



Superior Court of California
County of Orange

News Release

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August 6, 2009

Offsite Voluntary Settlement Conferences

The Superior Court of Orange County announces a collaborative program with local bar associations that will utilize court closure days to help reduce its growing civil caseload. The Offsite Voluntary Settlement Conference program is cost free for litigants with pending civil cases and will begin on the first monthly court closure day, August 19, 2009

Through the program, Superior Court judges, who have voluntarily waived their salary for court closure days, will donate their time and expertise to conduct voluntary settlement conferences, saving litigants the expense of hiring an independent mediator or arbitrator. The conferences will be held on court closure days at conference rooms donated by Orange County law firms.

Supervising Judge of the Civil Panel Frederick P. Horn said, "Civil case filings increased more than 15 percent in fiscal year 2008-2009. And, with the current budget cutbacks and court closures, we needed to find a workable solution to meet our responsibility to tend to the business of the court."

Orange County Superior Judge Steven L. Perk created the concept and developed the offsite voluntary settlement conference program by working with the Orange County Bar Association (Richard Grabowski), Orange County Trial Lawyers Association (Alan Brown), and the Orange County Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates (Larry Willis).

"Access to the courts for all is the most important principle for the execution of justice. In these difficult economic times, it is highly commendable the Superior Court, judges, and attorneys have teamed up to assure that all citizens of Orange County will continue to be served. We are all excited about the program," said President of the Orange County Trial Lawyers Association Alan C. Brown.

Information regarding scheduling a voluntary settlement conference can be obtained by contacting the court clerk of the department in which the civil case is assigned.

Court Release # 11-09

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