



Press Release

Alaska Court System, 303 K Street, 5th Floor Anchorage, AK 99501

Contacts: Ron Woods, Area Court Administrator, Fourth Judicial District, Fairbanks
rwoods@courts.state.ak.us; 907-452-9201; FAX 907-452-9206
Carol McAllen, Area Court Administrator, Third Judicial District, Anchorage
cmcallen@courts.state.ak.us; 907-264-0415; FAX 907-264-0560
Mara Rabinowitz, Communications Counsel, Alaska Court System, Anchorage
mrabinowitz@appellate.courts.state.ak.us; 907-264-0879; FAX 907-264-0640

FAIRBANKS, ANCHORAGE, AND PALMER COURTS OPEN SATURDAYS AND IN THE EVENINGS

Anchorage, Alaska, August 29, 2013. Alaska Supreme Court Chief Justice Dana Fabe, along with Fourth Judicial District Presiding Judge Michael MacDonald and Third Judicial District Presiding Judge Sen Tan, have announced that the Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Palmer courthouses will be open on Saturdays and in the evenings for certain types of cases. Chief Justice Dana Fabe remarked: "To better serve the community and make the court system more accessible, I asked the Presiding Judges of our two largest judicial districts to explore expansion of the hours of operations at some of our courthouses. Both Presiding Judge Tan and Presiding Judge MacDonald enthusiastically embraced this project. They have used their considerable administrative talent to provide the expanded hours without any additional court personnel resources by using flexible scheduling of current court system staff. The feedback from members of the public is that they appreciate being able to come to court when they don't have to take a day off from work. Making the courts accessible is one of our fundamental missions, and opening our courts when it's more convenient for the public is an important step towards that mission."

In May of 2013, Fairbanks trial courts began a pilot project to expand their hours of operation. The court is scheduling dissolutions without children and change of name hearings from 9:00am-11:00am on Saturdays. Upon filing a dissolution or change of name matter, the Clerk of Court's office provides parties with the option of scheduling their cases Saturday morning. The court also operates on the weekends for emergency hearings in domestic violence, criminal, child in need of aid, and mental health matters.

In July of 2013, Anchorage trial courts expanded the services offered in the evenings and weekends. The trial courts are open for emergency domestic violence hearings in the evenings Monday through Friday from 4:30pm-8:00pm, and on Saturday and Sunday from 12:00pm-8:00pm. The court is also open for traffic hearings every other Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 6:30pm-8:30pm. The court recently began hearing change of name cases on Saturdays at 2:30pm.

Palmer courts provide expanded services during Community Court which hears small claims cases, traffic matters, dissolutions and default and uncontested divorces. Community Court takes place in the evenings on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 4:30pm-6:30pm, and on Saturdays from 9:00am-12:00pm. Change of name hearings are also scheduled once a month during Community Court.

For questions on scheduling a weekend matter in the Fairbanks Trial Courts in a dissolution without children or change of name matter contact the Fairbanks Civil Division at (907) 452-9267 during regular business hours.

For questions on scheduling an evening or weekend matter in the Anchorage Trial Courts contact the Customer Service Division at (907) 264-0514 during regular business hours.

For questions on how to schedule a Palmer matter in the evening or weekend contact the Clerk's Office at (907) 746-8181 during regular business hours.

For general information about trial court hours of operation, go to the court system's website at: <http://courts.alaska.gov>

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