



Superior Court of California County of Orange

FAMILY LAW APPEARANCE PROCEDURES

UPDATE – Thursday, December 30, 2021

In-person services are available in the Family Law Department Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Effective February 4, 2022, Friday service hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

In light of the COVID-19 surge of the Omicron variant, the Court is implementing the interim procedures outlined below effective January 3, 2022. The procedures will remain in place until the court publishes local rules pursuant to Rule of Court 3.672(e).

While the Court is open to the public, some Family Law proceedings will be set for remote appearance with the option to appear in-person as outlined below in Section 3.

- 1. Filings:** Family Law filings can be submitted via eFiling, by scheduling an appointment, or by dropping the documents in the drop box located outside the Lamoreaux Justice Center. For more information, please click on this [link](#).
- 2. Questions:** Specific questions can be submitted via the “Ask a Question” button on the court’s website via this [link](#).
- 3. Appearance Process:**
 - Family Law hearings will be conducted in person and through remote technology. Remote and in-person courtroom schedules can be found on the court’s website at <https://www.occourts.org/directory/family/pdf/FamilyLawHearings.pdf>.
 - Remote appearances for Family Law will be conducted via Zoom or WebEx, links can be found at <https://www.occourts.org/media-relations/FamilyLawHearings.html> or please visit <https://www.occourts.org/directory/family/> and select the following:

CLICK HERE TO APPEAR FOR FAMILY LAW REMOTE HEARINGS

- Information on department rules, standing orders, and hearing templates are available at <https://www.occourts.org/directory/family/RemoteHearingRules.html>.
- For electronic evidence submission, please visit the court’s website at <https://www.occourts.org/directory/family/pdf/FamilyLawHearings.pdf> and click the appropriate courtroom link for “INSTRUCTIONS TO SUBMIT.”

(a) Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide greater access to justice, promote court efficiency, and facilitate remote and in-person proceedings. This procedure sets forth the interim remote and in-person proceeding protocols for Family Law cases.

(b) Consent

1. Appearance through remote technology will be considered consent to appear remotely, unless otherwise indicated by the party.
2. Any party who wants to appear in person may do so by providing notice to the court and all parties of the intent to appear in person as specified in this procedure.

(c) Procedure

In light of the COVID-19 surge of the Omicron variant, the Court is implementing the interim procedures outlined below effective January 3, 2022. The procedures will remain in place until the court publishes local rules pursuant to Rule of Court 3.672(e).

1. Remote Transition Rule for Departments C65, L53, L68, N16 and W10.

All proceedings in Departments C65, L53, L68, N16 and W10 noticed prior to December 31, 2021 for remote proceedings from January 1, 2022 to March 31, 2022, will be scheduled for remote appearance, unless otherwise ordered by the court. A party choosing to appear in person for any proceeding in Departments C65, L53, L68, N16 and W10 can do so by filing a Notice of Intent to Appear in Person at least five (5) court days before the scheduled proceeding. Appearing by remote technology during the transition period for any proceeding in Departments C65, L53, L68, N16 or W10 is deemed to be notice and consent to a remote appearance. If you do not consent to appear remotely, you must file Judicial Council form RA-015, Opposition to Remote Appearance at Evidentiary Hearing or Trial at least five (5) court days before the proceeding if at least 15 court days' notice of the trial or hearing date, or call the courtroom by at least noon the court day before the proceeding if a party gave or received less than 15 court days' notice of the proceeding.

2. Department of Child Support Service (DCSS) Cases

Pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 3.672(h)(1)(B), all DCSS proceedings other than contempt will be held by remote appearances, unless the court orders otherwise. A self-represented party who does not consent to appear remotely can file and serve a notice of intent to appear in person at least five (5) court days before the DCSS proceeding. A party who objects to a DCSS remote proceeding must file and serve the Judicial Council form RA-015, Opposition to Remote Appearance at Evidentiary Hearing or Trial, at least five (5) court days before the DCSS proceeding. Contempt proceedings in DCSS cases will be held in person.

