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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Pima County Courts Resume Jury Trials**

**PIMA COUNTY, AZ** – Pima County courts have resumed jury trials this week. A vital component of our justice system, the coronavirus pandemic forced a nearly year-long hiatus of jury trials in Pima County, following an administrative order issued by Pima County Presiding Judge Kyle A. Bryson in 2020.

“We’re excited to end the moratorium on jury trials in Pima County,” notes Judge Bryson, who was awaiting a marked reduction in local COVID-19 cases and increased availability of the vaccine before authorizing trial resumption.

The courts are thoroughly prepared. Through the hard work of Superior Court’s BTO – Back to Operations Task Force – Pima County courts have been organizing to provide a smooth return to more normalized trial operations since nearly the onset of COVID-19.

BTO worked in tandem with judicial officers, the jury commissioner, and court executive teams. They paired with community justice partners and county stakeholders as well as the local health department. All worked diligently to arrange the safe resumption of jury trials in Pima County courthouses.

A portion of the rigorous safety protocols include new guidelines for potential jurors.

All community members called to serve will receive questionnaires in advance of their service, which they may complete and submit online or through the mail. The information outlines health and safety protocols in place to support everyone’s well-being while they are in the court environment. Additionally, the questionnaire offers potential jurors the opportunity to complete a separate form if they have COVID-19-based concerns.

While the courts are not calling for potential jurors to be vaccinated nor inquiring as to vaccination status, they will continue to ask that all who visit the courthouses are masked, have their temperatures checked upon entry, and adhere to social distancing guidelines.

The changes also mean a very different look for courtrooms. Jurors will be seated throughout the courtroom, not only in the jury box. Plexiglas is in wide use, and each juror will receive their own trial package complete with a notepad, writing implement, mask, and hand sanitizer. Most victims and family members will be asked to follow trial proceedings from a separate area to help ensure the courtroom is not overcrowded.

“We remain devoted to the principle of maintaining a safe environment for court users and staff while providing access to justice for the citizens of Pima County,” said Judge Bryson. “Like litigants, attorneys, victims, and defendants, we have keenly awaited the time that trials can proceed while still protecting the health and safety of all who enter our court buildings.”

Information about jury service in Pima County can be found at <https://www.sc.pima.gov/jurors/> or by calling 520.724.4222. A video outlining the health and safety protocols in the Pima County Superior Court and its Juvenile Court Center is available at [\(48\) Pima County Superior Court Cleaning During COVID-19 - YouTube](#).

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**Media opportunity:** Contact Krisanne LoGalbo at [klogalbo@sc.pima.gov](mailto:klogalbo@sc.pima.gov) to arrange interviews or tour and film in the courthouse