



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
County of Sacramento

March 24, 2020

RUSSELL L. HOM
Presiding Judge

Dear Members of the Sacramento Legal Community:

As Presiding Judge of the Sacramento Superior Court, I provide this update regarding the present status of court operations in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. As you may know, on the evening of Thursday, March 19, 2020, I issued the Order re: Temporary Court Closure (“Temp Closure Order”). The Temp Closure Order effectuated a closure of all court buildings and courtrooms, with the exception of Department 47, through and including March 30, 2020. During this period, the court will continue to process ex parte requests for certain emergency restraining orders, petitions for temporary conservatorship and guardianship, juvenile TROs and emergency orders, family law emergency TROs, search warrants, EPOs, and emergency writs regarding COVID-19 measures, including medical quarantines. A dedicated drop box is available on the first floor of the Gordon D. Schaber Courthouse for filings relating to these matters. For a more detailed list of the emergency matters, please refer to the March 19, 2020 Order re: Temporary Court Closure available on the Sacramento Superior Court’s website. Please note that the matters we are able to serve currently are narrower than those listed in my March 17, 2020 Order re: Implementation of Emergency Relief.

I issued the Temp Closure Order in light of the Sacramento County Health Officer’s Public Health Order released earlier that day pursuant to the California Health & Safety Code, ordering “all individuals living in the county to stay at their place of residence except for essential activities.” To provide maximum protection for the health and wellbeing of the public and court employees, the temporary closure was necessary. My decisions through the past week, which have resulted in a step-by-step reduction in court functions, have been based upon the ongoing and evolving balance of keeping the court open to the greatest extent possible while protecting the health and safety of the public, including court personnel. This will continue to be my primary consideration in determining the court’s operational status.

We greatly appreciate your patience and understanding during this unprecedented time of national and worldwide crisis. Although court buildings are closed, the court's leadership, judges and minimum essential staff are working daily to support the functions that we continue to service. We are also working to prepare for an increase in operations towards the limited but still wider scope of enumerated matters in my March 17, 2020 Order re: Implementation of Emergency Relief. Certain operations may be phased in earlier than others. Please also check the public notices and web pages for court branches for possible updates on more specific operations that relate to your practice areas. I will keep you posted regarding any further changes given that the situation is extremely fluid, often requiring adjustments day-to-day and sometimes, hour-to hour.

We understand and appreciate the importance of open courtrooms and fully available civil and criminal operations for you and your clients. At the same time, protecting the health and safety of the public and court employees is our paramount concern. We will continue to work diligently towards an increase in court services as soon as possible under the circumstances. Thank you very much. I will remain in touch.

Russell L. Hom
Presiding Judge