

Stewart – Massachusetts Mid-Week Update – April 15, 2020

Dear Stewart Partners,

As always, we hope that you, your colleagues, staff and family are doing well. We are happy to report that your Massachusetts Stewart team is doing well and are here to work with you and help you in every way we can. As we've been doing for the past two weeks, we are providing you with this mid-week email to keep you apprised of recent development and relay information you may find useful.

- **EMERGENCY VIRTUAL NOTARIZATION BILL – NOT PASSED, BUT STILL PENDING**
The bill is proceeding as a stand-alone bill and there have been some changes made to the original language that was proposed a few weeks back. The bill is now pending in a House committee. For a recent news report published by NBC10-Boston on the virtual notarization bill see: <https://www.nbcboston.com/investigations/massachusetts-bill-would-allow-notaries-to-witness-signatures-remotely/2107080/>
- **LAND COURT INTERIM PROCEDURES FOR PROCESSING SUBSEQUENT CASES & CONDOMINIUM DOCUMENTS**
On April 10, 2020 the Chief Title Examiner issued a memorandum describing how Title Examiners of the land court will process Subsequent cases and condominium master deeds and amendments, via electronic mail. The memorandum makes clear that the processing of a *pending* Subsequent case will be available on a very limited basis and will depend on several facts assessed by the Chief Title Examiner upon submission of the request assessment of and the emergency situation. For new condominiums for which documents and plans have already been sent to the court, in order to avail of the remote approval process, new documents and new mylar plans must be obtained. If this is not possible the Chief Title Examiner advises that every effort will be made to review the condominium documents as soon as practicable once the courthouse reopens to full Land Court staffing and Title Examiners have returned to working at the courthouse full-time. The complete memorandum published can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.mass.gov/memorandum/land-court-interim-procedures-for-the-remote-processing-of-subsequent-cases-condominium>
- **INCREASED FRAUD RISK – BE VIGILANT!**
As a reminder, bad actors are out there and taking advantage of the changes in our workplace, work methods, and our fears during these unusual and unprecedented times. ALTA is hosting a WEBINAR today at 1PM on how to prevent and avoid PHISHING scams. Registration information is below:

Wednesday, April 15, 2020 | 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET | [Register Today](#)

Scammers are using phishing emails to profit from the COVID-19 pandemic. With more people working remotely, now is the time to learn how to help avoid getting scammed by fake email. Because phishing attacks look like legitimate emails from your trusted vendors' and customers' domains, traditional defenses often don't work against them. These phishing schemes often lead to wire transfer fraud, which can be devastating to your business and customers. Your top defense is a strong human firewall—and that means having an educated staff. Register for this webinar and learn how to spot the latest phishing techniques and what defenses do and don't work against them so you can better protect your business and your customers.

- [Stewart's Massachusetts COVID-19 Resource Page](#)
We've put together a resource page for you which contains all the local information relative to underwriting guidance, affidavits, registry closures and frequently asked questions. This site will be updated regularly. To access click [HERE](#) and make it a favorite on your web-browser. You can also copy the following URL and paste it into your web browser: <https://www.stewart.com/content/stewart/stewartcom/en/stg/massachusetts/underwriting-resources/forms-policy-information/covid-19-info-resources.html>

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