



# Superior Court of California County of Orange ***News Release***

Public Information Office  
Contact: Kostas Kalaitzidis, (657) 622-7097  
PIO@occourts.org

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## **UPDATE** **Court Begins to Restore Some In-person Appearances As Stay-At-Home Orders Are Lifted**

**Santa Ana, CA** – The Orange County Superior Court began restoring some in-person hearings while maintaining safety protocols, following Governor Gavin Newsom’s decision on Monday to lift the state’s regional stay-at-home orders.

Due to the fluid nature of the COVID-19 crisis, we recommend that the public frequently check the Court’s [COVID-19 website pages](#) for the most up-to-date information.

**Civil Operations.** Effective February 1, 2021, the Court will resume hearing in-person jury trials. Three courtrooms at the Civil Complex Center and three courtrooms at the Central Justice Center have been designated to conduct in-person Civil jury trials, as approved by the Civil Panel Supervising Judge. Small Claims calendars will also resume via video appearance. Other in-person hearings, such as name change matters and judgment debtor examinations, will also resume February 1, 2021, as noticed by the Court. All other Civil case related hearings will remain as scheduled unless specifically ordered otherwise by the Court. Further details are available on the [Civil COVID-19 website page](#).

**Probate Operations.** Effective February 1, 2021, the Court will resume hearing in-person jury trials. All other Probate & Mental Health hearings will continue to be heard via video appearance unless specifically ordered otherwise by the Court. Beginning February 1, 2021, the Conservatorship Orientation Program will be available online as a video orientation. Completion of the video orientation is mandatory prior to the hearing date on the Petition for Appointment of Conservator. The video can be found on the court’s website at: <https://www.occourts.org/directory/probate> or <https://www.occourts.org/media-relations/probate-mental-health.html>. Further details are available on the [Probate & Mental Health COVID-19 website page](#).

### **Criminal/Traffic Operations.**

- Remote hearings may be held telephonically and/or via Microsoft Teams or WebEx with applicable legal authority (PC 977).
- Criminal jury trials have resumed, judicial discretion will be exercised to identify the trials that will be conducted, while adhering to social distancing guidelines.
- All Criminal pre-trials will be heard remotely, except for those cases approved for resolution, motion, or other matters as determined by the Court.

- Traffic Court Trials have resumed. These calendars are being heard at the respective locations, with the exception of the North Justice Center Traffic Court Trials calendar. That calendar will be heard at the Harbor Justice Center through February 19, 2021.
- The [Misdemeanor Action Request \(MAR\)](#) or [Felony Action Request \(FAR\)](#) forms on the COVID-19 protocols section of the public website should be submitted electronically to request action or to set a hearing for a misdemeanor or felony case.
- On February 22, 2021, the North Justice Center will partially reopen. Visit the Court's public website for a listing of the courtrooms that will be operational.
- Also, members of the public can track their case and sign up for reminders at the [Court's public website \(www.occourts.org\)](#) and clicking on the "[My Court Portal](#)" Traffic and Criminal link.

**Family Law Hearings.** All matters will be heard remotely, with the exception of the Domestic Violence Restraining Order hearings in Department L11 and Department L63, as well as those matters deemed necessary by the Court. Remote hearing rules and protocols can be found on the Court's COVID-19 page under the [Family Law tab](#).

**Family Law Clerk's Office.** The online appointment scheduling application for in-person assistance in the Family Law Clerk's Office will be reinstated on February 22, 2021, and will include timeslots for self-represented parties and/or their attorneys.

For general questions/inquiries, the public can call the following telephone numbers: (657) 622-8350 and (657) 622-8457.

All Family Law forms may be mailed or dropped off in the drop box located outside the entrance of the building. The drop box is available 7 days-a-week, 24 hours-a-day. Documents received before 4 p.m. will be filed as of that day. Documents received after 4 p.m. will be filed as of the next business day. Please note that most Family Law documents can be eFiled. Visit <https://www.occourts.org/online-services/family-efiling/> for eFiling information.

**Family Court Services.** All mediation and investigation appointments are held remotely. For further information please visit our Court's public [website](#).

**Juvenile Justice and Dependency.** The online appointment scheduling application for in-person assistance in the Juvenile Court Clerk's Office will be reinstated on February 22, 2021.

**Juvenile Law Hearings.** Everyone with a scheduled hearing for a juvenile justice or dependency matter will be allowed entrance and has the option to be heard remotely.

For general questions/inquiries regarding Juvenile Court matters, members of the public can call: (657) 622-5509.

**Self-Help Services.** Services are being provided remotely at this time. Self-represented litigants can contact Self-Help Services by phone or email. For contact information by case type, available services, and current hours of operation, please visit: <https://www.occourts.org/self-help>.

## Counter Services

Appointments for in-person counter services will resume February 22, 2021. Appointment availability may vary by case-type/unit and can be scheduled through [the Court's website](#), the COVID-19 page, by selecting the "Schedule In-Person Counter Service" button. Scheduling an appointment prior to traveling to a Court facility is strongly encouraged as walk-in services may be unavailable or significantly limited.

Members of the public are also encouraged to use the Court's automated phone services and [public website](#) for payments, or eCorrespondence and the [Court User Portal](#) options for other inquiries and transactions related to infraction matters. Links can be found on the Court's website (<https://www.occourts.org/index.html>). Remote services will continue to be offered as outlined in the Court's [COVID-19 pages](#) for each case-type and unit. Specific questions can be submitted to the Court via the "[Ask a Question](#)" button on the Court's [website](#).

## Collections Payment Services

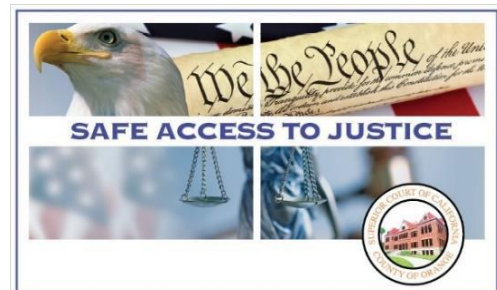
On February 16, 2021, Collections is extending the hours of payment services. Members of the public can make payments at the Harbor Justice Center, Stephen K. Tamura Justice Center (formerly known as West Justice Center), and Central Justice Center between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday; or at the South County Service Center between the hours of 8:00 a.m. through 12:30 pm and 1:30 p.m. through 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Beginning February 22, 2021, payment services will be available at the North Justice Center between the hours of 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Automated phone and web payments can be made by calling (657) 622-8459 or visiting [www.occourts.org](http://www.occourts.org). Please have your OC Pay Number available to access your case.

The Court is continually working on providing **Safe Access to Justice** and would like to remind everyone that **the use of facemasks or face coverings is mandatory for anyone entering a courthouse.** Exemptions issued by anyone other than the Court will not be honored. For Court ADA accommodations and exclusions, please email [ADAinformation@occourts.org](mailto:ADAinformation@occourts.org) or visit this web page

<http://www.occourts.org/directory/ada/>. **Social**

**distancing rules will also be strictly enforced in all facilities;** thus, the number of individuals entering public courtrooms and elevators will be subject to space limitations. Persons entering a courthouse are asked to maintain social distancing as recommended by the CDC. **Persons displaying possible coronavirus symptoms will not be allowed in Court facilities.**



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