

Contra Costa County Court Updates - COVID-19

[vc_row][vc_column][vc_column_text]Highlights of the Latest for Contra Costa County Courthouse: Emergency Local Rules for Family Law Litigants (updated as of 4/23/2020)[/vc_column_text][vc_raw_html]JTNDc2NyaXB0JTlwc3JjJTNEJTlYaHR0cHMIM0EIMkYIMkZmYXN0Lndpc3RpYS5jb20IMkZlZWJlZCUyRm1lZGhcyUyRmVnMDhhdHQwcGUuanNvbniAIMjllMjBhc3luYyUzRSUzQyUyRnNjcmldCUzRSUzQ3NjcmldCUyMHNyYyUzRCUyMmh0dHBzJTNBjTJGJTJGZmFzdC53aXN0aWEuY29tJTJGYXNzZXRzJTJGZXh0ZXJuYWwIMkZFLXyXlmpzJTlyJTlwYXN5bmMIM0UIM0MIMkZzY3JpcHQIM0UIM0NkaXYIMjBjbGFzcyUzRCUyMndpc3RpYV9yZXNwb25zaXZlX3BhZGRpbmclMjllMjBzdHlsZSUzRCUyMnBhZGRpbmclM0E1Ni4yNSUyNSUyMDAIMjAwJTlwMCUzQnBvc2l0aW9uJTNBcmVsYXRpdM0UIM0UIMjllM0UIM0NkaXYIMjBjbGFzcyUzRCUyMndpc3RpYV9yZXNwb25zaXZlX3dyYXBwZXlMjllMjBzdHlsZSUzRCUyMmhlYWdodCUzQTEwMCUyNSUzQmxiZnQIM0EwJTNCcG9zaXRpb24IM0FhYnNvbHV0ZSUzQnRvcCUzQTAIM0J3aWR0aCUzQTEwMCUyNSUzQiUyMiUzRSUzQ2RpdUyMGNsYXNzJTNEJTlyd2lzdGhX2VtYmVkJTlw2lzdGhX2FzeW5jX2VnMDhhdHQwcGUIMjB2aWRlbi0ZvYW0IM0R0cnVlJTlyJTlwc3R5bGUIM0QIMjJoZWlnaHQIM0ExMDAIMjUIM0Jwb3NpdGlvbiUzQXJlbiGF0aXZlJTNCd2lkZGgIM0ExMDAIMjUIMjllM0UIM0NkaXYIMjBjbGFzcyUzRCUyMndpc3RpYV9zd2F0Y2gIMjllMjBzdHlsZSUzRCUyMmhlYWdodCUzQTEwMCUyNSUzQmxiZnQIM0EwJTNCb3BhY2l0eSUzQTAIM0JvdmVyZmxvdyUzQWhpZGRlbiUzQnBvc2l0aW9uJTNBWJzb2x1dGUIM0J0b3AIM0EwJTNCdHJhbnNpdGlvbiUzQW9wYWNpdHkIMjAyMDBTcyUzQndpZHRoJTNBMTAwJTl1JTNCJTlyJTNEJTNDaW1nJTlwc3JjJTNEJTlYaHR0cHMIM0EIMkYIMkZmYXN0Lndpc3RpYS5jb20IMkZlZWJlZCUyRm1lZGhcyUyRmVnMDhhdHQwcGUIMkZzd2F0Y2gIMjllMjBzdHlsZSUzRCUyMmZpbHRlciUzQWJsdXlMjg1cHglMjllMjBzdHlsZSUzRCUyMmhlYWdodCUzQTEwMCUyNSUzQmxiZnQIM0EwJTNBWJ29udGFpbiUzQndpZHRoJTNBMTAwJTl1JTNCJTlyJTlwYXN0JTNEJTlyJTlyJTlyYXJpYS1oaWRkZW4IM0QIMjJ0cnVlJTlyJTlwb25sb2FkJTNEJTlydGhpcy5wYXJlbnROb2RlLn0eWxlM9wYWNpdHkIM0QxJTNCJTlyJTlwJTJGJTNEJTNDJTJGZG12JTNEJTNDJTJGZG12JTNEJTNDJTJGZG12JTNEJTNDJTJGZG12JTNEJTNDJTlxLS0IMjBCZWdpbiUyME1haWxjaGltcCUyMFNpZ251cCUyMEZvcmlMjAtLSUzRSUwQSUzQ2RpdUyMGikJTNEJTlybWNfZW1iZWZlZmVwJTlyJTNEJTBBJTNDZm9ybSUyMGFjdGlvbiUzRCUyMmh0dHBzJTNBjTJGJTJGY3Jpc3Rpbnmxvd2VsYXcudXMxOC5saXN0LW1hbWFnZS5jb20IMkZzdWJzY3JpYmUIMkZwb3N0JTNGdSUzRGJjY2VlODE0ZDhiNDJINzc5YjhiZTM1MDgIMjZhbXAIM0JpZCUzRDk0YWNhM2Y1NzclMjllMjBtZXR0b2QIM0QIMjJwb3N0JTlyJTlwaWQIM0QIMjYyY1bWJlZGRlZC1zdWJzY3JpYmUtZm9ybSUyMiUyMG5hbWUIM0QIMjYyY1bWJlZGRlZC1zdWJzY3JpYmUtZm9ybSUyMiUyMGNsYXNzJTNEJTlydmFsaWRhdGUIMjllMjB0YXJnZXQIM0QIMjYyYm90dG9tJTNBjTlwLjc1cmVtJTNCJTlyJTNEJTlyJTNDc3BhbiUyMGNsYXNzJTNEJTlydGV4dCUyMG1lZG1lbnVAIMjllMjBzdHlsZSUzRCUyMmZvbntd2VpZ2h0JTNBjTlwYm9sZCUzQiUyMGNvbG9yJTNBjTlwJTlzMjZiZW50JTNCJTlyJTNEJTlyJTNDZSUyMENvbniRyYSUyMENvc3RhJTlwQ291bnR5JTlwVXBkYXRlcyUzQyUyRnNwYW4IM0UIM0MIMkZkaXYIM0UIMEEIM0NkaXYIMjBjbGFzcyUzRCUyMm1jLWZpZWxkLWdyb3VwJTlyJTNEJTBBJTl1JTNDaW5wdXQIMjB0eXBlJTNEJTlyZW1haWwIMjllMjB2YWx1ZSUzRCUyMiUyMiUyMG5hbWUIM0QIMjFTUFTCUyMiUyMGNsYXNzJTNEJTlycmVxdWlyZWQIMjBibWFpbiUyMiUyMGikJT

