

SEP 09 2020

By: A. HUSTED, Deputy

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6 THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
7 COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
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10 **IN RE: RESTRICTED PUBLIC ACCESS**

**GENERAL ORDER OF THE
PRESIDING DEPARTMENT**

ORDER NO. 090920-90

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14 As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor of California declared a state of
15 emergency in this state. The President of the United States has also declared a national emergency.
16 The pandemic continues to cause significant health and safety concerns nationally, throughout the
17 State of California, and in San Diego County.

18 In response to the pandemic, the court was closed to the public and suspended services,
19 except for certain time-sensitive and essential functions, from March 17 to May 22, 2020. (See
20 General Orders of the Presiding Department, Ord. Nos. 031820-34, 040320-39, and 043020-47.)
21 The court resumed most services on May 26, 2020; however, with community spread of COVID-
22 19 still a concern, many services have been provided remotely or in the lobby area of each
23 courthouse, and all San Diego Superior Court courthouses and courtrooms have remained closed
24 to the public with limited exceptions for those seeking or participating in certain urgent emergency
25 services.

26 The court plans to continue providing as many services as possible, including most
27 hearings, remotely. However, beginning September 10, 2020, the court will open public access to
28 certain portions of its facilities with capacity limits to allow for adequate social distancing.

1 Although some personnel will remain in the lobbies, the following locations, which may be
2 amended from time to time, will be accessible to persons with court business:

- 3 • Central Courthouse: 1st through 4th Floors (Business Offices) and 14th Floor (Central
4 Records)
- 5 • Hall of Justice: 1st and 2nd Floors (Business Offices)
- 6 • Kearny Mesa Traffic Court
- 7 • East County Regional Center: Ground and 1st Floors (Business Offices)
- 8 • North County Regional Center: South Building Lobby, North Building and Annex
9 (Business Offices)
- 10 • South County Regional Center: 1st through 3rd Floors (Business Offices)
- 11 • Juvenile Court: 1st and 2nd Floors (Business Offices)

12 The court will continue to update its website (www.sdcourt.ca.gov) with information
13 regarding which in-person services and facilities are available.

14 Also on September 10, 2020, the court will begin hearing criminal trial status conferences
15 remotely for out-of-custody cases in addition to the remote hearings already being conducted for
16 other case types. The court has established Audio/Visual Access Rooms in each courthouse, which
17 will enable hearing participants who do not have access to a computer or smartphone to come to a
18 courthouse and use the court's equipment for their scheduled hearing.

19 The court plans to gradually resume in-person jury trials beginning on October 13, 2020,
20 and jurors will begin reporting on October 9, 2020.

21 For those who must enter the court's facilities, the court will comply with the guidance
22 from county, state, and federal health authorities, including, but not limited to, conducting
23 temperature screenings, requiring face coverings, enforcing social distancing, continuing increased
24 cleaning measures, and providing hand sanitizer kiosks.

25 For good cause and pursuant to the court's inherent supervisory and administrative
26 authority, as well as the Presiding Judge's duty to promote access to justice for all members of the
27 public, taking into account the needs of the public and court as they relate to the efficient and
28 effective management of the court (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 10.603), and in order to protect the

1 health and safety of the public, court personnel, judicial officers, parties, attorneys, witnesses, and
2 law enforcement officers, this court **HEREBY FINDS AND ORDERS AS FOLLOWS:**

3 1. Until further notice, access to any and all San Diego Superior Court courthouses
4 shall be authorized and restricted as follows:

5 a. Physical access to any and all courthouses, courtrooms, business offices, and
6 public areas shall be restricted at all times to persons with court business if such
7 services are being provided in person.

8 b. In-person access to any and all court proceedings, including Audio/Visual
9 Access Rooms, shall be limited to judges, commissioners, court staff, jurors,
10 parties, attorneys, witnesses subpoenaed to testify, one support person
11 statutorily permitted to accompany a person seeking a temporary restraining
12 order, one assistant or support person if granted in response to an ADA request,
13 and other authorized persons. The term “other authorized persons” includes,
14 but is not limited to, news reporters and news media representatives subject to
15 prior approval pursuant to the procedures outlined in the California Rules of
16 Court, the San Diego Superior Court Rules, San Diego Superior Court General
17 Order of the Presiding Department, Order No. 010120-02, or any other
18 applicable rule, order, or policy. Once the court resumes in-person jury trials,
19 in-person access to members of the public will be determined on a case-by-case
20 basis consistent with court policy and county, state, and federal public health
21 guidance; however, remote public access will continue to be available, subject
22 to applicable rules and procedures.

23 c. In-person access shall be subject to county, state, and federal public health
24 guidance and other general orders of this court, including, but not limited to,
25 social-distancing, face-covering, and screening requirements.

26 d. This order does not restrict or otherwise abrogate the express and inherent
27 authority of the court and its judges to provide for the orderly conduct of
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1 proceedings, including the decision to permit or deny access to any courtroom
2 or hallways adjacent to courtrooms.

3 2. Paragraph one (1) of the General Order of the Presiding Department of the San
4 Diego Superior Court, In Re: Restricted Public Access; Face-Covering and Temperature-
5 Screening Requirements; and Livestream Broadcasting, Order No. 052220-54, is rescinded as
6 moot. All remaining provisions of General Order 052220-54 shall remain in full force and effect,
7 except paragraph two (2), which was rescinded by General Order 071620-75.

8 **THIS ORDER IS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY AND MAY BE AMENDED AS**
9 **CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE.**

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12 DATED: September 9, 2020

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15 **HON. LORNA A. ALKSNE**
16 **PRESIDING JUDGE**
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