

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF SAN BENITO

CHANGES TO COURT OPERATIONS IN RESPONSE TO GLOBAL COVID-19 OUTBREAK

ORDER NO. 2020-09

WHEREAS Governor Gavin Newsom on March 4, 2020 proclaimed the existence of a state of emergency in California in response to the global COVID-19 outbreak, and on March 19, 2020 issued Executive Order N-33-20 recommending the practice of social distancing;

WHEREAS the Centers for Disease Control, the California Department of Public Health, and local county health departments have recommended increasingly stringent social distancing measures of at least six feet between people, and encouraged vulnerable individuals to avoid public spaces;

WHEREAS Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye recognized in her Statewide Order dated March 23, 2020 that the health restrictions implemented to combat the spread of COVID-19 prevent superior courts from operating normally; and

WHEREAS the health and safety of the parties in civil and criminal proceedings, the public, court staff, judicial officers, attorneys, witnesses, jurors, and others present at these proceedings is of great importance.

NOW, THEREFORE, I find good cause to order that:

1. CERTAIN CALENDAR SETTINGS VACATED

All cases originally set before March 16, 2020, and continued to dates within the six (6) week period from March 17, 2020 to the six (6) week period beginning March 5, 2020, are continued for the six (6) week period beginning June 16, 2020. Exceptions to the continuance are:

- (a) In custody criminal matters,
- (b) Matters not previously continued by Order No. 2020-04,
- (c) Emergency family hearings and trials,
- (d) Urgent probate matters,
- (e) Emergency child support hearings,
- (f) Emergency retraining and protective orders, and
- (g) Juvenile matters.
- 2. All time waived criminal trials, jury or bench, shall be vacated and re-set. All jury trials, criminal and civil, shall be vacated within the scope of the Chief Justice's March 23, 2020, order and the April 6, 2020 action of the Judicial Council of California.

3. SELF-HELP CENTER SUSPENSION

All self-help center appointments and walk-in visits are suspended until June 15, 2020.

4. CLERK'S OFFICE HOURS CLOSED

The clerk's office hours will be closed. This reduction in hours shall remain in effect until Governor Newsom lifts the state of emergency. Clerk's office staff will remain available by phone until 4 p.m. daily. Parties may deposit documents in the drop box located inside the courthouse entrance. Documents deposited in the drop box before 4:30 p.m. will be accepted for filing on that court day. Documents deposited after 4:30 p.m. will be accepted for filing as of the following court day.

This order is taken, in part, in light of the authority granted to the trial courts in the "Statewide" order of Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye dated March 23, 2020, and the April 6, 2020, order of the Judicial Council of California.

This order may be deemed part of the record in affected cases without the need to file the order in each case.

SO ORDERED.

Dated this, 28th day of April 2020.

Steven R. Sanders

Presiding Judge of the Superior Court