



PRESS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

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Chief Judge's Commission to Reimagine the Future of NY's Courts Issues First Set of Recommendations

NEW YORK—The Commission to Reimagine the Future of New York's Courts, chaired by former New York State Bar Association President Henry M. Greenberg, today issued a report outlining recommended plans and goals for restarting in-person court proceedings, including grand juries and jury trials. The Commission, appointed by Chief Judge Janet DiFiore in mid-June to examine technological, regulatory and other long-term innovations, was also charged with providing short-term recommendations as the courts resume in-person operations amid the Covid-19 crisis.

The Commission's "Goals and Checklist for Restarting In-Person Grand Juries, Jury Trials and Related Proceedings" report includes step-by-step guidance on how to create customized court plans, based on local conditions, that prioritize public health and safety. The report also contains a comprehensive checklist on restarting trials; courthouse and courtroom access; jury pools; jury reporting and selection, among other key topics.

The Commission is made up of six working groups: trials; appellate practice; online courts; regulatory innovations; structural innovations; and technology. The report was produced by the working group focused on trials—led by Court of Appeals Associate Judge Michael J. Garcia and Robert Giuffra, a senior partner at Sullivan and Cromwell—and then adopted by the full Commission. The guidelines and checklists contained in

the report are based on the working group's feedback, as well as on protocols developed by other state and federal courts across the country.

"The recommendations outlined in today's report are an excellent starting point for New York's judges, court administrators and relevant stakeholders to consider as the Court System works to safely re-establish in-person operations," said Chief Judge DiFiore. "I am pleased by the Commission's efforts to date and look forward to its long-range proposals as we strive to deliver quality justice services to New Yorkers in today's rapidly evolving society."

"I am deeply grateful to the Commission for meeting the moment and producing in real time a report that will serve as a resource for trial courts and courthouses across the State. It is imperative that our criminal and civil justice systems be as operational as possible under the circumstances, and that grand jury proceedings and jury trials are conducted in a safe and secure manner. To this end, the Commission's report reflects its best efforts to provide useful support, guidance and assistance," said Henry Greenberg.

The Commission's report is attached.

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