



# COVID-19

## Response for Prosecutors and Courts



### Webinar — Criminal Jury Trials During COVID-19: Prosecution Leadership for a New Era

Date: *Wednesday, August 19, 2020*

Time: *2:00-3:30 PM EDT*

COVID-19 has dramatically impacted the criminal justice system. Lengthy court delays have raised concerns over speedy trial rights and crowded dockets, prompting jurisdictions to consider how a volume of jury trials can be scheduled in the midst of uncertainty with the pandemic. However, necessary measures to protect the health and safety of all parties and the public – such as social distancing in courtrooms, alternative physical spaces, and even virtual hearings – raise challenges of their own. The process of adapting to change implicates constitutional and civil rights and thus prosecutorial decision-making within the necessary constitutional framework. With little time to accommodate sweeping change, prosecutors are challenged to assume leadership in the ongoing collaboration with judicial officers, defense attorneys, and other professionals to help shape thoughtful strategies for criminal proceedings during our “new normal.”

This webinar will address the potential impact of pandemic safety measures on criminal jury trials and strategies for protecting the integrity of the proceedings. Please join us on **Wednesday, August 19, 2020 from 2:00-3:30 PM EDT** as presenters discuss:

- Strategies for triaging delayed cases
- Considerations of constitutional rights, including the sixth amendment rights to a speedy, public trial and to confrontation, and the first amendment freedom of the press
- The use of juror questionnaires as a way to minimize potential exposure to COVID-19 during jury selection
- Methods for adapting prosecution strategies to virtual platforms

This webinar will be an interactive session featuring Patti Powers and Jon Kurland, AEquitas Attorney Advisors. To ensure that we are addressing your concerns, please share any specific topics that you would like addressed during the virtual discussion (e.g., specific questions on voir dire). Please enter your questions when you register.

**Note:** There is no cost of attendance for this webinar. NDAA will be applying for CLE credits in the state of Virginia.

Register



#### Patti Powers

Patricia D. Powers presents on trial strategy, legal analysis and policy, and ethical issues related to the prosecution of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking. Prior to working with AEquitas, Ms. Powers served as a Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney and Supervising Attorney for the Sexual Assault-Domestic Violence Unit in Yakima County, Washington. During her twenty-seven years as a trial attorney, Ms. Powers focused primarily on sexual assault, domestic violence and child and adult homicides, including complex litigation of high profile and cold cases with frequent use of expert testimony. As a prosecutor, Ms. Powers served as a member of the child fatality and domestic violence fatality review committees and the Washington State Technical Assistance Committee for Child Death Review Guidelines. She was a co-founder and co-chair of the Yakima County Sexual Assault Task Force.



#### Jon Kurland

Jonathan H. Kurland is an Attorney Advisor with AEquitas. Prior to joining AEquitas, Jonathan worked in the District Attorney's Office of Berks County, Pennsylvania where he started as an Assistant District Attorney and prosecuted the range of cases typical for a jurisdiction with a combination of urban, suburban, and rural communities. However, over time, Jonathan's focus increasingly trended to violent crime and cases involving the most vulnerable and exploited of victims. When Jonathan left after sixteen years in the District Attorney's Office to join AEquitas, he was the Chief Deputy District Attorney and supervised, advised, and still prosecuted matters involving intimate partner violence and homicides, sexual violence, child abuse, and grand jury investigations. During his time in the Berks County District Attorney's Office, Jonathan helped to develop collaboration between prosecutors, law enforcement, victim advocacy, medical professional, and other community stakeholders particularly through serving as the office lead for a variety of victim-focused multidisciplinary investigative teams and other community-based collaborative efforts focusing on intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child abuse, and human trafficking.

We want to hear from you! If you would like to submit questions or have other concerns, please email us at [covid19\\_courts@cna.org](mailto:covid19_courts@cna.org).

**COVID-19-related news articles and resources, and past bulletins will be posted on the [NDAA website](#). Continue to check the website for updated information.**

