other motion would be. Courtesy copies must be delivered five court days in advance, as described below, or with as much notice as possible. The Court may decline to address a piggybacked matter for insufficient notice or failure to timely deliver courtesy copies.

### **3.4. Briefs and Memoranda**

All opening and response briefs are limited to fifteen double-spaced pages. **Reply briefs are limited to ten double-spaced pages.** The ten-page limit on Reply briefs is applicable to all briefing schedules entered into on or after September 1, 2021.

Leave is required to exceed the page limit. An agreement of the parties to exceed the page limit is useless. The final decision is up to the Court.

Litigants are advised that court personnel only have access to Lexis, and as such Lexis citations are preferred. If cited authority is available on Lexis (e.g. out-of-state cases), separate reference copies of that authority are not required.

**If a motion is set for briefing, courtesy copies on the briefing are required at the time the Reply is filed.**

### **3.5. Agreed Orders**

In light of the pandemic, and to facilitate remote operations, the Court is accepting agreed orders via email. If the parties have reached agreement on any matter, they are encouraged to email chambers staff at [calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov), copying all other parties to the case. Such

communication must include a courtesy copy of any relevant underlying motions, and include a proposed agreed order in Word format.

The Court encourages parties to communicate regarding motions prior to spindling them. For example, parties may agree to a briefing schedule in lieu of presenting a contested motion.

#### 4. COURTESY COPIES

The Clerk of Court's e-filing system does not tender courtesy copies to chambers. Do not include the Court's email address on an automated service list.

The Court requires that parties email courtesy copies to chambers staff at [calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:calendar15.chancery@cookcountyil.gov). A complete set of courtesy copies should include all filings relevant to the motion. For instance, courtesy copies on a Motion to Dismiss must include the targeted pleading, in addition to all briefs filed.

For **presentments** or **statuses**, courtesy copies are required no later than five court days before the hearing date.

For **hearings**, courtesy copies are due when the last brief is filed, regardless of when the hearing date may be.

Notwithstanding the above, copies are better late than never. That said, if courtesy copies are tendered fewer than five court days in advance, the matter may not be heard, at the Court's discretion.

#### 5. COURTROOM PROCEDURE

There is no court reporter assigned to Calendar 15. If a party wants court proceedings transcribed, the party must provide a court reporter.

Where possible, parties are expected to provide their own interpreters. If an interpreter is required, please contact chambers staff as soon as the need is known.

Remote proceedings have benefits and drawbacks, one of them being that it is very easy for one person to derail court proceedings by inadvertently leaving their microphone on during another case. Participants may be muted at any time to cut off feedback or background noise.

Intentionally disrupting court proceedings is not permitted. Just as in a physical courtroom, disruption may result in being muted, having one's participation curtailed, being ejected from the hearing, or sanctions for contempt of court.

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