



Superior Court of California County of Fresno



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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On March 4, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom issued a Proclamation of a State Emergency concerning COVID-19. On March 12, 2020 Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-25-20, which provides guidance on COVID-19. On March 15, 2020, the Fresno County Public Health Officer issued a Declaration of Local Health Emergency based on the imminent and proximate threat to public health. Although courts of law are exempt from this Order, the Court is taking affirmative action to reduce the number of individuals gathering at the same time in one place.

The goal of the Fresno Superior Court during this unprecedented situation is to protect the safety health and welfare of court customers, jurors and staff. To this end we request that individuals refrain from visiting the Court whenever possible. The Court remains open for specific case types that have been determined to be essential matters. Please refer to the information below for guidance as to what is an essential matter.

Those feeling ill and experiencing flu-like symptoms, have a fever, are coughing or sneezing, should not come to the courthouse. Instead of coming to court, customers are strongly encouraged to conduct judicial business remotely if possible.

If you are represented by an attorney, please contact your attorney prior to coming to court to learn whether you need to appear at court. In most instances your attorney can appear for you. All attorneys are encouraged to appear via CourtCall if possible. If you are not represented and cannot determine from the information below whether your court matter is an essential matter please call the respective clerk's office for further guidance. **Call (559) 457-2000 for a full directory listing or visit Court Contact Information at fresno.courts.ca.gov.**

If you absolutely feel that you need to come to a court facility the information below shows what you can expect when you arrive.

Only individuals with business with the court should come to court. Please do not bring any friends or family with you; they will not be able to attend the court proceeding and, in many instances, they will be asked to exit the buildings.

The Archives Division and the Traffic Department will be closed to the public. If you are coming to court to make a payment, please use the on-line payment option or the payment by mail option instead.

The Self-Help Center will be closed for in person assistance. Self-Help staff will be providing limited assistance via telephone. The number to call for Self-Help assistance is (559) 457-2143.

The Children's Waiting Rooms will be closed.

If you have been summoned for jury service please do not report during this period of time, instead please call the number on your summons the evening prior to service to further information. Jury staff will be available during the day for phone assistance. The number is provided on your jury summons.

The Juvenile Delinquency clerk's office will be open. If you are appearing on a Juvenile Delinquency matter you may proceed to the Juvenile Delinquency clerk's office. Court staff will assist you from there and instruct if your matter is being continued or if it will proceed to court as scheduled.

All clerk's offices in the B.F. Sisk Courthouse will be closed. Mandatory efilng remains in place. Parties will be able to electronically file documents. Parties who are not required to efile are strongly encouraged to voluntarily do so to minimize the health risks associated with traveling to the Court. If you are at the B.F. Sisk Courthouse to file papers, the drop box in the lobby of the B.F. Sisk Courthouse will be available for filing papers and you will be directed to the drop box. Once you have completed your filing you will be directed to exit the building.

If your hearing is scheduled at the B.F. Sisk Courthouse all court customers will be routed to a triage area on the first floor. No one will be permitted to proceed beyond the first floor until they have been triaged by court staff. Court staff will confirm if your matter is going forward and if so they will direct you to the appropriate courtroom. In most instances matters will not be going forward as scheduled. Instead matters will be continued for various time frames depending on the case type and hearing type. If your matter is being continued you will be informed that you, or your attorney, will receive the notice of continuance in the mail and you will be directed to exit the building. Deputies will be assisting in the lines and triage area to help implement social distancing and direct court customers to the appropriate destinations.

If your hearing is scheduled at the Main Courthouse most court customers will be routed to a triage area on the B-1 level. Clerk's offices in the Main Courthouse will be closed. The exception to this is Juvenile Dependency. If you are appearing on a Juvenile Dependency matter

you may proceed to the Juvenile Dependency clerk’s office on the second floor. Court staff will assist you from there and instruct if your matter is being continued or if it will proceed to court as scheduled. All other court customers will first be assisted by court staff in the triage area on the B-1 level of the courthouse. Court staff will confirm if your matter is going forward, and if so, will direct you to the appropriate courtroom. In many instances matters will not proceed as scheduled, at which point they will be continued for various time frames depending on the case type and hearing type (refer to chart below). If your matter is being continued you or your attorney will be informed of the new date by notice of continuance via US Mail and you will be directed to exit the building. Deputies will be on site, overseeing the lines and triage areas to help implement social distancing and direct court customers to the appropriate destinations.

The Fresno Superior Court is taking precautions to maintain a safe environment for all court customers, jurors, and staff. The Court recognizes the balance that must be maintained between public health and safety and the constitutional rights of our citizens. At the Court’s request and as permitted under Government Code section 68115, the Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court has issued an emergency order at the request of the Presiding Judge. This order, along with the Fresno Superior Court’s administrative order, provide that retroactive to March 17, 2020 the following will take effect:

Case Type	Actions
Criminal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Court will continue to hear in-custody arraignments for both misdemeanor and felony cases. • The Court will continue to address out-of-custody arraignments for felony cases. • Out-of-custody arraignments for misdemeanor cases will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. • The Court will continue to hear domestic violence related matters. • The Court will continue to hear in-custody parole hearings. • The Court will continue to hear CRAD matters. • All criminal jury trials will be continued for no more than 30 days. Criminal jury trials that are in-progress will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. • All other matters will be continued. Notices will be sent.
Civil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Court will continue to hear civil harassments, other types of civil restraining orders where a temporary order is not in place. If a temporary order is in place the temporary order will be extended not more than 15 days. Notices will be sent. • The Court will continue to hear emergency ex-parte applications. • Unlimited and limited civil trials are continued for 90 days. Discovery cut-offs, summary judgment cut-offs, etc. will be based upon the new trial date. • Law and motion matters will be continued for 4 weeks on a rolling

	<p>basis. To the extent possible, parties are asked to file moving papers, opposition papers and reply papers based on the original hearing dates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All other matters will be continued. Notices will be sent.
Probate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Court will continue to hear emergency guardianship and conservatorship cases, emergency LPS conservatorships, Riese and writ hearings, and emergency ex-parte applications. • The Court will continue to hear elder abuse restraining orders where a temporary order is not in place. If a temporary order is in place the temporary order will be extended not more than 15 days. Notices will be sent. All other matters will be continued. • Probate investigator in-person interviews are postponed until further notice.
Family Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Court will continue to hear domestic violence restraining orders where a temporary order is not in place. If a temporary order is in place the temporary order will be extended not more than 15 days. Notices will be sent. • The Court will continue to hear emergency ex-parte applications. • The Court will continue to hear Family Law Contempt cases and Parental Termination cases. • All other Family Law matters will be continued. • The Court will hear child support contempt cases. • All other Family Support hearings and matters will be continued 6 weeks.
Juvenile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Court will continue to hear detention hearings and matters where the minor is in custody. • All other matters will be continued. Notices will be sent.
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Traffic Department will be closed to the public.
Small Claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Court will postpone all small claims matters for 70 days.
Unlawful Detainers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Court will postpone all unlawful detainer matters for four weeks.
Appellate Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Appellate Division hearings currently set for April 1, 2020 will be continued to May 6, 2020. Notices will be sent.

These actions are not in response to a specific notice of exposure at any court facility; rather, they are being taken to exercise the precautions necessary to maintain the safety and welfare of those who visit the courthouse during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We appreciate the patience and understanding of the public and our justice partners during these challenging times.

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