



**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON CODES
SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**

NOTICE OF ONLINE VIDEO PUBLIC HEARING

SUBJECT: The Unified Court System and COVID-19

PURPOSE: To examine the reopening and operation of New York's courts during the COVID-19 pandemic

Friday, August 21, 2020
10 a.m.

Web Link: <https://www.nysenate.gov/events>

ORAL TESTIMONY BY INVITATION ONLY

In March, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, New York closed its courthouses to the public and delayed non-essential proceedings. As rates of infection, hospitalization, and deaths due to COVID have declined and other industries in the State have begun to reopen, the Office of Court Administration (OCA) and the Unified Court System (UCS) have also phased in the reopening of the courts and non-essential matters.

Uncertainty remains regarding the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, judges, jurors, court staff, and the public upon their return to courtrooms. Furthermore, there are significant concerns about the compounding effects adverse legal determinations, such as evictions, foreclosures, and pre-trial detention, on individuals already suffering from unprecedented economic and public health risks.

This hearing will provide an opportunity to examine the status of proceedings and opportunity to file new matters in the courts, consider measures taken by OCA and the UCS to reduce the spread of COVID-19 at in-person proceedings, ascertain the unique impacts on individuals of legal proceedings and legal determinations during a pandemic, and contemplate additional potential plans and actions.

Persons invited to present pertinent testimony to the Committees at the above hearing should complete and return the enclosed reply form as soon as possible. It is important that the reply form be fully completed and returned so that persons may be notified of means by which to testify and/or in the event of emergency postponement or cancellation.

Oral testimony will be limited to five minutes' duration. In preparing the order of witnesses, the Committees will attempt to accommodate individual requests to speak at particular times in view of special circumstances. These requests should be made on the attached reply form or communicated to Committee staff as early as possible.

Attendees and participants at any legislative public hearing should be aware that these proceedings are video recorded. Their likenesses may be included in any video coverage shown on television or the internet.

In order to meet the needs of those who may have a disability, the Senate, in accordance with its policy of non-discrimination on the basis of disability, as well as the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), has made its facilities and services available to all individuals with disabilities. For individuals with disabilities, accommodations will be provided, upon reasonable request, to afford such individuals access and admission to Senate facilities and activities.

Senator Brad Hoylman
Chair
Committee on the Judiciary

Senator Jamaal Bailey
Chair
Committee on Codes

Senator Brian Kavanagh
Chair
Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development

PUBLIC HEARING REPLY FORM

ORAL TESTIMONY BY INVITATION ONLY

Testimony will be taken only upon approval by the Committee Chairs. Individuals who have been invited to present testimony at the public hearing on the Unified Court System and COVID-19 are requested to complete this reply form as soon as possible and e-mail a copy of planned testimony. Individuals invited to participate will be notified within 48 hours of the hearing. All replies and draft testimony submissions must be e-mailed to:

Kenan Kurt, Associate Counsel
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Email: Kurt@nysenate.gov
Phone: (212) 298-5593

I have been invited to make a public statement at the hearing. My statement will be limited to five of minutes, and I will answer any questions which may arise.

I will address my remarks to the following subjects:

I do not plan to attend the above hearing.

I would like to be added to the Committee mailing list for notices and reports.

I would like to be removed from the Committee mailing list.

I will require assistance and/or handicapped accessibility information. **Please specify the type of assistance required:** _____

ALL INFORMATION BELOW MUST BE COMPLETED:

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____