3. Domestic Violence Proceedings

All Domestic Violence Proceedings will be set for in-person hearings. At the discretion of the court, any domestic violence hearing may be set for remote appearance with good cause. Notice of the mode of appearance will be given in advance or at a scheduled in-person hearing. Additional instructions regarding remote hearings and oppositions to remote hearings are published on the court's public website at <https://www.occourts.org/directory/family/>.

4. Appearances for Name Changes, Dismissals, Law and Motion, Default Prove Ups, and Case Management Conferences

All proceedings for name changes, dismissals, law and motion, default prove ups and case management conferences in family law cases will be set for remote appearance, unless otherwise directed by the Court. Judicial Council form RA-015, Opposition to Remote Appearance at Evidentiary Hearing or Trial, must be filed and served on all parties at least five (5) court days in advance of the proceeding. A party who does not file and serve an opposition

to the remote appearance is deemed to have filed and served a notice of intent to appear remotely, unless the party appears in person. Notwithstanding other provisions of this rule, a party who has filed a notice of intent to appear in person, may subsequently ask the court for leave to appear remotely without timely notice. The court may permit the party to appear remotely upon a finding of good cause, unforeseen circumstances, or that permitting the request would promote access to justice.

5. Appearances in Family Law Evidentiary Hearings, Trials, and other Proceedings

Family law evidentiary hearings, trials, and other proceedings not specifically referenced by this rule will be set for in-person appearance unless the Court orders otherwise on the Court's own motion or so orders after a party makes a motion for remote proceedings. Procedures to file a request for a remote hearing, trial, or other proceeding under this subdivision are set forth on the court's website at <https://www.occourts.org/directory/family>. A party may file an opposition to a court's order or a party's motion for a remote evidentiary hearing or trial.

(d) Privacy and Security Settings

Nothing in this procedure is intended to modify current rules, statutes, or case law regarding confidentiality or access to confidential proceedings. A remote appearance by a party or witness must have the necessary privacy and security settings appropriate for the conference, hearing, proceeding, or trial. Persons appearing remotely shall ensure that their remote location affords the required level of privacy for the proceeding.

(e) Prohibition of Photography, Broadcasting, Recording, Streaming, and Filming

Photography, broadcasting, video recording, audio recording, electronic recording, filming, and streaming of court proceedings, whether in person or remote, is prohibited except as expressly authorized by California Rules of Court, rule 1.150, or Local Rule 180. Violation of this subdivision or [Administrative Order 21/12](#) may result in the imposition of monetary sanctions in amounts of up to \$1,500 per violation pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 177.5; a citation for contempt in violation of Code of Civil Procedure section 1209(a)(5); prosecution for criminal violations of Penal Code section 166(a)(3, 4, or 5); or other sanctions as provided by law.

(f) Technology or Audibility Issues

The court's remote technology system is designed to ensure that all parties, whether appearing remotely or in person, can fully participate in the conference, hearing, proceeding, or trial. Nevertheless, parties may experience technological or audibility issues during remote appearances. Parties have the option of appearing in person.

In the event a party, witness, official reporter, official reporter pro tempore, court interpreter, or other court personnel experiences technology or audibility issues that arise during a remote conference, hearing, proceeding, or trial, the person is to alert the court. Go to the court's public website at https://www.occourts.org/directory/family/pdf/FL_Reporting_Technical_Issues.pdf to report any technological or audibility issues that arise.

(g) Public Access

All statutory confidentiality requirements in family law proceedings apply equally to in-person appearances and remote appearances. Nothing in this rule is intended to modify current rules, statutes, or case law regarding confidentiality or access to confidential proceedings.

For proceedings held in person, media and public access to proceedings will be in person in the courtroom where the hearing is scheduled.

For remote proceedings, the press and public can obtain public access by calling or sending an email to the courtroom. Family Law courtroom numbers are located on the court's public website at <https://www.occourts.org/directory/family/pdf/FamilyLawDepartmentDirectory.pdf>.