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## **Pennsylvania Bar Association Prompts Reminders for Adherence to Public Health Guidance in Courthouses and Courtrooms**

HARRISBURG (Oct. 29, 2020) – The Pennsylvania Bar Association, on behalf of its members, recently expressed concern with the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts about the apparent lack of uniformity among the courts throughout Pennsylvania in adherence to the public health guidance concerning mask wearing and social distancing within courthouses and courtrooms.

As a result, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, through Pennsylvania’s Court Administrator Geoff Moulton, has issued a reminder of its strong desire that all judges in Pennsylvania take whatever actions are necessary to assure compliance with applicable CDC guidelines.

In a written communication to judges, Moulton cited CDC guidelines that “Everyone should wear a mask in public settings and when around people who don’t live in your household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain ... [K]eep 6 feet between yourself and others. The mask is not a substitute for social distancing.”

“Compliance is particularly important as cases in Pennsylvania have risen significantly in recent weeks,” Moulton wrote. “Moreover, many of Pennsylvania’s courthouses have older air-circulation systems, which increase the risk of contagion. While local conditions and resources vary across the Commonwealth, the need to protect all participants while conducting court business does not.”

“We thank the Supreme Court for requesting, in the strongest terms yet, observance of measures to protect the health of lawyers and members of the public when they are within the confines of courtroom walls,” said David E. Schwager, PBA president. “Likewise, we continue to encourage our lawyer members to adhere to the same measures meant to minimize the spread of COVID-19.”

Founded in 1895, the Pennsylvania Bar Association strives to promote justice, professional excellence and respect for the law; improve public understanding of the legal system; facilitate access of legal services; and serve the lawyer members of the state’s largest organized bar association.

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Source: Pennsylvania Bar Association, 100 South Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

