

This info was received from the QCBA Supreme Court Committee following their meeting with Judges Silver and Grays....

1. No more Preliminary Conferences (PCs) in person. PC Orders will be issued by the Court. They will set a Compliance Conference (CC) date 60 - 120 days out.
2. For now, no more personal appearances on an initial CC. These will be done via an online order that the parties can fill out together and e-file. If there are discovery issues, some procedure for these situations will be established. The Court indicated they are looking to do as many virtual appearances as possible as opposed to personal appearances.
3. The so-called "in person conferences" (these were cases that were placed in "stay" status as part of an earlier Queens Supreme practice) will be evaluated and addressed. While Judge Silver announced in January that these situations would end, the cases will remain stayed until the court determines a proper course of action.
4. The Queens practice of filing Notes of Issue with open discovery is over. Some practice will be established for determining when Notes can be filed. I suspect some sort of certification system is coming. At the outset, I would expect this to be virtual. For cases already on the calendar with open discovery, I am not clear on how these will be addressed.
5. Until further notice, all Motions will be taken on submission and will not require personal appearances. Judges can decide whether they want to schedule oral argument or conferences, virtually. As of now, pending motions are being administratively adjourned and are not being submitted, and no time frame has yet been set for when submissions will start. No framework has been set yet for adjournment requests.
5. Cases on the trial calendar will be conferenced virtually for the foreseeable future.
6. There will be no civil jury trials for some time, as bringing jurors back to court is a huge concern.
7. The Court is examining the possibility of bench trials with hi-lo parameters, possibly stipulated evidence (as in a summary jury trial), done virtually.

Although the building will open, use will be severely limited for some time. This is due to cleaning and retrofitting for social distancing. Phase 1 is starting now (opening the building for Court personnel). Phase 2 will incorporate SOME Court activity, but a starting date is not yet set. Phase 3 will follow Stage 2, with more activity, but is not yet scheduled.