

COUNTY OF BERKS, PENNSYLVANIA

Prothonotary



Courthouse, 2nd Floor
633 Court Street
Reading, PA 19601

Phone: 610.478.6970

Jonathan K. "J.D." Del Collo, Prothonotary

Ann L.R. Fitzgerald, Chief Deputy Prothonotary

FEBRUARY 2021 PROTHONOTARY OF BERKS COUNTY COVID-19 INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

1. The Prothonotary's Office is open by appointment ONLY for PFA litigants, notary signature registrants, name change petitions and emergency filings.

All other customers will need to use our e-filing system, website, mobile app, or calling or emailing our office.

Appointments will be scheduled between the hours of 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM only.

There are NO same day appointments EXCEPT in EMERGENCY situations.

All those individuals who do have appointments will be subject to temperature screening by Sheriff Deputies and security screening by Courthouse security personnel before entering the building. **Only the individual who has made the appointment will be permitted to come to our office.** Individuals not associated with the appointment holder shall remain outside the building. **Once cleared through screening, please come directly to our office and knock on the set of double center filing doors and wait for staff to assist you.** If there are other individuals waiting in the hallway, please be sure to maintain proper social distancing.

Arrive for your appointment about 5 minutes before your scheduled time otherwise you will have to wait in the lobby. Security will not allow you to come up to our office until your appointment time.

Proper mask wearing (both the nose and mouth are covered) is always MANDATORY when in the Courthouse/Services Center.

2. **E-filing and regular mail is the preferred method and most convenient/safest method for submitting documents and filings to the Prothonotary's Office.** Staff is processing electronic filings, electronic judicial orders and filings submitted through regular mail **timely**. We also continue to answer phone calls at the office's main number, 610-478-6970, **but we encourage the use of our website and mobile app which will contain answers to many questions.**

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3. **Passports:** The acceptance of new passport applications has been suspended indefinitely. Alternate acceptance locations in Berks County can be found by visiting travel.state.gov under the passports option.
4. **Registration of Notary Signatures:** We are registering new and renewal notary signatures by appointment only. You must first have been sworn in and have had your documents recorded at the Recorder of Deeds Office. Please call the office to make an appointment and be sure to bring your notary documentation with you.
5. **Record Requests/Searching**

All searching onsite is suspended indefinitely.

The public computer terminal room is closed indefinitely.

Most routine searching can be accomplished by using our online public docket (available through our website and mobile app). Research requests can be made by downloading the "Records Request Form" from our website and mailing it to our office or, for more convenience, using our mobile app to instantly submit the request. A photocopy or image of a **valid photo ID must be provided when requesting copies. During this time and until further notice, ten or fewer copies will be provided FREE as a courtesy. Any amount above ten will be charged at \$.50 per page.**

6. Citizens of Berks County and all other visitors to our office are encouraged to visit www.BerksDES.com for all of the latest information and resources on the COVID-19 pandemic in Berks County.

WE ALWAYS ENCOURAGE VISITING OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.COUNTYOFBERKS.COM/PROTHONOTARY and downloading our mobile app at <https://apps.myocv.com/share/a33219601> for lots more information and answers to many questions.

Jonathan K. Del Collo
Prothonotary of Berks County