

Vermont Supreme Court Receives Report From Jury Restart Committee



July 27, 2020

In late May the Vermont Supreme Court established a Jury Restart Committee and named Associate Justices Karen Carroll and Harold Eaton as its co-chairs. The committee was asked to consider issues relating to the resumption of criminal jury trials, which were suspended by the Supreme Court in its mid-March Declaration of a Judicial Emergency due to COVID-19. In addition to the co-chairs, the committee includes two superior judges, a court operations manager, a state's attorney, a public defender, and a representative from the Vermont Bar Association.

The committee submitted its report to the Supreme Court on July 21. The report includes 28 recommendations regarding the resumption of criminal jury trials. These recommendations address a range of operational issues associated with restarting jury activity, including those relating to community safety and public health. The report does not address the resumption of civil jury trials.

“The committee report provides us with a thoughtful and detailed roadmap to consider in connection with our efforts to reestablish jury trials – an essential feature of our justice system,” said Chief Justice Paul Reiber. “The Justices and I greatly appreciate their work.”

The Supreme Court has asked Chief Superior Judge Brian Grearson and the State Court Administrator Patricia Gabel to review the committee's report and provide the Court with an implementation plan based on its recommendations. The committee report is available below and the implementation plan will be posted to the [COVID-19 and Court Operations](#) webpage once this review has been completed.

