

Local Rules of the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda

Title 5. Family Rules

Chapter 1. General Provisions

Rule 5.26. Emergency rule re informal settlement conferences during COVID-19 crisis

During the COVID-19 crisis, and commencing April 20, 2020, the Court will begin conducting informal settlement conferences regarding Requests for Orders, Long Cause Hearings, and Trials that were calendared between March 17, 2020, and June 30, 2020. Only those cases where both parties agree to an informal settlement conference will one be set. Those requests can be made directly to the email account of the department where those hearings had been scheduled.

Informal settlement conferences conducted pursuant to this rule are subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The informal settlement conference will not involve a courtroom clerk or court reporter.
- (2) Requests for informal settlement conferences shall include case name, case number and the substance of issues to be discussed during the informal settlement conference.
- (3) Requests for informal settlement conferences should include method of conference (i.e., telephone or video) and include appropriate contact information for all parties and attorneys.
- (4) Requests shall include the need for foreign language interpretation, the language, and whether one or both parties need interpretation.
- (5) The Court will notify parties and counsel of the scheduled informal settlement conference.
- (6) In those informal settlement conferences where agreements are reached and counsel are involved, one counsel will be asked to prepare a Stipulation and Order. For parties that are unrepresented, the Court will request that staff from the Court's Self-Help Center prepare an order.
- (7) For those cases in which no agreement is reached, the Court will re-calendar those matters in the future.
- (8) Parties and counsel should understand that informal settlement conferences are intended to assist parties in reaching resolution of disputed issues. Cases being heard in these conferences will remain in the department to which they are assigned.

Rule 5.26 adopted effective April 20, 2020.