

STATE OF MAINE
SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER JB-26-01

APPROVAL OF PENOBSHOT COUNTY CRIMINAL PROCESS PILOT PROJECT

Effective: January 5, 2026

The Supreme Judicial Court issues this Administrative Order approving a criminal process pilot project in Penobscot County. The purpose of the pilot project is to test and evaluate methods designed to resolve criminal matters more efficiently and effectively.

I. SCOPE

The pilot project established by this Administrative Order authorizes the Regional Judge and Justice, in consultation with the Clerk of Court and other judicial officers, to utilize a standard Scheduling Order in all criminal cases. Pursuant to the Scheduling Order, the court will not conduct dispositional conferences pursuant to Maine Rule of Unified Criminal Procedure 18. Instead, the dispositional conference will be replaced with a status conference, the details of which are set forth in the Scheduling Order.

Because many of the deadlines in the Rules of Unified Criminal Procedure relate to the date of the dispositional conference, this Administrative Order further authorizes the following:

- A. The deadlines set forth in Rule 12(b)(3) for motions to dismiss, motions relating to joinder of offenses, motions to suppress evidence, and other motions relating to the admissibility of evidence shall be suspended in favor of the deadlines for these motions set forth in the Scheduling Order.
- B. Unless otherwise provided in the Scheduling Order, all deadlines set forth in Rules 16 and 16A that relate to the date of a dispositional conference now relate to the date of the status conference.
- C. The deadline set forth in Rule 46(d) regarding a petition for redetermination of bail shall be suspended in favor of the deadline for such a petition set forth in the Scheduling Order.

The Scheduling Order provides that all discovery must be produced no later than 14 days before docket call. Except as provided otherwise in the Scheduling Order, any non-exculpatory discovery not produced by that date will be presumptively excluded, but that presumption may be overcome if in the interests of justice, the presiding jurist determines that the presumption of exclusion should not apply.

This Order applies only to cases initiated in Bangor, unless and until the Regional Judge and Justice, in consultation with the Clerk of Court and other judicial officers, determine it necessary to use the Scheduling Order for cases initiated in other Penobscot County courts.

This Order does not apply to any other county or Judicial Region, unless the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court authorizes otherwise.

II. DURATION

The pilot project shall last for 12 months from the date of this Order. The duration of the pilot project may be amended by further order of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court.

III. REVIEW

The Criminal Process Stakeholders Working Group and the Administrative Office of the Court shall work collaboratively with the involved jurists to evaluate the success of this pilot project.

For the Court:

_____/s/_____
Valerie Stanfill
Chief Justice, Supreme Judicial Court

Promulgation Date: January 2, 2026