

## **SUPERIOR COURT OF AMADOR COUNTY**

### **NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) – COURT UPDATES AND INFORMATION**

**Last Updated: March 13, 2020**

#### **What is the Superior Court of Amador County doing about the Coronavirus?**

Similar to other government agencies and California Trial Courts, the Superior Court of California, County of Amador (Court) is closely monitoring the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. The Court is in routine communication with Amador County Public Health, other Amador County justice agencies, other California Trial Courts, and the Judicial Council of California. We are working with these and other entities to ensure we have up-to-date information and can best weigh the need to provide access to justice to our community, while also supporting the activities of our public health agencies and the health of the public.

The Court has implemented additional cleaning protocols in high use areas to reduce the potential for transmission of this or other viruses for those coming to our courthouse.

We encourage everyone to follow the Center for Disease Control and Amador County Public Health guidance on prevention.

Below is more detailed information on the following topics:

#### **Court Events and Appearances**

#### **Self-Help Services**

#### **Jury Service**

#### **General Information on COVID-19 Court Events and Appearances**

#### **Court Events and Appearances**

- Has the Court suspended any types of matters or hearings?

For the period of March 16 to March 31, 2020, the Court is postponing all traffic infraction and non-traffic infraction hearings and trials to future dates. The Court will provide notice to the parties of their new dates.

For the period of March 16 to March 31, 2020, the Court will postpone all Civil Jury Trials to a future date. The Court will provide notice to the parties of their new dates.

For the period of March 16 to March 31, 2020, the Court will endeavor to minimize the number of Criminal Jury Trials held. These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, balancing the constitutional rights of the parties and the efforts to maintain public health.

- Is my upcoming hearing still occurring?

With the exception of the items mentioned above, Court hearings are proceeding as normal. If you have an upcoming Court hearing, **you do still need to appear for your hearing.**

- Can I appear by telephone or video for my hearing?

The Court has temporarily expanded the types of hearings that are eligible for a telephonic appearance without prior approval by the judge. Currently the Court will be allowing telephonic appearances in all case types with the exception of criminal.

To set up a telephonic appearance please call (209) 257-2603 between the hours of 9 am and 4 pm Monday through Friday. You will need to provide the phone number at which you can be reached.

The Court will continue to evaluate options for expanded use of remote appearances to support the goals of the public health agencies and the health of the public.

- If I am sick, do I still need to appear for my Court case?

**If you believe you are sick, or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or any other communicable disease, please contact the Court Clerk's Office at 209-257-2604 for further information. If you have an attorney, contact your attorney before calling the Court.**

### **Self-Help Services**

- Is the Court Self-Help Center still open?

Yes. The Court is still providing self-help services. However, the Court is reducing the number of in-person appointments. In addition, the Court will be shifting to a model that uses telephone appointments and limited drop-in services for most non-emergency situations. Please call the Self-Help office at (209) 257-2627 if you have questions.

### **Jury Service**

**PLEASE NOTE: If you are in a high risk class, over 60 years of age or you have underlying health issues, you can request a deferment.**

- Is the Court still holding jury trials?

The Court has suspended all civil jury trials and will endeavor to minimize the number of criminal jury trials through the end of March 2020. Jurors will be called in groups of no more than 50.

- Do I still need to report for jury service?

If you receive instructions to appear, yes.

- Do I need to report for jury service if I am sick?

**If you are sick, please contact the Jury Commissioner's Office at 209-257-2642 to discuss a potential postponement of your service.**

- How do I stay informed of changes to my jury service?

<http://www.amadorcourt.org/gi-juryServices.aspx#tab2>

### **General Information on COVID-19**

For more information, please visit Amador County Public Health's website at:

<https://www.amadorgov.org/services/covid-19/-fsiteid-1>

Or, the California Department of Public Health at:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx> .

The California Department of Public Health recommends the following steps to prevent the spread of all respiratory viruses:

#### **The Court will be instituting social distancing best practices.**

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or cough/sneeze into your elbow.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay away from work, school or other people if you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever and cough.