



# Superior Court of California County of Orange ***News Release***

Public Information Office  
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## **Court Implements Changes to Reduce In-person Appearances as COVID incidents Increase**

**Santa Ana, CA** – The Orange County Superior Court implemented changes to reduce in-person hearings and ensure that we can maintain safety protocols in light of the increase in positive COVID-19 cases throughout our community.

Appointments for in-person counter services will not be available until further notice. Remote services will continue to be offered as outlined in the Court's [COVID-19 pages](#) for each case-type and unit. Specific questions can be submitted to the Court via the "[Ask a Question](#)" button on the Court's [website](#).

Due to the fluid nature of the COVID-19 crisis, we recommend that the public frequently check the Court's [COVID-19 website pages](#) for the most up-to-date information.

**Civil Operations.** The Court will not hear in-person jury trials or court trials through January 29, 2021. Small Claims trials and judgment debtor examinations scheduled through January 29, 2021 will be rescheduled, and parties will be notified of their new hearing dates. All other Civil case related hearings will remain as scheduled unless specifically ordered otherwise by the Court.

**Probate Operations.** The Court will not hear in-person jury trials or court trials through January 29, 2021. Hearings on Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Restraining Orders scheduled through December 31, 2020 will be heard via in-person appearance at the Central Justice Center, in Santa Ana. Effective January 4, 2021, these hearings will be heard via video appearance. Further information will be posted on the [Probate & Mental Health COVID-19 website page](#). All other Probate related hearings will remain as scheduled unless specifically ordered otherwise by the Court.

### **Criminal/Traffic Operations.**

- Criminal jury trials are being continued in accordance with the Chief Justice's order for the safety of our jurors. Judicial discretion will be exercised to determine if there are any necessary trials that must be conducted during this time period.
- All Criminal pre-trials are being heard remotely, except for those cases approved for resolution, motion, or other matters as determined by the Court. Remote hearings may be held telephonically and/or via WebEx with applicable legal (PC 977) authority.
- Remote appearances for matters on calendar can be coordinated by calling the designated hearing courtroom.

- Traffic Court Trials are cancelled effective Monday, December 21, 2020. They will be rescheduled and a notice with a new appearance date will be mailed to all parties.
- The [Misdemeanor Action Request \(MAR\)](#) or [Felony Action Request \(FAR\)](#) forms on the COVID-19 protocols section of the public website should be electronically submitted to seek action or to set a hearing for a misdemeanor or felony case.
- Our online appointment scheduling application for counter services has been suspended. Remote service options are available through the Court's public website. Virtual kiosks are available to the public for general information at the Harbor and Central Justice Centers between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Also, members of the public can track their case and sign up for reminders at the [Court's public website \(www.occourts.org\)](#) and clicking on the "[My Court Portal](#)" Traffic and Criminal link.

**Family Law Hearings.** All matters will be heard remotely, with the exception of Domestic Violence Restraining Order hearings, as well as those matters deemed necessary by the Court.

**Family Law Clerk's Office.** The online appointment scheduling application for in-person assistance in the Family Law Clerk's Office has been suspended.

Court employees will call the parties with existing appointments to inform them not to appear in person at the courthouse on their appointment date, and to advise them that their appointment date and time will remain the same, but they will be contacted via phone and assisted remotely.

For general questions/inquiries the public can call the following telephone numbers (657) 622-8350, (657) 622-6504, and (657) 622-8457.

All Family Law forms may be mailed or dropped off in the drop box located outside the entrance of the building. The drop box is available 7 days-a-week, 24 hours-a-day. Documents received before 4 p.m. will be filed as of that day. Documents received after 4 p.m. will be filed as of the next business day. Please note that most Family Law documents can be eFiled. Visit <https://www.occourts.org/online-services/family-eFiling/> for eFiling information.

**Juvenile Justice and Dependency.** The Juvenile Court Clerk's Office will be closed for purposes of in-person assistance. Any existing appointments for in-person assistance in the Juvenile Court Clerk's Office have been canceled. Members of the public can make an appointment for remote assistance. To schedule an appointment for remote assistance, go to <https://www.occourts.org/media-relations/JuvenileAppointments.html>

**Juvenile Law Hearings.** Only individuals with scheduled hearings will be admitted into the courthouse. Everyone with a scheduled hearing has the option to be heard remotely. For general questions/inquiries regarding Juvenile matters members of the public can call: 657-622-5509.

**Lamoureux Justice Center Self-Help Services** unit is suspending all in-person services, including appointments. Self-represented litigants can contact Self-Help Services by phone or email. For contact information by case type, available services, and current hours of operation, please visit: <https://www.occourts.org/self-help>

## Counter Services

The Court temporarily suspended most services at our public counters. Use of the online appointment scheduling application has also been suspended. Members of the public are encouraged to use the Court's automated phone services and [public website](#) for payments, or eCorrespondence and the [Court User Portal](#) options for other inquiries and transactions related to infraction matters. Links can be found on [the Court's website](#) (<https://www.occourts.org/index.html>).

## Cash payments

Members of the public can make cash payments at the South County Service Center, Harbor Justice Center or Stephen K. Tamura Justice Center (formerly known as West Justice Center) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday; or 8:00 a.m. through 12:00 p.m. on Fridays.

The Court is continually working on providing **Safe Access to Justice** and would like to remind everyone that **the use of facemasks or face coverings is mandatory for anyone entering a courthouse.** Exemptions issued by anyone other than the Court will not be honored. For Court ADA accommodations and exclusions, please email [ADAinformation@occourts.org](mailto:ADAinformation@occourts.org) or visit this web page

<http://www.occourts.org/directory/ada/>. **Social**

**distancing rules will also be strictly enforced in all facilities;** thus, the number of individuals entering public courtrooms and elevators will be subject to space limitations. Persons entering a courthouse are asked to maintain social distancing as recommended by the CDC. **Persons displaying possible coronavirus symptoms will not be allowed in Court facilities.**



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