

Alameda County Court Updates - COVID-19

[vc_row][vc_column][vc_column_text]Highlights of the Latest for Alameda County Courthouse:
Emergency Local Rules for Family Law Litigants (updated as of 4/24/2020)[/vc_column_text][vc_raw_html]

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1. Court Hearings

- **Videoconference Hearings.** Starting April 20, 2020, *limited* family law matters will

be heard on Mondays and Thursdays between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. The Court will use the Blue Jeans videoconferencing platform for these appearances. Each judge has the discretion to select the emergency and ongoing hearings filed before March 17, 2020. The Court will contact litigants and attorneys directly in scheduling videoconference appearances.

- **Closure End Date.** It is unlikely that the court will be reopened on May 4, 2020, the currently scheduled date; however, *do not assume* that hearings will be continued. The Court will continue relying on federal, state, and local health and safety guidelines in making the decision to reopen.
- **Hearing Continuances.** Notice of new Court dates will be provided by mail. It is imperative that you have a current mailing address, email address, and phone number on file with the Court. Non-confidential matters (including divorce) can be accessed online:
<https://publicrecords.alameda.courts.ca.gov/PRS/Case/SearchByCaseNumber>
- **Settlement Conferences.** Commissioner Bishay (Department 504) is available to conduct settlement conferences via videoconference, even if the matter is not currently set for a hearing. Parties must agree to use Commissioner Bishay and understand that there is no court reporter or court clerk available. You may contact him directly to schedule a Settlement Conference: mbishay@alameda.courts.ca.gov

2. Court Filings

- **Limitations.** Family law filings are limited to ex parte emergency motions, restraining orders, Stipulations and Orders, and limited Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) filings.
- **Method.** Filings may be submitted via fax filing. Premium fax filing is not a currently available option. Filed pleadings will be returned via mail or electronically. There is a drop box for filings in front of the Hayward Hall of Justice. If it is an emergency ex parte motion, a Court clerk will initiate contact when the documents are available for pick up.
- **Backlog.** There is an enormous backlog of family law pleadings that have not yet been filed.

3. Family Court Services.

Mediation is being offered for certain cases. If ordered to contact FCS, comply with the instructions; however, do not expect that your matter is guaranteed to be scheduled for mediation. All mediation sessions will occur remotely.

[View the full text of the update provided April 16, 2020 can be found here](#)

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