



**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA  
COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**Release date:**

**May 15, 2020**

**FROM:** Russell L. Hom, Presiding Judge

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NOTICE OF ORDER – ACCESS TO COURT PROCEEDINGS BY GENERAL PUBLIC-RESTRICTED**

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and in the interest of health and safety of the public and all court personnel, the Sacramento Superior Court shall continue to limit the public's physical access into court buildings to attendance for specified criminal matters as delineated in the court's May 15, 2020 Order re: Access to Court Proceedings by General Public-Restricted. The Carol Miller Justice Center, The Ridgeway Family Relations Court, Hall of Justice and the B.T Collins Juvenile Justice Center will remain closed to the public. Access to both the Gordon D. Schaber Courthouse and the Lorenzo Patino Court Facility is limited only to those individuals authorized in the aforementioned order. Those entering court facilities shall be subject to temperature screening and face covering requirements as set forth in the court's May 14, 2020 news release.

Notwithstanding the limited physical access to the court, the court continues its current operations and plans for future operations, which provide the public with expanded remote access to court services. Since the court's March 19, 2020 reduction of court operations to only emergency services and temporary closure of court buildings, the court has endeavored to increase its functions incrementally throughout its divisions. Primarily through the development and implementation of remote technology solutions, including videoconferencing and live-streamed hearings, the court continues to provide public access to designated court hearings and operations while avoiding the large number of people, density of gatherings, and interaction of public and court personnel that would otherwise regularly occur inside court facilities.

For criminal operations, beginning May 18, 2020, the court will conduct time-sensitive preliminary hearings, including the presentation of witness testimony and other evidence, while maximizing the use of remote videoconferencing technology. This is in addition to remote appearances for arraignments, status conference, and other specified criminal matters, which have been ongoing since the beginning of April. Criminal filings remain open since May 6, 2020 pursuant to the court's May 4, 2020 Order re: End of Criminal Filing Holiday. Please refer to the Public Notice-Criminal Division Implementation of Expanded Criminal Services for further details.

For general civil operations, the court remains on schedule to begin remote hearings in cases handled by the Civil Writ/CEQA Departments and Complex Civil Management Departments starting May 26, 2020. These hearings will occur through Department 34 using telephonic and videoconference appearances. The Civil Law & Motion Departments remain scheduled to recommence hearings remotely on June 1, 2020, for three days per week. Individual judges shall reschedule previously continued hearings and parties will be permitted to reserve dates for new hearings. All hearings are to be conducted remotely. The court has also reinstated its Voluntary Settlement Conference program. These services are in addition to the court's earlier-reinstated operations for ex parte applications for emergency relief, petitions for compromise of claims of

minors/incompetent persons, and civil harassment and gun violence restraining orders. Civil filings in cases handled by departments in the Gordon D. Schaber Courthouse and Hall of Justice remain open since May 6, 2020 pursuant to the court's April 27, 2020 Order re: End of Civil Filing Holiday and Resumption of Specified Civil Proceedings. Please refer to the Public Notice-Civil Division Implementation of Expanded Civil Services for more detailed information.

For family law operations, the court commenced remote hearings for law and motion matters and Department of Child Support Services hearings starting May 11, 2020. All hearings are to be conducted remotely. This is in addition to the ongoing handling of Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse Restraining Orders and Emergency Family Law Ex Parte Applications. Family law filings remain open since May 6, 2020 pursuant to the court's April 30, 2020 Order re: End of Family Law Filing Holiday and Resumption of Specified Family Law Proceedings. Please refer to the Implementation of Court Closure Mitigation Plan for more detailed information.

For probate operations, the law and motion calendar will resume on May 19, 2020. All hearings are to be conducted remotely. This is in addition to the ongoing handling of emergency ex parte applications in probate matters. Probate filings remain open since May 6, 2020 pursuant to the court's May 7, 2020 Order re: End of Probate Filing Holiday and Resumption of Specified Probate Proceedings. Please refer to the Implementation of Court Closure Mitigation Plan for further information.

The court also continues its handling of mental health hearings.

For juvenile operations, the court continues to handle or is developing plans to expand services in delinquency and dependency detention hearings, delinquency jurisdiction and dispositional hearings, delinquency motions regarding custody status, Division of Juvenile Justice reentry hearings, dependency drug court, dependency jurisdiction and disposition hearings and delinquency settlement conferences, as indicated in the court's April 20, 2020 orders. This is in addition to addressing juvenile warrants, temporary restraining orders, ex parte matters and other emergency relief, which have been handled since March 19, 2020. Please refer to the court's website for additional information.

Additionally, as to small claims matters, although the Court has been accepting filing of lawsuits and motions since May 11, 2020, hearings are not yet being held, either in person or remotely. For traffic matters, new filings have also been accepted since May 11, 2020 and video arraignment hearings will be offered as of May 26, 2020. Assistance regarding traffic matters is being provided to the public via email and driver's license holds for failure to appear are being removed upon request. Please refer to the court's website for further information.

The court's ability to reinstate its operations to its current degree is due to the implementation of protocols that utilize remote technology solutions, limit the number of people in court facilities and in areas within facilities, and require appropriate social distancing, extensive and frequent cleaning, temperature checks, face coverings, and other appropriate safety measures. The court remains committed to its ongoing endeavor to reinstitute additional court operations when and where possible while giving due consideration to the health and safety of the public, court employees and judicial officers.