

FILED

October 2, 2024

**OFFICE OF
APPELLATE COURTS**

STATE OF MINNESOTA

IN SUPREME COURT

ADM20-8001

**ORDER GOVERNING THE CONTINUING OPERATIONS OF THE
MINNESOTA JUDICIAL BRANCH**

O R D E R

The operations of the Minnesota Judicial Branch have been governed by the order filed on April 19, 2022. Order Governing the Continuing Operations of the Minnesota Judicial Branch, No. ADM20-8001 (Minn. filed Apr. 19, 2022). That order implemented a presumptive hearing format set out in Judicial Council Policy 525 for holding court hearings remotely or in-person. Departures from the presumptive hearing format could occur on a case-by-case basis if the presiding judge found exceptional circumstances existed to change from the presumptive hearing format.

Over the past two years, the OneCourtMN Hearings Initiative (“OHI”) has worked with the public, judicial officers, legal professionals, Minnesota government partner agencies, and court staff to gather input on the impact of remote court proceedings. OHI has also gathered and analyzed data related to remote and in-person court proceedings. As a result of this work, the Minnesota Judicial Council has approved a revised Policy 525 that will continue the use of remote hearings in Minnesota district courts for the long-term.

Revisions to Policy 525 take effect on February 3, 2025. Policy 525 is revised to include a default hearing appearance type framework for whether a hearing should be held remotely or in-person based on the type of case and the type of hearing. Exceptions to the

default setting may be made by a judicial officer exercising discretion to deviate from the default hearing appearance type on a case-by-case basis and may also occur on a larger scale when an agency, district, county, or division-wide hearing appearance type deviation is approved.

The April 19, 2022, order also ordered that certain court rules of procedure that prohibit court proceedings remotely or that constrain the use of remote technology to conduct court proceedings were suspended. Certain Supreme Court Rules Advisory Committees were also directed to consider whether amendments to the rules were necessary to implement the Judicial Council Policy 525. We ordered at that time that the committees' respective reports and recommendations be filed on or before December 30, 2022, but later stayed rules committees' work on this this topic, pending the finalization of the remote hearings framework that has now occurred with revised Policy 525. Order Governing the Continuing Operations of the Minnesota Judicial Branch, No. ADM20-8001 (Minn. filed March 10, 2023).

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. The default hearing appearance types set out in revised Judicial Council Policy 525 shall apply to all court proceedings scheduled to occur on or after February 3, 2025. Exceptions to the default hearing appearance types may occur as provided in revised Judicial Council Policy 525.

2. Upon revised Judicial Council Policy 525's effective date of February 3, 2025, rules of procedure that prohibit holding court proceedings remotely or that constrain the use of remote technology to conduct court proceedings, specifically Minn. R. Crim. P.

1.05, Minn. Gen. R. Prac. 131, Minn. Gen. R. Prac. 309.02, Minn. Gen. R. Prac. 359.03, and Minn. Spec. R. Commit. P. 14, will remain suspended to the extent that those rules contradict the terms of this order or revised Judicial Council Policy 525.

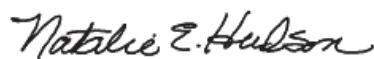
3. The Supreme Court Advisory Committees for the General Rules of Practice for the District Courts, the Rules of Criminal Procedure, and the Rules of Procedure Governing Proceedings Under the Minnesota Commitment and Treatment Act are directed to consider whether amendments to the rules are necessary to remove or amend rules that prohibit holding court proceedings remotely or that constrain the use of remote technology to conduct court proceedings, or to implement the default format for hearings reflected in revised Judicial Council Policy 525. The committees' respective reports and recommendations must be filed with the supreme court on or before May 30, 2025.

4. Effective November 1, 2024, self-represented litigants may no longer submit filings by email and must file all documents as required and authorized by the applicable rules of procedure. The provision in paragraph 7 of the April 19, 2022 order permitting self-represented litigants to submit filings by email is rescinded, effective November 1, 2024.

5. The other provisions of the April 19, 2022 order which are currently in effect, will sunset and expire upon the February 3, 2025 effective date of revised Judicial Council Policy 525.

Dated: October 2, 2024

BY THE COURT:



Natalie E. Hudson
Chief Justice