



NEWS RELEASE

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA • COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Post Office Box 120128 • San Diego, CA 92112-0128

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

San Diego Superior Court Resumes Summoning Jurors

Along with several COVID-19 precautions, a limited number of jurors will be summoned beginning Oct. 9

September 1, 2020 – This week, the San Diego Superior Court began mailing out summonses for jury duty for the first new jury trial since the COVID-19 pandemic caused jury trials to be put on hold in March.

The San Diego Superior Court is committed to the safety of all jurors and is closely following guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control, and state and local health authorities.

In addition to the numerous precautionary measures already enacted to promote the safety of all court visitors and employees (temperature tests upon entry, mandatory masks or facial coverings, social distancing, increased cleaning with a focus on high-touch areas, etc.), additional precautions have been built into welcoming prospective jurors as jury trials resume.

Significantly fewer jurors are being summoned – for example, the Central Courthouse jury assembly room that typically receives 350-400 people on a regular day will be reduced to 18-20% of the usual capacity beginning on October 9.

“As we safely and cautiously resume trials with a smaller potential juror pool, we will start by seating our first jury at the Central Courthouse before we expand to the other courthouses,” said Superior Court Presiding Judge Lorna Alksne. “We know this will be an uphill battle to work through all of the pending jury trials and we will only be able to accomplish this with the support of jurors willing to fulfill this public service. It is more critical than ever that you report for jury duty if summoned.”

The telephone standby process previously in place for the South County Courthouse will now also be used at the Central Courthouse. Summoned jurors will begin their service on a Friday and may be directed to call in each day for up to five days to determine if they need to report in-person the next day. A new online portal allows potential jurors to register their phone number and email address to receive an alert if they aren't needed to come into the courthouse.

Available seating in the jury lounge will be spaced out to maintain social distancing. Juror interviews will take place in settings that permit six feet of distance between other people.

Individuals selected to serve on a jury will be spaced at least six feet apart in the courtroom or seated in a jury box with clear protective panels installed between each juror and other courtroom participants. Deliberation will take place in another courtroom or a larger meeting room to allow for adequate distance between jurors.

Jury trials will resume in the Central Courthouse with one criminal trial scheduled to begin on October 13, and will eventually expand to the East, North, and South County Courthouses. The number of jury trials that can be held simultaneously will be limited by the size of the jury lounges, which will have decreased capacity in order to maintain social distance and the number of courtrooms that can provide adequate spacing or are equipped with protective barriers.

Jury service for people who previously deferred their service through October 8 is considered complete. Those who deferred their service for a date after October 8 will receive a new summons in the mail with their reporting instructions.

For more information on jury service at the San Diego Superior Court, please visit sdcourt.ca.gov/Jury.

Protective partitions surrounding each seat in the jury box:



Additional protective partitions in the courtroom:



Social distancing markers in the courtroom and jury assembly room:



#####