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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF MADERA

**FOURTEENTH GENERAL ORDER RE: MADERA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
MITIGATION OF THE SPREAD OF THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

This general order supersedes this court’s Thirteenth General Order.

On March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom issued a proclamation that a state of emergency exists in California as a result of the threat and continuing spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in this state.

On March 16, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-28-20 expanding protections for tenants against residential and commercial evictions where the failure of the tenant to pay mortgage or rent payments was related to COVID-19.

On March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-33-20 ordering that all residents heed current State public health directives to stay home, except as needed to maintain continuity of operations of essential critical infrastructure sectors and additional sectors as the State Public Health Officer may designate as critical to protect the health and well-being of all Californians. Further, “[w]hen people need to leave their homes or places of residence . . . they should at all times practice social distancing.”

On March 23, 2020, Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye, as Chair of the Judicial Council, issued a statewide order modifying specific statutory time limits in criminal and civil proceedings designed to protect the health and safety of litigants, the public, court staff, judicial

1 officers, attorneys, witnesses, jurors and others present at court proceedings.

2 On March 27, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-38-20 suspending
3 limitations on the Chief Justice, as Chairperson of the Judicial Council, imposed by Government
4 Code sections 68115 and 68072, and authorizing the Chief Justice to issue emergency statewide or
5 local rules, amending the California Rules of Court or other applicable court rule, or for
6 implementing any other expedited procedure for amending the California Rules of Court or any
7 other applicable rule to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

8 On March 30, 2020, Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye, as Chair of the Judicial
9 Council, issued a statewide emergency order further extending specific statutory time limits and
10 authorizing trial courts to make use of available technology to protect the health and safety of all
11 persons who use, access and work in the courthouses in California. In so ordering, the Chief
12 Justice reasoned that “[t]he [Centers for Disease Control], the California Department of Public
13 Health and local health departments have recommended increasingly stringent social distancing
14 measures of at least six feet between people, and encouraged vulnerable individuals to avoid
15 public spaces . . . [C]ourts are clearly places with high risks during this pandemic because they
16 require gatherings of judicial officers, court staff, litigants, attorneys, witnesses, defendants, law
17 enforcement, and juries – well in excess of the numbers allowed for gathering under current
18 executive and health orders.”

19 On April 6, 2020, the Judicial Council of California adopted Emergency Rules 1 through
20 11 of the California Rules of Court thereby establishing rules designed to address the specific
21 challenges faced by judicial officers, attorneys and litigants during the current COVID-19 state of
22 emergency.

23 On April 19, 2020, the Judicial Council of California adopted Emergency Rule 13 of the
24 California Rules of Court thereby permitting a court to make orders modifying a child, spousal,
25 partner or family support order effective as of the date the request is served by U.S. mail or other
26 valid means.

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1 On April 29, 2020, Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye, as Chair of the Judicial Council,
2 issued a statewide emergency order further extending the 60-day continuance of criminal jury
3 trials and the 60-day extension of time in which to conduct criminal trials under Penal Code
4 section 1382 an additional 30 days.

5 To address this unprecedented challenge to the operation of the Superior Court of
6 California, County of Madera, to ensure consistency with the orders of the Chief Justice and to
7 balance the constitutional right of due process with the health and safety of court users and court
8 staff, I hereby issue the following general orders:

- 9 1. The court may hold sessions anywhere in the county, including the Madera County
10 Department of Corrections and Madera County Juvenile Detention Facility, between May
11 20, 2020 and June 19, 2020, inclusive.
- 12 2. All civil proceedings, other than jury trials, currently scheduled between May 20, 2020 and
13 May 31, 2020, inclusive, are continued for eight weeks from the currently scheduled date.
- 14 3. All jury trials are suspended and continued for a period of sixty (60) days. Courts may
15 conduct such a trial at an earlier date, upon a finding of good cause shown or through the
16 use of remote technology, when appropriate.
- 17 4. Exceptions to the continuance of all civil proceedings include the following matters:
 - 18 a. requests for temporary civil harassment restraining orders in which unlawful violence
 - 19 or the credible threat of violence has occurred;
 - 20 b. requests for temporary restraining orders to prevent workplace violence;
 - 21 c. requests for temporary restraining orders to prevent elder abuse;
 - 22 d. requests for emergency ex parte probate matters; and
 - 23 e. all statutorily mandated hearings not otherwise affected by this order.
- 24 5. Dates from May 20, 2020 to May 31, 2020, inclusive, are deemed holidays for purposes of
25 computing the time for filing papers with the court under Code of Civil Procedure sections
26 12 and 12a.

