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, March 19, 2020

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA: Superior Court of Alameda County orders release of 247 persons from Santa Rita Jail and provides additional information regarding availability of Court services during public closure period.

*** CORRECTED MARCH 20, 2020 ***

On March 19, 2020, the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Alameda County (Court), Hon. Tara M. Desautels, issued a General Order releasing 247 persons from the Santa Rita Jail. The Order was issued upon the joint request of the Court's criminal justice partners, including the District Attorney, the Alameda County defense bar, and the Public Defender, in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the proclamations of a state of emergency by Governor Gavin Newsom and President Donald Trump, and the Alameda County Public Health Officer's March 16, 2020, Shelter in Place Order. The sentences of all persons ordered released will be deemed to have been served.

In addition, the Court has updated its COVID-19 web site with more detailed information about which Court services will be available during the Court's public closure period, which currently runs through April 7, 2020. (The Court will continue to assess the need to seek an extension of the public closure Period in view of Executive Order N-33-20, issued by Governor Newsom on March 19, 2020, and ongoing COVID-19-related developments.)

Notably, the Court continues to work with its justice partners to develop an in-custody arraignment calendar within the limitations of the Court's COVID-19-related staffing and health and safety constraints. Beginning Friday, March 20, 2020, the Court will attempt to operate four arraignment calendars at two court locations (the Wiley W. Manuel Courthouse in Oakland and the East County Hall of Justice in Dublin) on Tuesdays and Fridays each week during the closure period.

The Court has posted a Frequently-Asked Questions list addressing the Court's plan for handling arraignments and other Criminal matters on its COVID-19 web site.

The Court encourages the public to check that web site regularly for the most up-to-date information about the availability of Court services.