2020 will be **vacated** (canceled), and rescheduled for at least 60 days

- All trials scheduled between April 6, 2020 and June 5, 2020 will be postponed for at least 60 days. Unofficially, trials that are set for June are likely to be continued.
- Non-emergency hearing dates will likely not be rescheduled until after the courthouse reopens fully to the public. Each judge's department will have its own calendaring procedures. Do not contact the court for rescheduled dates. Notice will be provided.
- All pending restraining orders **are** being continued, and notice is being provided by mail. All non-confidential matters can be viewed online for pending court dates at cc-courts.org
- Scheduling an ex parte (emergency) hearing is possible on or after April 6, 2020. Emergencies include domestic violence and child custody issues where the child's health, safety, and welfare are compromised or where there is threat of parental kidnapping.
- Court hearings will be conducted via phone or videoconference (Zoom). The court will commence limited emergency hearings via videoconference the last week of April, 2020.
- Documents intended for use at a hearing must be exchanged prior to the hearing, and the Court must be provided copies of the documents via email, fax, or USPS.
- Court hearings are still conducted as formal proceedings. Dress appropriately, speak respectfully, and arrange for a distraction-free appearance via videoconference (i.e. using headsets, no third-party participation/observation, etc.)
- Departments 32 and 29 will hear cases on Mondays and Tuesdays
- Department 18 will hear cases on Wednesdays and Thursdays
- Department 52 will hear cases Monday through Thursday

2. Mediation

- Mediation for child custody/visitation disputes will be available in emergency situations.
- Sessions will be conducted via videoconference (Zoom) or phone. All mediators have received training on how to videoconference using Zoom.