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- 1 6. The time in which to bring a civil action to trial, as provided for in sections 583.310 and
2 583.320, is extended as set forth in Emergency Rule 10 of the California Rules of Court.
- 3 7. All civil hearings in which parties personally appear in the courthouse, will be heard in the
4 department designated on the date of the hearing. Interested parties and attorneys should
5 review electronic notices in the courthouse atrium to determine department assignment.
- 6 8. All misdemeanor and felony proceedings in which a time waiver has been entered and the
7 defendant is out of custody, that are scheduled between May 20, 2020 and May 31, 2020,
8 inclusive, are continued for eight weeks from the currently scheduled date.
- 9 9. All criminal hearings involving defendants who are not in custody shall be heard in the
10 department designated on the date of the hearing. Interested parties and attorneys who are
11 personally appearing in the courthouse should review electronic notices in the courthouse
12 atrium to determine department assignment.
- 13 10. Consistent with the orders of the Chief Justice, dated March 30, 2020 and April 29, 2020,
14 the time period provided in Penal Code section 1382 for the holding of a criminal trial is
15 extended for a period of no more than ninety (90) days from the last date on which the
16 statutory deadline otherwise would have expired. This extension applies to trials which
17 occurred or will occur between March 16, 2020 and June 15, 2020. Courts may conduct a
18 trial at an earlier date, upon a finding of good cause shown or through the use of remote
19 technology, when appropriate.
- 20 11. (a) Consistent with Emergency Rule 3 of the California Rules of Court, judicial
21 proceedings and court operations shall be conducted through the use of remote
22 technology, when appropriate.
- 23 (b) In criminal proceedings, the court must receive the *consent of the defendant* to conduct
24 the proceeding remotely. *Consent of the defendant* means that the consent of the
25 defendant is required only for the waiver of defendant's appearance as provided in
26 Emergency rule 5 of the California Rules of Court.

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1 12. Consistent with Emergency Rule 5 of the California Rules of Court, with the consent of the
2 defendant:

3 (a) the court must allow a defendant to waive his or her personal appearance and appear
4 before the court by use of remote technology; and

5 (b) the court must allow a defendant to waive his or her appearance and permit counsel to
6 appear on his or her behalf.

7 (c) In criminal proceedings, including preliminary hearings, for which a defendant does
8 not consent to waive his or her appearance, and agree that the proceeding be conducted
9 through the use of remote technology, the proceeding shall be continued until the
10 defendant's personal appearance may be safely arranged. No defendants are to be
11 transported from the Madera County Department of Corrections to the court absent an
12 order of the presiding judge or his designee. This order relates specifically to the order
13 of the Public Health Officer, dated March 19, 2020, and Governor Newsom's executive
14 order calling for Californians to maintain appropriate social distancing, as well as the
15 rationale stated by the Chief Justice in her statewide emergency order of March 30,
16 2020, citing the recommendation of the CDC, California Department of Public Health
17 and local county health departments for all persons, including court employees, visitors
18 and users to maintain social distancing of at least six-feet between one another and
19 conduct no gathering in excess of the numbers allowed under current executive and
20 health orders. The purpose of this order is to protect the health and safety of judicial
21 officers, court staff, litigants, attorneys, witnesses, defendants, law enforcement
22 personnel and all others with whom these persons come into contact with throughout
23 the day.

24 13. Consistent with the order of the Chief Justice, dated March 30, 2020, the time period
25 provided in Penal Code section 859b for the holding of a preliminary examination and the
26 defendant's right to release is extended from 10 court days to not more than thirty (30)
27 court days.
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- 1 14. Consistent with the order of the Chief Justice, dated March 30, 2020, the time period
2 provided in Penal Code section 825 within which a defendant charged with a felony
3 offense must be taken before a magistrate is extended from 48 hours to not more than
4 seven (7) days.
- 5 15. All out-of-custody criminal arraignments that are scheduled between May 20, 2020 and
6 May 31, 2020, are continued for eight weeks from the currently scheduled date.
- 7 16. The time period provided for in Welfare and Institutions Code section 313, within which a
8 minor taken into custody pending dependency proceedings must be released from custody,
9 is extended to not more than five (5) days. This applies only to minors for whom the
10 statutory deadline otherwise would expire between May 20, 2020 and May 31, 2020,
11 inclusive.
- 12 17. The time period provided for in Welfare and Institutions Code section 315, within which a
13 minor taken into custody pending dependency proceedings must be give a detention
14 hearing, is extended to not more than five (5) days. This applies only to minors for whom
15 the statutory deadline otherwise would expire between May 20, 2020 and May 31, 2020,
16 inclusive.
- 17 18. The time period provided for in Welfare and Institutions Code section 334, within which a
18 hearing on a juvenile dependency petition must be held, is extended by not more than
19 fifteen (15) days. This applies only to minors for whom the statutory deadline otherwise
20 would expire between May 20, 2020 and May 31, 2020, inclusive.
- 21 19. The time periods provided for in Welfare and Institutions Code sections 632 and 637,
22 within which a minor taken into custody pending wardship proceedings and charged with a
23 felony offense , must be given a detention hearing or rehearing is extended to not more
24 than five (5) days. This applies only to minors for whom the statutory deadline otherwise
25 would expire between May 20, 2020 and May 31, 2020, inclusive.

