Superior Court of California

COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

Tara M. Desautels, Presiding Judge

Charles Smiley, Assistant Presiding Judge

Chad Finke, Executive Officer

René C. Davidson Courthouse
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, April 16, 2020

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA: Superior Court of Alameda County resumes limited hearings in Civil, Family, and Probate matters, issues related Emergency Local Rules and FAQs, permits limited public courthouse access, and orders additional jail releases.

The Superior Court of Alameda County (Court) is pleased to announce that, beginning April 20, 2020, it will resume a limited number of hearings in Civil, Family, and Probate matters. Given the COVID-19 crisis and related health and safety concerns and resource constraints, the hearings will be conducted remotely via telephone or videoconference and will be limited to emergency hearings and matters filed and scheduled before the March 17, 2020 Court closure. The Court will notify parties or their counsel in cases that are being set for hearing the week before the anticipated hearing date.

To facilitate operations during the COVID-19 crisis, the Court has also enacted a number of new emergency Family and Probate Local Rules, and a new Family form, effective April 20, 2020. Litigants can find further guidance in the Court's newly created Frequently Asked Questions list, which is posted on the Court's COVID-19 web page.

Also beginning Monday, April 20, 2020, the Court is offering limited public courthouse access for records searches. Between 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., members of the public may enter the criminal and civil clerk's offices of the Rene C. Davidson Courthouse in Oakland (RCD) to conduct records searches. The Court offers this public opportunity in recognition of the fact that criminal and family records are not permitted to be offered remotely per the California Rules of Court. Members of the public who wish access will only be admitted if they wear a respiratory covering or mask, use their own or Court-provided hand sanitizer, and comply with social distancing directives. Access will be limited to one person in the criminal office and two people in the civil office at any given time; computer use will be limited to 15 minutes per user. Those waiting will be asked to wait outside weapons-screening at 6-foot increments. Failure to follow any of these directives will result in denial of access.

Finally, the Court notes that its Presiding Judge, Hon. Tara M. Desautels, issued General Orders on April 14 and 16, 2020, releasing an additional 14 persons from the Santa Rita Jail. The released persons all had their bail reduced to $0.00 pursuant to Emergency Rule 4, adopted by the Judicial

Council of California on April 6, 2020, and Alameda County Superior Court Local Rule 4.115, which the Court adopted on April 8, 2020.

The Court appreciates the patience and understanding of the public as it works to restore Court services while complying with public health guidelines.