

INFORMATION | Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update - March 20, 2020

From: CEO Announcement <CEO_Announcement@LACourt.org>

Sent: Friday, March 20, 2020 11:12 AM

To: All Staff Users <AllStaffUsers@LACourt.org>

Subject: INFORMATION | Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update - March 20, 2020

(Sent on behalf of Sherri R. Carter, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court)

With Governor Newsom's announcement last night of a Stay at Home order, I provide the following clarification as it relates to our Court, which is considered an essential service and is exempt from the Governor's order.

Disaster Service Workers

Court employees are considered disaster service workers under California Government Code section 3100 and are needed to deliver the statutorily mandated, time-sensitive and emergency services in times of local, state and national emergencies. To accommodate this duty, as outlined below, the Court has worked to achieve a balance between protecting the health and safety of our employees and delivering statutorily mandated essential services.

Court Operations

Effective Monday, March 23, 2020, while the Court remains open for essential services, the Clerk's offices will be closed to the public in all courthouses. We are currently establishing telephone numbers and other means for litigants, counsel and the public to conduct limited, time-sensitive and essential services. We will provide details over the next few days about how we will be converting our public services to telephonic and other electronic methods to the largest extent possible.

Effective immediately, we are shifting as much work as possible to telework which will vary depending on the classification, the assignment and the location, and may include processing paperwork, clearing backlogs, performing administrative work, completing annual online training modules and any other assigned work. Due to the nature of some of our essential services, however, we will still need a reduced number of Court staff to work in whatever courthouses remain open to deliver those important services. Managers are evaluating the affected units and preparing schedules that minimize the number of employees needed in courthouses to perform that work. This work will be rotated among staff—to the extent possible—and you will only be asked to work in the courthouses if solutions cannot be identified to complete the essential, time-sensitive work remotely. Your managers will let you know your schedules in the coming days. Please be patient.

Employee Concerns

We have received questions from employees about how to keep themselves and their loved ones safe. Many employees have asked what happens to their pay and benefits if they are not at work during the pandemic. I want you to know that so long as you remain available for work, whether in a courthouse or remotely, during traditional hours or not, you will remain in paid status. Employees whose managers cannot assign them at least 40 hours of work per week, but who remain available for other work as assigned to them, will remain in paid status. Employees who refuse work assignments (whether in person at a courthouse or via telework) will be placed on leave.

On March 18, 2020 President Trump signed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. We are evaluating how it affects Court employees and will update you in the coming days. Any further federal legislation or state action may change the options available to you and to the Court.

High Risk Employees (Age 65+, with Underlying Medical Condition, or Pregnant)

If the Court authorized you to telework because you are at least 65 years old, have an underlying chronic medical condition, or are pregnant, you may remain in telework status. Your manager will work with you to determine how to accommodate your condition to allow you to work safely.

Employees Impacted by School, Child Care, or Elder Care Closures

If the Court authorized you to telework because you have a minor, dependent child whose school or child care center was closed, or whose parent's elder care center was closed, you may remain on the agreement. However, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, which will take effect in two weeks, appears to afford you some benefits. As we determine what those are, we will communicate them to you.

Working Together

This unprecedented public health and economic crisis will have lasting impacts in ways we cannot now comprehend. While we continue to try to perform the essential duties of the Court, we must look out for our loved ones and for each other. There is no playbook for how we get through this, but I want to reassure you that your wellbeing is very important to me and to the Court.

As the situation changes, I will communicate with you. Please remain safe.

This message can be found on [CourtConnect](#) under [Weekly Communications](#) > [CEO Announcements](#).