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- 1 20. The time period provided for in Welfare and Institutions Code section 657, within which a
2 wardship petition for a minor charged with a felony offense must be held, is extended by
3 not more than fifteen (15) days. This applies only to minors for whom the statutory
4 deadline otherwise would expire between May 20, 2020 and May 31, 2020, inclusive.
- 5 21. All specialty court reviews, including drug court, behavioral health court and veterans'
6 court that are scheduled between May 20, 2020 and June 13, 2020, are continued for eight
7 weeks from the currently scheduled date.
- 8 22. All proceedings in the family law department, including family support proceedings,
9 currently scheduled between May 20, 2020 and May 31, 2020, are continued for eight
10 weeks from the currently scheduled date.
- 11 23. Exceptions to the continuance of all family law proceedings include the following matters:
12 a. requests for restraining orders related to domestic violence;
13 b. temporary guardianship proceedings in which the child's health or safety is at risk.
- 14 24. The duration of any emergency protective order, temporary restraining order, gun violence
15 emergency protective order, criminal protective order and any restraining order or
16 protective order after hearing issued or set to expire during the state of emergency shall
17 remain in effect, be continued and/or automatically extended as set forth in revised
18 Emergency Rule 8 of the California Rules of Court adopted by the Judicial council of
19 California on April 19, 2020.
- 20 25. All family law hearings between May 20, 2020 and May 31, 2020, will be heard in the
21 department designated on the date of the hearing. Interested parties and attorneys
22 personally appearing in the courthouse should review electronic notices in the courthouse
23 atrium to determine department assignment.
- 24 26. Consistent with Emergency Rule 13 of the California Rules of Court, the court may make
25 an order modifying child, spousal, partner or family support order effective as of the date
26 the request is served by U.S. mail or other valid means of service on the other party or the
27 local child support agency.
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- 1 27. Day-of-court mediation services are suspended until further notice.
- 2 28. All mediation services provided by Family Court Services between May 20, 2020 and June
3 30, 2020, shall be conducted telephonically unless in-person mediation is specifically
4 ordered by the court.
- 5 29. All probate investigations conducted by Family Court Services or the Department of Social
6 Services, including guardianship and conservatorship interviews, between May 20, 2020
7 and June 30, 2020, inclusive, shall be conducted with the use of available technology. All
8 home inspections and in-person interviews are suspended until June 13, 2020.
- 9 30. The self-help office is closed for walk-in assistance from May 20, 2020 through June 30,
10 2020. In-person services will be provided as ordered by the court and by appointment only
11 beginning June 1, 2020.
- 12 31. Notwithstanding Madera County Superior Court, Local Rule 2.4.6, all applications for ex
13 parte relief filed between May 20, 2020 and June 13, 2020, shall be submitted to the court
14 and notice provided to the opposing party as provided for in Rule 3.1204 of the California
15 Rules of Court. A judicial officer will review the application and a judicial assistant will
16 notify the applicant if a court appearance is required. If a hearing date is ordered by the
17 judicial officer, the person applying for ex parte relief must notify the opposing party no
18 later than 10:00 a.m. the court day before the hearing date ordered, unless the judicial
19 officer finds good cause to dispense with such notice.
- 20 32. All hearings in the appellate department that are scheduled between May 20, 2020 and
21 May 31, 2020, are continued for eight weeks from the currently scheduled date.
- 22 33. All traffic trials scheduled on May 20, 2020 through May 31, 2020, inclusive, in which a
23 time waiver has been entered are continued for eight weeks from the currently scheduled
24 date.
- 25 34. Dates for payment of fines or appearance in court on traffic citations between May 20,
26 2020 and June 13, 2020, inclusive, are continued 26 weeks from the date listed on the
27 citation or the courtesy notice, whichever is later.
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- 35. All payment plans for the payment of fines are extended 60 days before finding the payments delinquent and referring the matters to collections.
- 36. All visitors to the courthouse must maintain an appropriate social distance of six feet between the visitor and other persons at all times whether in a courtroom or in common areas.
- 37. The court may use available technology, when possible, to conduct judicial proceedings and court operations remotely notwithstanding any rule in the California Rules of Court that would prevent the court from using such technology for judicial proceedings.
- 38. With the exception of the statewide orders issued by the Chief Justice on March 23, March 30, 2020 and April 29, 2020, and the Emergency Rules of the California Rules of Court, adopted from time-to-time, by the Judicial Council, each judicial officer retains discretion to deviate from the foregoing orders upon a finding of good cause and in keeping with the intent of these orders to comply with the emergency orders of the governor and the directives of public health officials, including but not limited to limitations on gathering size and social distancing.

DATED: May 19, 2020



Presiding Judge of the Superior Court