



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF MONTEREY

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**PRESS
RELEASE**

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MONTEREY COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT ANNOUNCES SERVICE EXPANSION DURING THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY

On March 17, 2020, Monterey County Superior Court announced the closure of some court locations in response to the COVID-19 emergency. Court closures were initiated to temporarily eliminate the public's presence at these court locations. The court and its staff are categorically exempted from the shelter in place orders issued by the state and county.

On March 30, 2020 in a Statewide Emergency Order, California Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye acknowledged that the "continuous operation of our courts is essential for our constitutional form of government, for providing due process and protecting the public."

The Monterey Superior Court is continuing to expand the number of case types and hearings that can be conducted via remote video and/or phone. Added to the list of hearings that are currently proceeding via remote video or telephonic appearances are some family law matters, restraining orders, dependency, probate hearings, ex parte matters and civil hearings. Remote hearings allow attorneys, litigants, probation officers and court personnel to all appear in court through the use of remote technology.

Starting Monday, April 20, 2020, the Court will hear misdemeanor arraignments for out of custody defendants at the Salinas Courthouse. Defendants and essential parties to proceedings will be allowed into the Salinas Courthouse. Media or others wishing to visit court proceedings may submit requests that will be reviewed by a judicial officer.

The court will continue to maintain social distancing protocols and limitations on the number of individuals in the courthouse. Precautions to help ensure litigant and staff safety remain a priority. Individuals entering the courthouse will be asked health screening questions as they enter. Court offices remain closed to the public.

The court continues to process documents and filings electronically. Self Help services are offered via telephone. Hearings in many case types will proceed with appearances through CourtCall or by remote video.

During this emergency, the Court continues to update real time information for court users in the form of frequently asked questions (FAQ's). For FAQ's and updates on each case type, visit the [court's home page](#). The home page also includes a link to all court orders impacting court services and operations. This information is updated regularly. The public is encouraged to visit the website frequently to access current information.

Presiding Judge Julie R. Culver said, “The safety of those most vulnerable in our community demands that we continue to provide essential services to those most in need. We are employing technology to allow more and more cases and case types to be heard remotely. We are committed to restoring our ability to hear cases involving in-person litigants in a way that maintains and protects the health and safety of all in our courthouses.”

Presiding Judge Culver has issued an updated Interim Order RE: Modification to Court Operations and Services 2020-02, which is attached to this release and posted to the court’s public website.

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