

DEC 27 2023

THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

**IN RE PROCEDURES REGARDING
ELECTRONICALLY IMAGED COURT
RECORDS AND ACCESS TO
ELECTRONIC COURT RECORDS IN
ADOPTION COURT DEPARTMENTS**

**GENERAL ORDER OF THE
PRESIDING DEPARTMENT**

ORDER NO. 010124-27

THIS COURT FINDS AND ORDERS AS FOLLOWS:

I. IMAGING ADOPTION COURT PROGRAM

In 2020, the San Diego Superior Court (“court”) began an Imaging Program in the Adoption Court Departments (“Imaging Program”) designed to reduce paper filings and storage and facilitate electronic access to adoption court files. As part of the Imaging Program, beginning January 2, 2020, the court began scanning all newly filed papers in adoption cases. All adoption cases filed after this date are part of the Imaging Program. The imaged documents are stored in an electronic court file.

II. ELECTRONIC COURT FILE IN IMAGED CASES - OFFICIAL COURT RECORD

Pursuant to Government Code section 68150 and California Rules of Court (“CRC”), rule 2.504, the electronic court file in Imaging Program cases is certified as the official record of the court. The paper filings that are imaged and stored electronically will be physically stored by the court for 30 days after filing, after which time they will be shredded and recycled. During this 30-day period, these documents will not be stored in a manner that will allow a party or a party’s attorney to access

1 them. Parties should not attach any original documents to pleadings filed with the court. Any original
2 documents necessary for an adoption hearing shall be lodged in advance of the applicable hearing
3 pursuant to CRC, rule 3.1302(b).

4 III. ACCESS TO OFFICIAL COURT FILE AND COURT DOCUMENTS

5 Persons who are authorized by law to view or access adoption file records before the adoption
6 is finalized may request printouts from the electronic file to the same extent they would be authorized
7 to access and view a paper court file. After an adoption has been finalized, persons who wish to
8 request copies of documents from the adoption file must file with the court a Petition for Birth Record
9 Information (San Diego Superior Court Form ["SDSC Form"] #JUV-236). Copying and certification
10 fees may apply. (See SDSC Form #ADM-001 [Fee Schedule].)

11 Court documents from cases within the Imaging Program are not available in electronic format
12 for viewing and printing remotely due to the prohibition of that type of access set forth in CRC, rule
13 2.503(b). Only the adoption case Register of Actions ("ROA") will be available for viewing remotely.
14 The ROA can be accessed by visiting the court's website at www.sdcourt.ca.gov.

15 This order shall become effective on January 1, 2024, and expire on December 31, 2024,
16 unless otherwise ordered by this court.

17 IT IS SO ORDERED.

18 DATED: December 27, 2023

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20 **HONORABLE MICHAEL T. SMYTH**
21 **PRESIDING JUDGE**
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