



# Press Release

Alaska Court System, 820 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501

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## Palmer Courthouse Open House

**Palmer, AK, August 19, 2022:** On Tuesday, August 23 from 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm, the Alaska Court System is pleased to welcome the public to the [Palmer Courthouse](#) for an open house to celebrate the completion of construction work after the extreme flooding event in January. There will be a short dedication ceremony at 4:00 pm that will include speeches by Chief Justice Daniel Winfree and local judges, followed by light refreshments and small group tours. Please arrive early to allow time to go through security screening. Please [sign up for a tour in advance](#).

The New Years' weather event resulted in extensive water damage to the Palmer Courthouse that closed the facility to the public. Over half of the courthouse was unusable for a period of time while repairs, mold remediation, and construction continued. Five courtrooms were flooded and all of the judicial chambers and offices sustained damage. Three courtrooms needed to be completely re-wired, and much of the facility needed carpeting replaced, sheetrock repaired and painted. All repairs are now completed, except tile replacement in the lobby will occur in October.

The Palmer judges conducted hearings telephonically and through videoconference while repairs and construction were on-going. Judges and court staff continued to work wherever there was undamaged space, and courtrooms doubled as temporary offices for judges and their staff. Some staff even worked in hallways. Immediately after the storm, the judges always heard high priority and emergency matters including domestic violence and sexual assault protective orders, emergency Child in Need of Aid (CINA) proceedings, criminal arraignments, search warrant requests, bail hearings, and emergency mental commitment and guardianship matters. As soon as possible, [they added other criminal and civil matters](#).

From January 1 through July 31, 2022, the Palmer court held 19,389 hearings in criminal cases, including in felony, misdemeanor, and delinquency cases, and in civil matters - including in Child in Need of Aid (CINA), domestic relations, domestic violence, probate, small claims, minor offense, and general civil cases.

The Palmer Court's newly remodeled customer service counter re-opened in mid-February. Court clerks have assisted people either in-person or remotely continuously since the storm – accepting new cases for filing, pleadings, domestic violence petitions, marriage applications, and taking payments for fines and bail. From February through August 12, 2022 12,666 customers came to the Palmer courthouse in-person.

Beginning in March, Palmer welcomed back Grand Jurors, and in April the court re-started criminal jury trials. Jury Trials are currently occurring in all courtrooms and grand jury and jury calls occur weekly, as needed. The Palmer courthouse is [open](#) Monday–Thursday 8:00 am – 4:30 pm and Friday 8:00 am – 12:00 pm.

The court system would like to thank the community for its support and understanding as we worked hard to remediate and repair the damage from the storm.

For updates, please check the Alaska Court System [Facebook page](#) or [Twitter account](#).

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