



NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

San Diego Superior Court to Resume Additional In-Person Services and Relax Previous COVID-19 Restrictions

In accordance with local, state and federal guidelines, select service modifications will be enacted effective June 15, 2021

June 14, 2021 – The San Diego Superior Court is restoring additional in-person access in the wake of updated state and local public health guidance that allows for the relaxing of certain COVID-19 safety protocols. Effective June 15, 2021, public access will generally revert to pre-pandemic levels while many of the recently introduced online and remote options will remain available.

In accordance with state and local public health guidance, facial coverings will be optional for members of the public who are fully vaccinated. Those who are not yet vaccinated are required to wear facial coverings. Temperature and symptom screening at the doors to the courthouses will be discontinued, however, those who are not feeling well or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 are asked to stay home and seek assistance online, by telephone or via mail.

Hand sanitizer stations remain widely available in public spaces within the courthouses. As recommended, higher-rated MERV-13 (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value) filters have been installed at all facilities to reduce airborne particles and fresh air circulation has been increased throughout the court facilities where possible. The Court continues to implement increased cleaning of all high-touch areas in the courthouses, including door handles and elevator buttons.

“The past year has been one of the most challenging across the Court and our community. We’ve adapted our business processes, increased the use of newer technologies and maintained access to justice amidst constantly changing circumstances and priorities,” said Presiding Judge Lorna Alksne. “Wherever possible, we anticipate maintaining online and virtual service enhancements that were implemented out of necessity. We also look forward to safely welcoming more people back into the courthouse as we make progress toward normal operations and an increase in the number of trials we can hold.”

Public access hours for business office services at all locations will be 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Jury service will gradually be brought back up to pre-pandemic levels. Beginning in mid-July, jurors called to serve in the Central Division in downtown San Diego will resume daily in-person reporting with plans to accommodate 4-5 trials per day. Jurors called to serve at the North, East or South County courthouses will continue to be on telephone standby, calling in for five days to learn if they will need to report in-person the next business day.

Depending on the case type, virtual hearings may still be available for future dates and there may be other options for online resources or assistance outside-of-business hours.

Current information by case type:

Criminal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-custody criminal defendants will be produced in person for hearings. • Out-of-custody criminal defendants will have the option to attend their pre-trial hearings remotely or in person.
Civil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select Civil hearings, including Small Claims hearings, will be available in person, virtual or in a hybrid format. • Online scheduling of civil motion dates is available at racd.sdcourt.ca.gov • Small Claims Night Court is anticipated to resume later in the summer.
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select Family hearings may be available in person, virtual or in a hybrid format. • The Family Law Facilitator's Office will resume in-person assistance, however, telephone and video appointments remain available. • The Online Workshop Reservation System remains available for individuals interested in workshops concerning topics like divorce, child custody/visitation, child support, guardianship, and parentage.
Juvenile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select Juvenile hearings may be available in person, virtual or in a hybrid format.
Probate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select Probate hearings may be available in person, virtual or in a hybrid format.
Traffic/Minor Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic or Minor Offense defendants will have the option to appear in person or remotely for their hearings. • Defendants can continue to plead guilty in writing using form MO-041. • Bail will not have to be posted at this time for defendants pleading not guilty via mail and requesting to go to trial using form MO-012. • Traffic Night Court is anticipated to resume later in the summer. • Several online services are available at sdcourt.ca.gov/Traffic to find general information about traffic tickets, ask the Court to consider financial hardships, pay your bail or fine or request a 30-day extension, or request traffic school. • Online scheduling of business office appointments will resume at a later date.
Appeals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appellate Oral Arguments remain available by videoconference only.

For individuals without attorney representation, online and in-person self-help services are available. In addition to the Family Law Facilitator's Office for family-related matters, the San Diego Superior Court offers the Small Claims Legal Advisor to provide procedural assistance with small claims filings. Small Claims Legal Advisor assistance will remain available remotely throughout the summer and anticipates resuming in-person services in the fall. The San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program (SDVLP), Legal Aid Society of San Diego (LASSD) and Center for Community Solutions provide walk-in and remote assistance for domestic violence restraining orders. SDVLP and LASSD also provide assistance for civil harassment and elder abuse restraining orders, unlawful detainer matters, and conservatorship or guardianship matters. LASSD is available for assistance with changes of name or gender. For information on all self-help services available, please visit sdcourt.ca.gov/SelfHelp.

For more about the Court's operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, including a recently updated guide to all [San Diego Superior Court Service Modifications Following COVID-19](#), please refer to the Court's website at sdcourt.ca.gov/coronavirus.