

PRESS RELEASE

JUDICIAL BRANCH LAUNCHES A NEW SYSTEM FOR FILING REQUESTS FOR RESTRAINING ORDERS AND OTHER URGENT CIVIL MATTERS REMOTELY

Chief Justice, Hon. Maite D. Oronoz Rodríguez announced today that as a result of the extension of the emergency caused by COVID-19 in Puerto Rico, the Judicial Branch has launched a new system that allows individuals to file requests for restraining orders, involuntary admission orders for reasons of mental health, and other urgent civil matters in municipal courts, without having to physically go to the courthouse or to the police station.

As she explained, individuals may request these urgent petitions electronically anywhere with a computer, tablet or mobile device, and the judge will hear the matter remotely through the videoconferencing system. Those urgent matters that may be entertained remotely are the following: restraining orders in favor of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, lewd acts, or sexual harassment, and in favor of elderly persons and minors; orders issued under the Mental Health Code; requests to relocate minors; petitions for removal in cases of child abuse; requests for emergency medical treatment for minors and incapacitated persons, and other urgent matters arising from cases regarding family matters and minors' affairs.

Should a person choose to file a petition via this option, the required forms must be sent via email to presentaciones@ramajudicial.pr. These forms are available at the Judicial Branch website. Domestic violence restraining orders may be filled out with an interactive format at www.ayudalegalpr.org. Court staff will be in contact to address the matter through videoconference. This mechanism may be accessed Monday through Sunday, from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Should you have any doubts regarding the form or need assistance filling it out, you may contact the Electronic Filing Helpline at (787) 641-6962 or (787) 641-6963 any day of the week between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. You may also write to buzon@ramajudicial.pr. For technical support regarding the use of the videoconferencing system, please contact (787) 641-6225, Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

The courts will continue to receive the public at the municipal courts convened in the thirteen judicial regions and in police stations. This new system is another alternative to provide greater access to the courts during this emergency which requires social distancing.

Additional information is available at www.ramajudicial.pr and on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram as @ramajudicialpr.

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April 13, 2020 / Contact: Daniel Rodríguez-León R-588 (787) 505-9293