



NEWS RELEASE

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA • COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
Post Office Box 120128 • San Diego, CA 92112-0128

Release: Immediately

Date:

04/03/2020

San Diego Superior Court to Begin Testing for Videoconference Hearings

Non-emergency services remain suspended through April 30

The San Diego Superior Court will begin hearing a few in-custody matters through videoconference on Monday, April 6. In cooperation with the Sheriff's department, Public Defender's office, defense counsel and the District Attorney's office, video appearances will connect detainees in each of the County's detention centers with courtrooms in the Central, North, South and East County Courthouses. The Court will test the new remote video system next week with the anticipation that preliminary hearings and arraignments will proceed by video in the coming weeks.

"In the midst of these challenging times, we are looking for innovative ways to restore judicial services where possible, while also remaining socially distanced and acting with proper caution. We continue to offer emergency services in all of our court locations and hope that the use of videoconference technology in criminal matters will bring some additional relief," said San Diego Superior Court Presiding Judge Lorna Alksne.

In the on-going effort to mitigate community spread of COVID-19, and in the interest of the health and safety of all Court visitors and employees, the San Diego Superior Court has extended the suspension of all non-emergency services through April 30 as provided in General Order 040320-39.

SERVICES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE DURING THIS PERIOD:

- Chamber ex parte requests for civil harassment TROs, DV TROs, and Gun Violence Protective Orders.
- Emergency ex parte lockout proceedings (UD).
- One Family law judge at each branch will review ex parte requests for DV TROs and, starting on April 8, 2020, emergency ex parte orders for all types of family matters.
- One Juvenile judge will be available for dependency detention hearings and for emergency orders.
- One Probate judge will be available to cover emergency conservatorships and other emergency orders in Probate. Please email PRB@SDCOURT.CA.GOV.
- All search warrants (day and night) will be electronic.
- Petitions for writ seeking emergency relief in unlawful detainer matters.
- Emergency writs challenging COVID-19 emergency measures.
- Writs of habeas corpus challenging medical quarantines.
- Emergency surrogacy order requests (members of the public with such a need are asked to notify the court with their request through the email address: FAM@SDCOURT.CA.GOV).
- Chamber ex parte requests for Elder Abuse, Workplace Violence and School Violence Restraining Orders.
- Probable cause determinations for persons arrested without a warrant.
- Requests and orders for lower bail or own recognizance release from custody pursuant to Penal Code § 1269c.
- Requests and orders for release from custody pursuant to stipulations between defense counsel and the prosecution.

SERVICES SUSPENDED THROUGH APRIL 30:	
Criminal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All criminal proceedings including arraignments, preliminary hearings, readiness hearings, pre-trial motions, trials, and sentencings will be rescheduled except time-sensitive, in-custody criminal matters, including arraignments and preliminary hearings as required by statute or stipulation. All in-custody criminal matters during the COVID-19 pandemic will be heard via remote audio/video.• Criminal defendants should contact their attorney.• Criminal case attorneys should contact opposing counsel.
Civil	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Civil proceedings will be rescheduled except for those matters described above in available services.• All Unlawful Detainer (UD) matters will be rescheduled except for those matters described above in available services.• E-Filing and in-person filings are suspended.• All Temporary Restraining Orders that would otherwise expire from March 17, 2020, to April 30, 2020, inclusive, will be automatically extended by 30 days, and a new Restraining Order hearing date will be set. For all such cases, the Court will be issuing orders continuing existing orders and assigning a new hearing date.
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Family Court departments are closed except for those matters described above in available services.• All family and family support matters will be rescheduled.• All Family Court counseling and mediation matters will be rescheduled. All clinics and workshops have been cancelled.• All Temporary Restraining Orders that would otherwise expire from March 17, 2020, to April 30, 2020, inclusive, will be automatically extended by 30 days, and a new Restraining Order hearing date will be set. For all such cases, the Court will be issuing orders continuing existing orders and assigning a new hearing date.
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All traffic matters will be rescheduled.• All those cited to appear in Traffic Court will have a 30-day grace period to appear starting when the Court reopens all services (monitor sdcourt.ca.gov for service updates).• Limited traffic online services may available at sdcourt.ca.gov.
Small Claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Small Claims filings are suspended.• All Small Claims matters will be rescheduled.• The Small Claims Advisor will be closed.
Juvenile	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Juvenile Dependency and Delinquency matters will be rescheduled except for those matters described above in available services.• All adoption and citation calendars will be rescheduled.• Juvenile case attorneys: The Superior Court is developing a procedure for processing Juvenile cases suspended during this time period. Please monitor the San Diego Superior Court website sdcourt.ca.gov for updates.
Probate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Probate hearings will be rescheduled to a new date by the clerk's office except for those matters described above in available services. Parties will be informed of the new date by U.S. mail.• All in-person visits by Court investigators and Court-approved attorneys for conservatorship cases will be suspended.

If you have a case and have a case-specific question, you are asked to submit an email. Non-case specific questions will not be answered and the court will not accept documents submitted through these email boxes. Please be advised that your email and any attachments will not be included in the court file or be considered a court record, may not be preserved, and will not be forwarded to the judicial officer presiding over your matter as that would constitute an ex parte communication. You must include your name and case number:

Department	Email
Traffic	TRF@SDCOURT.CA.GOV
Civil	CVL@SDCOURT.CA.GOV
Jury	JURYSUPPORT@SDCOURT.CA.GOV
Probate	PRB@SDCOURT.CA.GOV
Family	FAM@SDCOURT.CA.GOV
Small Claims	SMC@SDCOURT.CA.GOV
Appeals	APP@SDCOURT.CA.GOV

Criminal and Juvenile defendants should contact their attorney.

Criminal and Juvenile case attorneys: The Superior Court is developing a procedure for processing criminal and juvenile cases suspended during this time period. Please monitor the San Diego Superior Court website (sdcourt.ca.gov) for updates.

In addition, the Court has instituted the following changes through April 30, unless otherwise noted:

Jury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All jurors summoned for the dates March 16, 2020-May 22, 2020, are not to report to the Courthouse. You have fulfilled your service. Jurors summoned past May 22, 2020, are to monitor sdcourt.ca.gov for additional information.
Workshops and Clinics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All workshops and clinics have been cancelled through April 30, 2020. The Court's contracted service providers, Legal Aid Society of San Diego (LASSD) and San Diego Volunteer Lawyers Program (SDVLP), as well as the Center for Community Solutions (CCS), will offer alternatives to their onsite clinic services so that self-represented litigants can obtain assistance for emergency matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Aid Society of San Diego: www.lassd.org; 877-534-2524 San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program: www.sdvlp.org; 619-235-5656 Center for Community Solutions: www.ccssd.org; 858-272-5777 Family Law Facilitator: FLF staff is available in the Central, East, North and South County Division offices for walk-in assistance with ex parte requests for restraining orders.
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Court volunteers, including Temporary Judges and Justice Corps members, are not to report to their assigned Courthouses.
Court Researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Court Research activities will be discontinued until after April 30, 2020. Please monitor sdcourt.ca.gov for any updated information.

Please monitor the San Diego Superior Court website (sdcourt.ca.gov) for continued updated information.