

MAY 12 2022

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

JULIA C. DUDLEY, CLERK
BY: 
DEPUTY CLERK

IN THE MATTER OF:

**SUSPENSION OF NATURALIZATION
CEREMONIES IN THE WESTERN
DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA**

**Twelfth Amended
Standing Order No. 2020-3**

The United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia has continued to closely monitor the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), as well as the developing guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local health authorities. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began in the spring of 2020, the court has suspended in person naturalization ceremonies in the Western District of Virginia to protect the public health.

Currently, COVID-19 hospitalizations are approaching their lowest reported levels since the pandemic began, and the majority of courthouses and court facilities in this District are located in cities with "Low" COVID-19 community transmission levels as determined by the CDC. Currently, there are four counties with "Medium" community transmission levels in our District. Although the transmissions levels for COVID-19 have dropped, the CDC continues to recommend avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.

To balance the need to conduct naturalization ceremonies with the public health issues attendant to the ongoing pandemic, the court will suspend routine scheduling of naturalization ceremonies for non-name-change applicants in the Western District of Virginia until December 31, 2022. Special events, such as the July 4, 2022 naturalization ceremony at Monticello, and other such events, may be held by separate order of the court. During this temporary period of suspension and until further Order of this Court, the Attorney General of the United States,

acting through the USCIS, may administer the Oath of Allegiance to all non-name-change applicants for naturalization residing in the Western District of Virginia. See 8 U.S.C. § 1421.

Beginning June 1, 2022, candidates who elect to change their name via the naturalization process and require a judicial ceremony will be scheduled to appear in person at the Western District of Virginia court near their residence and be sworn in by the Judges of the Court.

It is so **ORDERED**.

Entered this 12th day of May, 2022.



Michael F. Urbanski
Chief United States District Judge