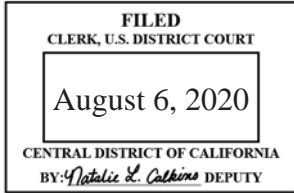


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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

IN RE:) GENERAL ORDER NO. 20-09
CORONAVIRUS PUBLIC) (Supersedes Amended General Order
EMERGENCY) No. 20-08)
ORDER CONCERNING PHASED)
REOPENING OF THE COURT)

WHEREAS, the number of people infected by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, also known as “Coronavirus” that causes COVID-19, continues to grow, with thousands of confirmed cases and deaths in the Central District of California; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other public health authorities have advised the taking of precautions to reduce the possibility of exposure to the virus and slow the spread of the disease, including implementing physical distancing and reducing the size of in-person gatherings;

Upon a majority vote, in order to protect public health, and in order to reduce the size of public gatherings and reduce unnecessary travel, the Court orders as follows:

1. The Plan for Phased Resumption of Operations (“Reopening Plan”) is adopted. The Reopening Plan has three distinct Phases, as follows:

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- 2 a. Phase 1 (return of certain staff to the courthouses to prepare for
- 3 limited in-court hearings), which has ended;
- 4 b. Phase 2 (reopening courthouses for limited in-court hearings),
- 5 which began on June 22, 2020; and
- 6 c. Phase 3 (resumption of jury trials), which will be implemented at a
- 7 date to be determined.
- 8 2. The Court has adopted gating criteria that will be used to inform when the
- 9 Court transitions to Phase 3. The gating criteria is designed to determine
- 10 local COVID-19 exposure risks based on 14-day trends of facility
- 11 exposure, community spread, and community restrictions.
- 12 3. Judges will determine when their chambers staff will return to work at the
- 13 courthouses during each Phase of reopening. The District Court
- 14 Executive/Clerk of Court will determine when and which Clerk's Office
- 15 and Probation and Pretrial Services Office staff will return to the
- 16 courthouses during each Phase of reopening.
- 17 4. Due to the recent surge in the Coronavirus cases in the Central District of
- 18 California, until further notice, and except as set forth below, the
- 19 Courthouses will be closed to the public.
- 20 5. Until further notice, no jury trials will be conducted in civil cases. All
- 21 appearances in civil cases will be by telephone or video conference.
- 22 However, individual judges, at their discretion, may offer bench trials by
- 23 video conference in lieu of postponement.
- 24 6. Until further notice, no jury trials will be conducted in criminal cases.
- 25 Hearings in any criminal matter may proceed in court when the defendant
- 26 does not consent to appear by telephone or video conference. Members of
- 27 the public will have access to such proceedings with a limit of 10 people
- 28

1 present in the courtroom or in an overflow courtroom at one time at the
2 discretion of the assigned judge.

3 a. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention has warned that “in
4 the coming months, most of the U.S. population will be exposed to this
5 virus.” The COVID-19 rates of infection, hospitalizations and deaths
6 have significantly increased in the Central District of California in the last
7 thirty days such that holding jury trials substantially increases the chances
8 of transmitting the Coronavirus. The Court concludes that conducting
9 jury trials would also likely place prospective jurors, defendant, attorneys,
10 and court personnel at unnecessary risk. Therefore, the Court finds that
11 suspending criminal jury trials in the Central District of California
12 because of the increase in reported COVID-19 infections, hospitalizations,
13 and deaths serves the ends of justice and outweigh the interests of the
14 public and the defendants in a speedy trial.

- 15 7. Criminal bench duty for all divisions will continue to take place in the
16 Roybal Courthouse in Los Angeles and the Santa Ana Courthouse, by
17 video or telephonic conference with the defendant’s consent and in-court
18 absent consent.
- 19 8. The Bankruptcy Court will issue separate guidance for reconstituting its
20 operations.
- 21 9. The naturalization ceremonies scheduled through the end of September
22 2020 are cancelled. The Court delegates authority to the United States
23 Citizenship and Immigration Service to administer the oath of citizenship
24 to applicants scheduled to be naturalized at those ceremonies.
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1 IT IS SO ORDERED.
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5 CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

6 *Date of Approval by the Court:* August 6, 2020
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8 *Date of Filing by the Clerk:* August 6, 2020
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