3. Court Filings

- Submit via USPS or drop box (M-F, 9 – 3); address: Family Law, 751 Pine Street, Martinez, CA 94553
- Drop boxed documents
 - Include a cover page: provide name of case (example: Marriage of Jones), case number, and documents enclosed. Specify the manner in which documents are to be returned (USPS or email). If documents are to be returned via USPS, include a SASE with sufficient postage.
 - Include the filing fees via check or money order, if necessary
 - Documents still need to be assembled properly: one original, double-hole punched and stapled, with two copies
 - Monitor online! Do not assume the documents were received or filed.

Review bank records to see if check has been cashed.

- USPS
 - Include a cover page: provide name of case (example: Marriage of Jones), case number, and documents enclosed. Specify the manner in which documents are to be returned (USPS or email). If documents are to be returned via USPS, include a SASE with sufficient postage.
 - Include the filing fees via check or money order, if necessary
 - Monitor online! Do not assume the documents were received or filed.
- Emergency filings may be picked up in person from the courthouse after they have been processed. After calling the courthouse to confirm the documents are ready to be picked up, go to the family law building (751 Pine Street, Martinez) from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm, Monday- Friday. Remain at least 6 feet away from the deputy sheriff stationed outside the building. Provide the case name, and the deputy will obtain the documents. **Do not approach the deputy.**
- **Court filings may no longer be submitted via e-mail or fax, except for restraining order applications and responses to restraining orders.**
 - **Restraining Orders may be submitted to:**
familylawemergency@contracosta.courts.ca.gov
 - Any email submission must contact the case name and number, if one exists
 - Declarations must be limited to 10 one-sided, double spaced pages, using a 12-point font if typed.
 - Filings with more than 10 pages of exhibit attachments must also be submitted via hard copy by mail or drop box
 - Filed restraining orders must be picked up at the courthouse from 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm, Monday – Friday.
- Restraining order applications may be filed online as follows:
https://california.tylerhost.net/SRL/SRL/Start?legalProcessKey=Domestic_Violence_Restraining_Order_Request
 - Restraining orders may be picked up in person from the courthouse after they have been processed. After calling the courthouse to confirm the documents are ready to be picked up, go to the family law building (751 Pine Street, Martinez) from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm, Monday- Friday. Remain at least 6 feet away from the deputy sheriff stationed outside the building. Provide the case name, and the deputy will obtain the documents. **Do not approach the deputy.**

4. Judgments

- Submit via USPS or drop box (M-F, 9 – 3); address: Family Law, 751 Pine Street, Martinez, CA 94553
- Drop boxed documents
 - Include a cover page: provide name of case (example: Marriage of Jones), case number, and documents enclosed. Documents will only be returned via USPS. Provide a self-addressed stamped envelope for the Judgment and

associated Judicial Council forms and two envelopes for the Notice of Entry of Judgment (one envelope for each party, with sufficient postage)

- Monitor online! Do not assume the documents were received or filed.

Review bank records to see if check has been cashed.

- Electronic signatures are currently accepted for Judgments and deemed equal to original wet ink signatures

5. **Stipulations (Agreements)**

- Agreements may be submitted to the assigned judge via email, fax, or mail, but the \$20.00 filing fee must be delivered to the court separately. The supervising family law judge, the Honorable Danielle Douglas, will also receive stipulations for review, regardless of whether the case has been assigned to her.

6. **Self-Help Center**

- Family law facilitators will be available to provide assistance via telephone or email
- Email address: selfhelpfamilylaw@contracosta.courts.ca.gov
- Phone: (925) 608-2067

7. **Miscellaneous**

- The courthouse is operating with only approximately 70% of its usual staff, including courtroom clerks, filing clerks, legal technicians, etc.
- Mail, email, and fax is the preferred method of providing documents to the courthouse for filing
- This is an emergency system which has been developed on an emergency basis. There will be difficulties in transitioning to the new normal, and the Court will need time to adapt to this new operation system. Please be patient, respectful, and grateful that there are some available resources for family law litigants.

[View the complete set of the Emergency Local Rules ›](#)

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