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**MEMORANDUM**

To: ALL PARTIES  
From: Omar Hernández, Senior Judge  
Re: Post-COVID Dispute Resolution Procedures-REMINDER  
Date: November 4, 2020

Five weeks have passed since Dispute Resolution re-opened to begin conducting Hearings on a limited basis. With the re-opening, certain changes in Dispute Resolution were implemented in order to address the backlog of cases. These changes were specifically outlined in Emergency Administrative Bulletin #7 dated September 16, 2020. This bulletin can be found on the DIA website. I also presented and discussed these changes at multiple Zoom Town Hall meetings across the state. I have outlined below important highlights from my presentation and Emergency Administrative Bulletin #7.

Failure to comply with procedures established in Emergency Administrative Bulletin #7 will result in a significant delay as the case will be placed at the end of the Hearing queue.

**Pre-Hearing Conferences**

The parties are required to contact the judge's office within two weeks of receipt of the Hearing notice in order to schedule a Pre-Hearing Conference. Every effort must be taken to conduct the Pre-Hearing Conference during that two-week period.

The parties shall submit the Joint Pre-Hearing Memorandum within two weeks of receipt of the hearing notice. The parties must be prepared to discuss all issues contained in the Pre-Hearing Memorandum, and to schedule a motion conference if applicable. If the parties are unable to schedule a timely Pre-Hearing Conference, they still must submit the Pre-Hearing Memorandum to the Judge within two weeks of receipt of the Hearing notice.

**Hearings**

The parties must notify the judge by email *forty-eight* hours in advance to advise the judge whether the Hearing is going forward.

The Insurer's and Employee's Hearing memorandum, and the Employee Biographical Data sheet must be received by the Administrative Judge no later than 5 days prior to hearing, via email in pdf format.

Any and all medical records and any agreed to exhibits must be bookmarked and received by the Administrative Judge no later than 5 days prior to hearing, via email in pdf format.

Testimony via a virtual platform may be allowed for certain witnesses/persons who for COVID-19 reasons are not able to attend in person. The judge will decide whether this option is appropriate.