



For Immediate Release:

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PRESS RELEASE

Tulare County Superior Court to Implement Mitigation Efforts related to COVID-19

In response to the significant public safety challenge presented by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and in compliance with the California Department of Public Health and Center for Disease Control guidelines and recommendations, in addition to the Executive Order N-25-20, signed by Governor Gavin Newsom on March 12, 2020, the Superior Court of California, County of Tulare, is taking immediate precautionary measures to ensure the health and safety of the community. Today Presiding Judge Brett R. Alldredge filed a request with the Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court for a Judicial Emergency Order to enable to court to do the following:

Effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020, the Superior Court of California, County of Tulare, will adjust court operations as follows:

- All civil trials currently set between Tuesday, March 17, and Friday April 17, 2020, will be continued; and
- All service counters will be closed to the public effective Tuesday, March 17 through Friday, April 17, 2020. Increased availability of phone, email, and drop-box options will be available to facilitate regular court transactions. Payments will be accepted online, by telephone or drop box.

No time-waiver criminal matters, mandatory juvenile matters, restraining order hearings, emergency family law Requests for Order, and other case or calendar types and hearings

not mandated by statute to be heard within a limited time period will continue to be heard as court resources and health directives permit, but with the following modifications:

- The court will only summon jurors to a courthouse for “essential” trials as required by law. In those circumstances, jury panel sizes will be reduced, and trial calls will be staggered to reduce group sizes;
- Attorneys and litigants are strongly encouraged to file documents through e-filing;
- Attorneys and litigants are strongly encouraged to file to make court appearances telephonically;
- The court will continue to grant COVID-19 related deferrals for jury service. Prospective jurors may make such requests on-line at www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov or by calling the Jury Services office at 559-730-5100 for service in the north county (Visalia) or 559-782-3800 for service in the south county (Porterville);
- All time-waived misdemeanor jury trials currently set between Tuesday, March 17 and Friday, April 17, 2020, will be continued;
- All time-waived felony jury trials currently set between Tuesday, March 17 and Friday, April 17, 2020, will be continued;
- All traffic hearings currently set between Tuesday, March 17 and Friday, April 17, 2020, will be continued;
- Starting Tuesday, March 17, 2020, all “walk in” appearances will be suspended through Friday, April 17, 2020. Any requests to address matters that require immediate attention may be mailed to the court or placed in the drop box and will be addressed remotely, when possible; Persons with an active warrant should call the court at 559-730-5000 option 2 for north county cases (Visalia) and 559-782-3700, option 1 for south county cases (Porterville) for further direction.
- Family law bench officers will exercise their discretion in continuing non-emergency Requests for Order hearings and Case Management Conferences currently set between Tuesday, March 17, and Friday, April 17, 2020;
- Family Court and Special Services will suspend its day-to-day mediation services, effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020, but will schedule telephonic mediation opportunities where appropriate;
- The court’s Self-Help Resource Center will be closed for walk-in appointments, and all in-person Self-Help clinics will be suspended, effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020. Please call 559-737-5500 for assistance via telephone.

The Superior Court of California, County of Tulare, will continue to monitor this evolving situation and will make further operational adjustments as appropriate. The public should continue to check the court's website (www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov) for updated information.

California's Chief Justice, Honorable Tani Cantil-Sakuye issued the following statement: "Although the extent of the pandemic is unknown at this time, California's courts will continue to do what they do best: balancing public safety and health while protecting liberty and due process." The Tulare County Superior Court is committed to maintaining our essential functions and Constitutional obligations while working to minimize COVID-19 related risks. The court appreciates the understanding, patience and support of the public and justice partners during these unprecedented challenges.

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