



INDIANA SUPREME COURT

251 N Illinois St | Suite 1600
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Office of Judicial Administration

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March 4, 2020

Your Honors-

Current events are understandably causing all of us to put renewed focus on ensuring our organizations are prepared for emergencies, especially updating our continuity of operations plans. A good COOP plan will ensure a court's essential functions continue even when faced with limited access to technology, facilities, or personnel whether faced with an ice storm, flooding, a courthouse fire, or the spread of an infectious disease like the 2019 Novel Coronavirus.

This year's Spring Judicial College will include a presentation by staff from the National Center for State Courts on emergency preparedness planning for courts, including developing a COOP plan. The [NCSC's website](#) contains a wealth of materials to get you started on the topic, including providing some COOP plan templates.

But to prepare for that presentation and how your COOP plan will fit within your county's disaster preparedness planning, please reach out to your local emergency management agency. Make yourself known and ask to attend their meetings. Those agencies will take the lead on any emergency and disaster response—don't wait until the emergency to speak up.

With respect to the coronavirus in particular, the Indiana State Department of Health has [launched a website](#) with updates on the spread of the virus, prevention steps, and infographics. ISDH is Indiana's lead agency on this issue, and the Office of Judicial Administration will be acting in concert with ISDH's assessments. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also has an excellent [website on coronavirus](#), and you should also check with your county health departments for local updates.

In the meantime, both ISDH and the CDC recommend that the best approach is to practice fundamental healthy practices at the individual level and within our offices to prevent the spread of any illnesses: get your flu shot and vaccines; wash your hands; have hand sanitizer available for your staff and visitors to your courtrooms; and stay alert for changing conditions announced by our healthcare agencies, your county officials, and this office.

Very respectfully,

Justin P. Forkner
Chief Administrative Officer