



PROBATE COURT OF THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE  
RHODE ISLAND

**April 1, 2020**

**To the Members of the RI Bar  
and Citizens of RI :**

Providence City Hall remains closed and locked down, with access only for **essential City Employees (public safety, maintenance, and other personnel directly related to the health and welfare of the public)** until **April 17, 2020** and very possibly longer.

As a result, there **cannot be regular, twice a week Probate court sessions commencing March 31 through the above date.** During this time, you may continue to mail documents to the court. However, since Probate Court staff is not able to go into the building to process court filings, statutorily required advertisements and other court matters, cases that are not of an **Emergency nature** as described hereafter will not be scheduled and heard until regular court sessions begin.

Normal court operations will resume when conditions improve sufficiently to allow City Hall to open and court staff to return to work. Initially, the court will prioritize scheduled cases not heard in **March** and **April**. Depending on volume, additional court sessions on Tuesday and Thursday, are possible as is the addition of another weekly court day until the court docket is current. Staff will process cases submitted during the closure and schedule them pursuant to the applicable statutory requirements set forth in **Title 33 of the RI General laws.**

The following are **Emergency Matters** as referenced above:

- 1. Adult and certain minor Temporary Guardianships (those cases with life threatening issues or dangerous life altering conditions)** subject to the terms and conditions established by **Statute** and as are directed and modified specifically by the court in response to the present crisis through **Emergency Administrative Procedures.**
- 2. Decedent Estates** which are **uncontested** and if not heard **create dangerous life altering conditions** for the heirs at law/ beneficiaries of the decedent, with appropriate waivers of notice from heirs at law and beneficiaries.



PROBATE COURT OF THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE  
RHODE ISLAND

Page: 2

April 1, 2020

**Emergency Matter Procedure:**

Before filing a case, please call or e-mail me at **401-521-3110**, e-mail- [jmartinelli@providenceri.gov](mailto:jmartinelli@providenceri.gov) or if I am not available e-mail one of the clerks: Rene- [rmanosh@providenceri.gov](mailto:rmanosh@providenceri.gov) ; Melissa- [mguardarrama@providenceri.gov](mailto:mguardarrama@providenceri.gov) ; Deana- [Dburke@providenceri.gov](mailto:Dburke@providenceri.gov) and they will contact me to answer any questions you may have and to obtain authorization to file and prepare the matter for teleconference hearing.

Once it is determined that the matter is an **Emergency Matter** and Probate Court action is appropriate, the **specific Emergency Procedures** to be followed will be electronically transmitted to counsel **or** the pro se individual. Please insure that Court filings and forms contain appropriate signatures, notarizations and witnesses as is applicable; **first transmit the court and support documents electronically via e-mail** to me or any one of the clerks at the e-addresses provided herein and then mail the documents **to Providence Probate Court** with the **appropriate filing fees**. As soon as the procedural requirements are complete, the case is eligible for hearing by the court at a mutually agreed time and day, telephonically or through the Zoom app.

Of course, you may also contact me at the above number or e-mail address or the **Probate Clerk, Paul V. Jabour** at his law office number with any procedural questions related to the interruption of the court's operation. Thank you for your understanding and patience in these very difficult times.

S/ **John E Martinelli**

**John E. Martinelli**  
**Providence Probate Judge**