

District of New Jersey Extends Standing Orders Responding to COVID Crisis for Several More Months

March 15, 2021

As part of the District of New Jersey's continuing response to the ongoing public health emergency and in light of the current resurgence of COVID-19 in the state, on March 12, 2021, Chief Judge Freda L. Wolfson of the District of New Jersey issued four orders further extending pending Standing Orders for an additional two and a half months.

First, the Court extended Standing Order 21-02, thus extending the suspension of *all* in-person judicial proceedings for both civil and criminal cases through June 1, 2021.

Second, the Court entered Standing Order 21-04, which extended Standing Order 20-12 concerning filing and discovery deadlines. Standing Order 21-04 includes the following key provisions:

- All jury selections and jury trials for civil and criminal trials are now continued until June 1, 2021.

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For criminal trials, the period between March 16, 2020 and June 1, 2021 shall now be "excluded time" under the Speedy Trial Act. That period of time shall also be "excluded time" for criminal matters not yet set for trial.

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Although several Standing Orders issued shortly after the COVID crisis commenced altered upcoming filing and discovery deadlines at that time, no further filing and discovery deadlines are being automatically tolled. However, individual judges continue to be afforded discretion for filing or scheduling adjustments to ensure the fairness of the proceedings and preserve the substantial rights of the parties.

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No statutes of limitations are tolled by the Standing Order or its extensions.

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- Any litigant can seek relief from the extension if they believe it is necessary due to emergent circumstances.

Standing Orders 21-03 and 21-05 were also entered, with provisions focused largely on criminal and immigration habeas matters.

Full copies of these four Orders are available at the following links: