

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS  
HALF-DAY CLOSING PLAN  
VERMONT JUDICIAL BRANCH**

- Q. I thought that courts were supposed to be open at least eight hours per day except Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. Is this plan legal?
- A. The Supreme Court has the power to administer the Judicial Branch, including the power to adopt rules and administrative directives, including emergency rules and directives. The Supreme Court has adopted the emergency rules and directives that are necessary to implement the half-day closing plan.
- Q. If my court is closed on an afternoon when I try to file a document that is due that day, what will it mean? Will I be in default or will I be considered to have missed the deadline?
- A. The Supreme Court has addressed this issue by the adoption of a specific directive which extends the time to file to the next day.
- Q. For how long will the Half-Day Closing Plan be in effect?
- A. The current plan is based on the current fiscal year budget. Barring changes in circumstances, the Plan will be in effect until the end of the fiscal year [June 30, 2010].
- Q. Will the Supreme Court close one-half day per week?
- A. Yes, the Supreme Court will be closed to the public each Friday morning.
- Q. How will the courts handle relief from abuse proceedings during the half-day period that the courts are closed each week?
- A. Parties seeking relief from abuse orders should call the following toll-free number during periods when the court is closed for the scheduled half-day: **1-800-540-9990**.
- Q. How will the courts handle other emergency matters that require the court's immediate response, such as search warrants, bail calls, and the like?
- A. These kinds of matters will be handled on a court-by-court basis according to systems developed by that court in collaboration with other partners in the justice system.
- Q. During the half-day that the court is closed, will I be able to speak with someone to answer questions or to otherwise provide assistance to me?
- A. No, the situation will be the same as the situation that exists at nights and on the weekends. With the exception of relief from abuse orders, which will be handled by the 800 telephone number, no one will be available to answer questions or to provide other assistance.
- Q. How do the full-day furloughs effect the half-day closing schedule.
- A. During the week that the courts are closed all day for the state-wide furlough, the half-day closing schedule will not be in effect.