

## **CT Judicial Branch Announces Intent to Close Bristol Courthouse**

Chief Court Administrator Patrick L. Carroll III today announced the Judicial Branch's intent to close the Bristol Geographical Area No. 17 Courthouse, effective at the end of the business day on Friday, August 30, 2019. Effective Tuesday, September 3, 2019, all cases from Bristol will be heard at the New Britain Judicial District courthouse (the New Britain Geographical Area No. 15 Courthouse).

Judge Carroll noted that the Judicial Branch has already starting working with Bristol Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu, Chief State's Attorney Kevin T. Kane and Chief Public Defender Christine Perra Rapillo to facilitate the closing of GA 17, located at 131 N. Main St., and transfer of the cases to the New Britain courthouse at 20 Franklin Square.

"We are very grateful to Mayor Zoppo-Sassu for understanding why this move is necessary and beneficial to all parties," Judge Carroll said. "Moreover, given the daily challenges that the Judicial Branch, prosecutors and public defenders continue to face because of reduced resources, this move allows us to position those resources more effectively, and thus provide the best services possible to the people we serve."

Quotes from Mayor Zoppo-Sassu, Chief State's Attorney Kane and Chief Public Defender Rapillo are as follows:

- *Mayor Zoppo-Sassu*: "The City of Bristol has valued its long-term relationship with GA 17, but we also recognize the need to seek regional solutions to economic challenges. We are pleased that there will be only a relocation of services to New Britain and no job loss. This is a part of what I see as an evolution of downtown and what type of services we want here. While some may see this as a negative, I prefer to view it as yet another opportunity for the city to review options for the space that might help us cut our costs or improve efficiencies."
- *Chief State's Attorney Kane*: "For generations, prosecutors assigned to the Bristol courthouse have provided outstanding service to the communities they serve. While grateful for that service, closing the Bristol GA courthouse and transferring the cases to New Britain will help the Division of Criminal Justice to consolidate and to more effectively use its scarce resources. We should also be able to avoid some duplication of

administrative staff. I am fully supportive of this consolidation and confident that all of the stakeholders in our criminal justice system will continue to receive outstanding service from these dedicated men and women.”

- *Chief Public Defender Rapillo*: “Our clients’ ability to physically get to the courthouse is always a concern when a facility is closing. However, the consolidation of the Bristol docket into the New Britain Judicial District courthouse presents an opportunity to maximize our limited staffing resources and potentially provide better service. The Public Defender’s office will work with the Judicial Branch and the Bristol community to help our clients successfully navigate the transition to the new location.”

An attached list of FAQs answers various questions related to the closure.

###