

PRESS RELEASE



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

El Centro, California – On March 23, 2020, the Imperial County Superior Court restricted access to its courthouses and courtrooms due to the COVID emergency. Since that time, the Court has held most hearings remotely. The first jury trial since that date began this week. Imperial County residents have not been able to meet in-person with staff at our Access Center as well. Needless to say, access to justice has been restricted. But, Judges, staff, and our justice partners are to be commended for doing all they have been doing under difficult circumstances to avoid denying access to justice in our county.

The COVID situation has greatly improved in Imperial County and because of that, the Court has prepared a Master Plan to Fully Restore Court Services. The plan calls for a phased in approach to allow people into the courthouses and courtrooms. This phased in approach allows the Court to monitor the increase in activity in our courthouses while doing everything it can to insure the safety of all who work in and enter the courthouses for court business. This will also allow the Court to pause the implementation of a phase and/or return to remote services, if conditions necessitate.

The Master Plan is available at <https://imperial.courts.ca.gov/>. The Court continues to take safety precautions and a list of those is also available at <https://imperial.courts.ca.gov/>.

Phase 1 will commence on October 5, 2020 wherein the Civil calendars, Probate calendar and long cause Family Law matters will be heard in-person. Also, the Civil and Criminal Clerks' offices will be open to the public, by appointment, for all filings. The Access Center and Small Claims Advisor will be available, by appointment only, for virtual or in-person service.

Information regarding appointments will be made available on the Court's homepage at <https://imperial.courts.ca.gov/>.

Phase 2 will commence on October 13, 2020 wherein all Family Law matters, all restraining order hearings, Traffic and Small Claims calendars will be in-person. The Traffic office will also be open to the public.

The remaining phases commencement dates will be announced later as the Court monitors the situation.