

District of New Jersey Issues Amended Standing Orders that Begin a Return to In-Person Judicial Proceedings

May 19, 2021

Source: New Jersey Federal Practice Alert

On May 19, 2021, Chief Judge Freda L. Wolfson of the District of New Jersey issued two Amended Standing Orders, Nos. 2021-02 and 2021-04, which relax existing COVID restrictions and, taken together, begin the return to in-person proceedings before the District of New Jersey.

First, ***effective immediately***, Standing Order 2021-02 is amended to permit the presiding judicial officer to choose to resume in-person evidentiary hearings, settlement conferences and emergent matters on a limited basis and in the judicial officer's discretion. All other judicial proceedings will continue to be conducted remotely.

Second, Standing Order 2021-04 is amended to indicate that civil jury selections and trials shall resume ***on September 1, 2021***, subject to the restriction that only one civil jury trial may be conducted at any of the District's courthouses at a given time. Meanwhile, criminal jury selections and trials shall resume on June 1, 2021. 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, and litigants retain the ability to seek relief from the Court's standing orders if they believe it is necessary due to emergent circumstances.

Full copies of the Amended Standing Orders are available at the following links: