

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA
MIDDLE DISTRICT**

AND

**COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF HUNTINGDON COUNTY,
PENNSYLVANIA**

IN RE: 20 th Judicial District – Conduct of	:	33 MM 2020
Proceedings via Advanced	:	CP-31-MD-125-2020
Communication Technology During	:	AO-16-2020
Judicial Emergency	:	

AMENDMENT TO ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER


AND NOW, this 28th day of April, 2020, in an effort to limit the spread of COVID-19, and pursuant to the Supreme Court’s Orders of March 16, 2020, and April 1, 2020 (Nos. 531 and 532 Judicial Administration Docket), this Court’s Declaration of Judicial Emergency, issued March 16, 2020, and all extensions thereof, the Court Orders that Paragraph 3 of Administrative Order AO-16-2020, filed April 22, 2020, is amended to read as follows:

3. Consistent with Pa.R.Crim.P. 119(B), criminal defendants may consent to the conduct of any proceeding in their respective cases via ACT. Furthermore, the Court hereby suspends Pa.R.Crim.P. 119(A)(1)–(6) during the Judicial Emergency, except to the extent to which Rule 119(A)(4) applies to jury trials. Criminal defendants are hereby **required** to participate in all proceedings in their respective cases via **ACT with the exception of** jury trials and those governed by Pa.R.Crim.P. 119(A)(7). For purposes of clarification, the proceedings to be conducted via ACT, regardless of whether the defendant consents, include (but are not limited to) preliminary hearings, bench trials, sentencing hearings, and revocation hearings regarding parole, probation, and intermediate punishment.

33 MM 2020
CP-31-MD-125-2020
AO-16-2020

- a. The Court calls to the attention of both criminal defendants and their counsel that the operation of Pa.R.Crim.P. 600 is currently suspended due to the Judicial Emergency, and that even after such suspension is lifted, both the Judicial Emergency and general infection control procedures regarding COVID-19 will remain in place, to varying degrees, until the pandemic is resolved. This means that inmate transports will continue to be extremely limited, if not eliminated entirely, for quite some time.
- b. In light of the above, the Court **strongly encourages** criminal defendants to consent to the conduct of all possible proceedings via ACT, and the Court will endeavor to ensure that all such proceedings are conducted with appropriate solemnity and protection of procedural rights (including, without limitation, confrontation clause rights under the Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution), as well as that each defendant's reasonable concerns regarding the use of ACT are appropriately addressed.

BY THE COURT:


George N. Zanic, President Judge

C: Irene Bizzoso, Esq., Supreme Court Prothonotary
Geoff Moulton, Court Administrator of Pennsylvania
Stacey Witlec
Kay Coons, Prothonotary/Clerk of Courts
Virginia Cooper, Register & Recorder/Clerk of the Orphans' Court
Jeffrey E. Leonard, Sheriff
Duane Black, Warden
Leonard Hahn, Director, Probation Department
David G. Smith, District Attorney
Fredrick Gutshall, Esq., Director, Office of Court Appointed Counsel
Angela J. Robinson, District Court Administrator
Huntingdon County Bar Association