



Sacramento Superior Court Civil Settlement Conference

All Counsel-

As you are aware, all MSC's and civil trials have been continued until further notice pursuant to the Presiding Judge's March 17, 2020 Order re: Implementation of Emergency Relief, Section 3. For cases that are already assigned to a judge for trial, the assigned trial judge will reset the trial and MSC dates when possible. For cases not yet assigned to a judge for trial, the court, in the future, will refer the parties back to the Trial Setting Process for selection of new MSC and trial dates. This referral will occur via order after the court has determined the range of dates in which civil trials can be reset. The court will provide more information in the future.

As a result of the March 17, 2020 Order, Dept. 59 has received numerous emails and telephone inquiries asking what the Civil Settlement Center might be able to do to assist litigators and their parties in settling cases that may otherwise be left without a set trial date for an unknown period of time. Our court is cognizant of the intense stress such scheduling uncertainty can create for litigants and litigators alike.

In order to address these concerns, Presiding Judge Hom and Dept. 59 Supervising Judge Davidian have decided to reopen the VSC program as quickly as practicable. In-person attendance will not be required, or permitted, for the foreseeable future so all VSC's will be conducted by videoconferencing via the ZOOM platform. Judge Davidian will personally handle all VSC's unless and until the workload makes that impossible, in which case other civil judges may be asked to assist. Unfortunately, it will not be possible to use Pro Tem judges for the foreseeable future. All VSC's will be conducted Mondays through Thursdays.

Dept. 59 has prepared a VSC Request Form, to be used by all parties wishing to be included in the VSP program. The form will be used to triage cases according to the anticipated length of time required to perform each VSC. The form is now available on the Dept. 59 webpage at <https://www.saccourt.ca.gov/civil/settlement-conference.aspx>.

VSC's are, by definition, voluntary, so ALL parties must agree to participate in the program for any case to be assigned a VSC date.

We look forward to working with all of you who wish to participate in the VSC program.

Hon. Ben Davidian
Supervising Judge
Civil Settlement Center

Dayo Horton, Clerk
Civil Settlement Center