

VERMONT SUPERIOR COURT
FRANKLIN/GRAND ISLE UNIT
CIVIL DIVISION

STANDING ORDER

As the COVID-19 pandemic wreaks its havoc, our legal system faces unprecedented challenges—among them the health and safety effects of the pandemic, the Governor’s “stay-at-home” order, the dramatic impacts upon individuals and businesses in our community, and the resulting obstacles to business as usual for the legal profession and the courts. This court concludes that it has an obligation to address these challenges head-on and systematically, rather than leaving the response to an inevitable flood of motions that could exacerbate rather than ameliorate the situation. The court therefore orders as follows:

1. This order applies to cases in the Franklin/Grand Isle Unit Division only.
2. The court hereby extends all unexpired deadlines in Rule 16.2 discovery schedules, other than trial-ready dates, for 90 days. The parties may by stipulation lengthen or shorten this extension by no more than 60 days.
3. Due to the CDC’s “social distancing” recommendations and the Governor’s stay-at-home order, no one should be out in the community to attend a foreclosure sale. The court hereby stays all previously-noticed foreclosure sales, and deadlines to conduct any foreclosure sales, for 90 days.
4. Because it will be virtually impossible for anyone to find new housing during the Governor’s stay-at-home order, and because causing people to leave their residences to seek housing or to become homeless could increase the risk of community spread of COVID-19, the court will defer action on any motion seeking a writ of possession until expiration of the current Judicial Emergency.
5. The court may extend, expand upon, or reconsider this order as circumstances dictate.
6. Any party seeking an exception to any provision of this order may file a motion, supported by an affidavit showing specific circumstances warranting such exception. To support a request for a writ of possession notwithstanding paragraph 4 above, the affidavit must establish either a clear need for emergency relief or that execution of the writ will not cause any person to become homeless during the Judicial Emergency.

Electronically signed on March 30, 2020 at 04:47 PM pursuant to V.R.E.F. 7(d).



Samuel Hoar, Jr.
Superior Court Judge