

LAW OFFICES OF  
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April 20, 2022

Ms. Jane Severin  
San Juan County Superior Court  
350 Court Street, #7  
Friday Harbor, WA 98250

Re: Proposed Revisions to San Juan County Superior Court Local Court Rules

Dear Ms. Severin,

With regard to the Court's request for recommendations regarding possible revisions to the San Juan County Local Court Rules, I recommend that the Court retain procedures that were implemented during the pandemic which promote accessibility and access to justice and increase efficiency; specifically, I recommend that the Court include the provisions from its Seventh Amended Emergency Order No. 2022-2 which are set forth below (and to modify the local court rules that are inconsistent with such modifications):

CIVIL MATTERS:

3. CIVIL EVIDENTIARY HEARINGS AND BENCH TRIALS may occur in person or in whole or in part remotely via live video through the Microsoft Teams platform, depending on the preference of the parties. Each party may decide for themselves whether to appear in-person or via live video, as may counsel, subject to a motion by either side to establish good cause to require both parties to attend in person. Witnesses may testify at evidentiary hearings via live video unless an objecting party establishes good cause to require in-person testimony. Counsel and unrepresented parties are encouraged to discuss issues related to remote hearing procedures at the trial readiness hearing, or sooner, as needed. Additional procedures including the handling of exhibits in remote evidentiary hearings are addressed in the Court's Remote Bench Trial Procedure, which is available on the Court's website and may be updated from time to time.

4. CIVIL HEARINGS OTHER THAN EVIDENTIARY HEARINGS/BENCH TRIALS may occur in person or remotely via the Microsoft

Teams platform at the option of each party, or as ordered by the Court. A party will only be required to attend a non-evidentiary hearing in person for good cause established by the requesting party.

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## 6. REMOTE HEARING PROCEDURES.

a. Parties who are permitted to attend Court remotely may do so only through the Microsoft Teams platform, consistent with the Remote Hearing Procedures posted on the Superior Court website, which will be updated from time to time. The link for video appearance and the telephone number to call into remote hearings via the Microsoft Teams platform are available from the Superior Court website or by contacting the Superior Court Administrator or Clerk's Office.

<https://www.sanjuanco.com/185/Superior-Court>

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C. To support safe public access, the Superior Court shall make the audio of its hearings available to the public via live streaming in real time until further notice. A link to such live stream is available on the Superior Court's website. The public also may observe through the Microsoft Teams platform.

<https://www.sanjuanco.com/185/Superior-Court>

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## 7. ELECTRONIC FILING.

Parties may file documents with the San Juan County Clerk of Court via facsimile at 360- 378-3967 pursuant to LCR 78(i) or electronically by email, until further order. The Clerk's office has provided detailed procedures for electronic filing on its website at: <https://www.sanjuanco.com/184/County-Clerk>. E-filed documents must be received by the Clerk's office by 4:00p.m. to be file stamped the same day. A document is considered electronically filed only when a responsive email is provided by the Clerk. New cases are not officially filed until receipt of any required fees is confirmed. To allow for electronic filing,

GR 30 (d)(1)(A)-(C) are temporarily suspended. When documents are filed electronically, proposed orders shall be lodged with the Clerk's Office and sent to Court Administrator Jane Severin at [JaneS@sanjuanico.com](mailto:JaneS@sanjuanico.com) for judge's working copies

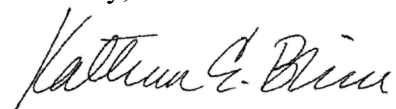
8. SIGNATURES ACCEPTED ON FILED DOCUMENTS.

Notwithstanding any provision of GR 30 to the contrary, a fax, scan, or electronic signature shall be deemed a reliable means for authentication of documents and shall have the same force and effect as an original signature to a paper copy of the document so signed. For purposes of this Order, "electronic signature" means: an electronic signature defined by RCW 19.360.030 (repealed by SB 6028); a digital signature as described in Supreme Court Order No. 25700-B-596 (July 16, 2019) and RCW 9A.72.085(5); an electronic image of the handwritten signature of an individual; or other electronic sound, symbol, or process, attached to or logically associated with an electronic record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record, including but not limited to "/s/[name of signatory]".

Scans and faxes of a judicial officer's original signature or the Clerk's original signature shall be deemed the equivalent of an original and may be filed as such. The Judge's signature stamp may be used by the Court Administrator or Clerk with written instruction to affix the signature via stamp; the signature stamp shall be deemed the equivalent of an original signature. The Clerk's signature stamp shall likewise be deemed the equivalent of an original signature. Further, whenever a judicial officer or clerk is required to sign an order, judgment, notification or other document an electronic signature shall be sufficient.

Thank you for your consideration of the above.

Sincerely,



Katherine E. Blaine  
Attorney at Law