

September 13, 2011

Barnstable Probate and Family Court Adjusts Public Office Hours

Changes Intended to Help Reduce Delays

Beginning on Monday, September 19, 2011, the Barnstable Probate and Family Court Registry Office will adjust public office hours in order for the staff to reduce case processing delays. The Barnstable Registry of Probate Office will close to the public from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. During the hours of 3:00 p.m. through 4:30 p.m., staff will be in the office processing cases, but there will be no public counter service and the phones will not be answered. Court will remain in session and all scheduled matters will be heard. Emergency matters will be heard on a case by case basis. The Registry Office will continue to open to the public at 8:30 a.m. Monday through Friday, and court sessions will also begin at 8:30 a.m.

The court will continue to accept and hear complaints for protection from abuse (209A complaints) after 3:00 p.m. as long as the person filing the complaint is at the courthouse by 3:45 p.m. and a senior staff person will be available to assist with other emergency matters on a case by case basis. There will also be a senior staff member available by telephone during those hours to handle emergency matters only. Beginning September 19, 2011, the emergency number to reach the court between 3:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. will be recorded on the Court's information line at (508) 375-6710. The public may also refer to the Court's website at www.barnstablecountypfc.com to obtain court forms and other court information. Parties may continue to use the Court's website to choose their own motion date per the Court's scheduling practice instructions on the website.

According to Anastasia Welsh Perrino, Register of Probate for Barnstable County, the Chief Justice of the Probate and Family Court in consultation with all Registers of Probate and the First Justices of all Probate and Family Courts requested the adjusted public hours due to budget constraints and staff reductions which have caused delays in processing court paperwork. The purpose of the adjusted public office hours is to allow staff uninterrupted time to prepare cases for court sessions, prepare court orders, as well as to complete filing, docketing, scanning and other case processing necessary to properly serve the public. According to Register Welsh Perrino, all Probate and Family Court Registry Offices across the Commonwealth will adjust public office hours and be closed to the public from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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