

Dear Stewart Partners,

We are midway through the month of September, but the weather feels more like mid-August today! We hope all of you, your colleagues, friends and family are well and healthy as Massachusetts and the rest of the country continue to see rising COVID infections and hospitalizations.

In this week's update, we want to share with you some news about the Roderick B. Ireland Courthouse in Springfield, which houses the Springfield office of the Hampden County Registry of Deeds, as well as several county courts. In addition, for all of you Apple product users, we've included information on Apple's recent urgent security update announcement. Lastly, we are sharing an article we found interesting about the housing market and what the next few months might bring.

- *Information Regarding the Roderick B. Ireland Courthouse / Hampden County (Springfield) Registry of Deeds*

You may have heard about the recent closure of the Roderick B. Ireland Courthouse in Springfield. The Courthouse, which houses the Hampden County Registry of Deeds, Probate and Superior Courts, as well as the Springfield District Court, was closed temporarily on August 25 when the District Attorney and the Registrar of Deeds evacuated their staff from the building because of ongoing problems with mold within the building. The Courthouse has reopened, but the Registry of Deeds, along with several other departments, remains closed. The satellite office of the Hampden Registry of Deeds located in Westfield City Hall is open. Also, online search and e-recording capabilities are still available for both recorded and registered land. As of September 14, the Hampden Probate Court was open for business, including searching and file examination, but given the state of affairs, we have been told that could change at any time. A lawsuit was filed on behalf of current and former employees at the Courthouse, but at a hearing on September 13 a Worcester Superior Court Judge denied the request for an emergency injunction to keep the courthouse closed. However, an evidentiary hearing will take place in the near future to see if an injunction is warranted. Cleaning and sanitation of much of the building occurred before the reopening, but purportedly air ducts had not been tested so various departments remain closed due to health and safety concerns. We will continue to keep you updated as the situation develops.

- *Apple Releases Urgent Fix for iPhones, iPads, Watches & Macs*

Another week, another urgent security patch – this time from Apple. We've alerted you in the past to security vulnerabilities impacting iPhones or iPads. However, this latest flaw affects not only mobile devices running iOS, it also involves Mac computers and Apple watches. This recently discovered exploit can allow a hacker to access your camera and microphone, as well as any emails, texts, or calls. While Apple says the goal of the exploit was likely to target certain individuals and would not be used to spy on a majority of its users, when it comes to security it's always better to be safe than sorry. Downloading the update should only take a few minutes. You can read more about the update here: <https://www.zdnet.com/article/apple-releases-update-fixing-nso-spyware-vulnerability-affecting-macs-iphones-ipads-and-watches/>

- [Housing Inventory Expected to Increase Creating a Friendlier Environment for Buyers](#)

Fortune Magazine recently reported that many homeowners will be exiting the forbearance programs which they entered into during the pandemic. Over 1.7 million borrowers took advantage of the forbearance programs, but they will begin winding down on September 30, 2021. As homeowners begin to exit these programs, the author predicts that many of these homeowners will opt to sell their homes, which will add to the slim sale inventory that has existed for the past year. The article predicts that this will cool the red-hot sale market. To read the full article, follow this link (registration required):

<https://fortune.com/2021/09/12/mortgage-forgbearance-housing-market-2021-october/>

- [Stewart's Massachusetts COVID-19 Resource Page & Information Page – URL CHANGE](#)

Our easy reference page, which provides you quick access to all our Mid-Week updates, gap coverage affidavits, and bulletins that specifically relate to COVID and other emergency orders, has moved. Save this new URL as bookmark in your web browser for easy access: <https://www.stewart.com/en/state-pages/massachusetts-agents/tools-and-resources/covid-19.html>

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