



Circuit Court of St. Mary's County, Maryland

JOHN HANSON BRISCOE CIRCUIT COURTHOUSE
41605 COURT HOUSE DRIVE

MICHAEL J. STAMM
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable David Densford
Honorable Joseph M. Stalalonis
Magistrate F. Michael Harris
Debbie Mills Burch, Clerk of Court
Donna Sweeney, Case Management Manager
Phyllis R. Superior, Register of Wills
Richard D. Fritz, State Attorney for St. Mary's County
Edie Cimino, Office of Public Defender
Major Michael Merican, SMCSO
Jaymi Sterling, President, St. Mary's County Bar Association

FROM: Hon. Michael J. Stamm, Administrative Judge

SUBJECT: Closure/delayed opening of St. Mary's Circuit Court

DATE: December 11, 2019

With winter almost here and with it the increased potential of weather events affecting the Court, please consider this Memorandum as a friendly reminder of our policy concerning emergency closures and delayed openings of our court house. Please remember that these decisions pertain to not only inclement weather but also other issues affecting the Circuit Court for St. Mary's. The following is our procedure and policy concerning these events.

1. If a decision is made to close the Circuit Court for St. Mary's and St. Mary's County Government is closed, the Court House will be closed to the public and all staff whether state or county.
2. If a decision is made to close the Circuit Court for St. Mary's and the St. Mary's County Government remains open or has a delayed opening for their

related agencies, the Court House will be closed to the public and to all staff whether state or county.

3. If a decision is made to have a delayed opening by the Circuit Court for St. Mary's, and the St. Mary's County Government is either open or has a delayed opening, there will be two (2) announced times for the public. The first will be the time the Court House will open to the public, and the second, when Court dockets shall commence. Staff are to report to their duty stations one half ½ hour prior to the public opening.
4. If a decision is made to have early closure by the St. Mary's County Circuit Court, notwithstanding the status of the St. Mary's County Government, the Court Administrator will advise all of the Agency leadership in the Court House of the time for public closure. All staff will be released at the same time. After that closure time the Court House will be closed to the public and to all staff whether state or county.
5. On those days with delayed openings by the Circuit Court for St. Mary's, Dockets shall begin one half ½ hour after the public opening. However, if the opening is after 11:15 am, 9:00 am dockets shall commence at 1:30 pm. and will be added to the scheduled pm docket.
6. On those days with delayed openings by the Circuit Court for St. Mary's, all civil and criminal jury trials scheduled to begin with the picking of jurors for that day will be postponed and jury panels will not be required to report. In addition, due to child care issues with our jury panels, if the St. Mary's Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather and the Circuit Court for St. Mary's has a regular start time, both civil and criminal jury trials to begin with the picking of jurors will be postponed and the jury panel will not have to report. **This postponement of jury trials in this scenario does not include delayed openings by the public-school system if the Circuit Court for St. Mary's opens on time.** In both scenarios, Case Management will contact the attorneys and/or self-litigants to reschedule new dates. Closure of the St. Mary's County Public Schools for anything other than inclement weather, or county wide emergencies will not postpone civil or criminal jury trials scheduled to begin with the picking of jurors for that day, or excuse the jury panel.
7. On those days with delayed openings by the Circuit Court for St. Mary's, all juries in both civil and criminal trials, who have already been picked and sworn are to report to the Court House at the time of the announced time for being open to the public.

8. On those days when there is a closure by the Circuit Court for St. Mary's, all juries in both civil and criminal trials, who have already been picked and sworn are to report to the Court House on the next day that the Court House opens whether on time or if delayed, at the announced public opening time.
9. On those days that there is a delayed opening or closure, the grand jury will not meet and will be rescheduled by the State's Attorney after consultation with Case Management.

These policies and procedures became effective January 1, 2019 and will continue until further notice from the Court.

Please remember that when the Court House is closed and when there is either a delayed opening or early closure, staff is not to report or be in the building until the Court House is officially opened for staff per the above policy and procedures.