



## **SUPREME COURT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

### **UPDATED PUBLIC NOTICE - COVID-19**

#### **CIVIL TRIALS**

The notice applies in addition to the notice issued on 18 March 2020.

The Supreme Court is continuing to operate. The courts are an essential service. While the extent to which the courts are able to perform their functions has been, and will continue to be, restricted during this time, now more than ever it is vital that the courts continue to be able to operate to ensure that the rule of law is maintained in the State.

Nevertheless, as a consequence of the need to direct scarce technological and human resources to those matters that are most pressing it has been necessary to place more restriction on civil hearings, particularly trials that are currently underway or listed to commence soon. Criminal matters, particularly those involving the liberty of persons, and other urgent matters, must take priority for the use of technology and IT support at this time.

To that end, I have issued the following direction within the Supreme Court:

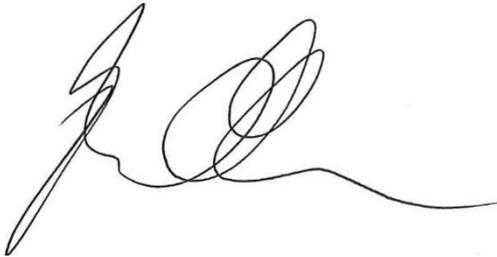
Civil proceedings, to the extent that they involve witnesses giving oral evidence, will only proceed with the express authorisation of the Chief Justice, based on the urgency of the matter in light of available resources. This does not prevent civil proceedings, including trials, from otherwise proceeding by way of telephone or video-link, in relation to legal argument etc. It does mean that arrangements for witnesses (including for evidence to be given remotely) should not be made unless specific approval has been given.

The basis upon which an assessment of urgency is being made is affected by the other matters in the lists at the time of any particular trial, the resource allocation and technical support required to facilitate the matter and the time sensitive nature of the proceedings. That assessment is continually changing in response to the changing environment.

Trials listed until the end of June are currently being reviewed. Any issues that parties wish to raise in relation to particular matters should be raised with the allocated judge in the first instance.

This step is regrettable, but necessary. As and when normal listing can resume, and as far as it is practicable, any matter that is vacated during this time will be given priority in relisting.

Dated 27 March 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Peter Quinlan', written in a cursive style. The signature starts with a large, stylized 'P' and ends with a long, horizontal flourish.

The Hon Justice Peter Quinlan  
Chief Justice of Western Australia