

TENTATIVE
FAMILY LAW DIVISION EMERGENCY REORGANIZATION ORDER

In response to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor on March 4, 2020, and the orders issued by the Health Officer of the County of Riverside related to COVID-19, and in order to manage the complexities in the Family law caseload of the Riverside Superior Court caused by the shutdown of most operations' effective March 18, 2020, the Court makes the following Order. This Order is made pursuant to the authority granted by Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye, Chair of the Judicial Council of California under California Constitution, article VI, section 6; Executive Order N-38-20; Government Code section 68115; the subsequent orders of Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye dated March 17, 2020, March 20, 2020, March 23, 2020, March 30, 2020, and April 1, 2020; the Judicial Council of California Emergency Rules of Court enacted on April 6, 2020, April 20, 2020, and April 24, 2020; and pursuant to California Rules of Court, Rule 10.603.

This Order is applicable to all family law cases, including Domestic Violence Restraining Orders, Department of Child Support Services, contempt proceedings and adoptions. The Court orders as follows:

1. The Court will resume in-person court hearings on Domestic Violence Restraining Orders on May 18, 2020 at the Blythe Courthouse, the Hall of Justice, Southwest Justice Center and at the Larson Justice Center.
2. Child Custody Recommending Counselors will commence child custody and visitation mediations on May 18, 2020. Mediations appointments will be conducted by videoconference.
3. Requests for Orders (RFOs) proceedings will be heard telephonically commencing June 8, 2020 at the Blythe Courthouse, the Riverside Family Law Court, the Southwest Justice Center, and the Larson Justice Center.
4. Parties may stipulate to a judicial officer ruling on a contested matter without a hearing by submitting a Stipulation and Order Re: Ruling on Request for Order without Hearing. Parties submitting the Stipulation and Order form will receive a written ruling from the judicial officer. Parties may submit the Stipulation and Order form via the eSubmit Document Submission Portal, Mail or by placement in the Dropbox.
5. On May 18, 2020, the family law clerk's office will resume accepting all general family law filings and rescind the court holiday provision. Customers may file documents online via the eSubmit Document Submission Portal, Mail or by placement in the Dropbox.
6. On June 15, 2020, the family law clerk's office will resume accepting of all Adoption and Termination of Parental Rights filings and rescind the court holiday provision. Customers may file documents online via the eSubmit Document Submission Portal, Mail or by placement in the Dropbox.

7. All court trials currently set, and are not in progress, are hereby vacated and converted to a Trial Readiness Conference. All Mandatory Settlement Conferences and Trial Readiness Conferences will be reset on the Master Calendar with notices sent to counsel and the parties. Any trial in progress will remain as scheduled in the assigned department, unless the court determines good cause to continue the trial to another date.
8. At a future date, each courthouse hearing family law cases will have one Temporary Master Calendar Department designated to hear Mandatory Settlement Conferences and Trial Readiness Conferences to address pending trials. The Master Calendar Department will not be ruling on any pre-trial motions.
9. In all cases in which the deadline for having discovery completed under Cal. Code of Civ. Proc., §2024.020 has passed, discovery is ordered reopened under Cal. Code of Civ. Proc., §2024.050, with new deadlines established in accordance with the setting of the new trial date.
10. The time in which to file a responsive pleading under Cal. Code of Civ. Proc., §585 is hereby extended to 30 calendar days from the termination of the State of Emergency that was declared by the Governor of the State of California on March 4, 2020.
11. For any Request for Order, Mandatory Settlement Conference, or Trial Readiness Conference that requires a meet and confer declaration and notwithstanding any prior meet and confer efforts, the parties shall further meet and confer, and describe in a new declaration, the issues in the motion and the impact of the State of Emergency pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 5.98.
12. The requirements pursuant to Local Rule 5155 (Child Custody Recommending Counseling Telephonic Appearances) and Local Rule 5160 (Appearance by Telephone) are temporarily suspended as the court will be conducting hearings and mediations via telephone or video conference.

This Order is deemed to be filed in every case affected by this Order. Nothing in this Order shall be construed as prohibiting a trial department from making such orders as the Court deems necessary for case management purposes in any individual case. In the event that this Order conflicts with any other order of this Court, this Order shall control.

A final version of this Order will be adopted no later than May 15, 2020. Suggestions, comments, questions or concerns can be sent no later than May 12, 2020. At 5:00 p.m. to RCFLBAR@riverside.courts.ca.gov In addition, a Family Law Update Meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, May 13, from 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. to discuss this Order. A conference line has been scheduled for this meeting, details below:

Join by phone

+1-415-655-0001

Meeting Number: 283708543#

Access Code: # (no number after the #)

Please **MUTE** your telephone.