



## Selected Federal Court Restrictions in Light of the Coronavirus Pandemic

Below are restrictions in place at various U.S. federal courts in response to the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. The restrictions are current as of March 20, 2020.

Restrictions at other courts are available at the respective court's website, or by emailing Pearl Cohen.

### United States Supreme Court

Oral arguments scheduled for the March session have been postponed.

Out of concern for the health and safety of the public and Supreme Court employees, the Supreme Court Building will be closed to the public from 4:30 p.m. on March 12, 2020, until further notice. The Building will remain open for official business. Although case filing deadlines have not been extended generally under Rule 30.1, the Court has issued an order addressing the extension of many filing deadlines.

### U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit

#### NOTICE OF MODIFIED PUBLIC ASSISTANCE FROM THE CLERK'S OFFICE

Pursuant to the court's March 20, 2020 Administrative Order, the Clerk's Office will be reducing public assistance by phone as of Monday, March 23, 2020. Instead, members of the public are asked to contact the Clerk's Office by email using one of two new email addresses. For inquiries about pending cases, contact [casequestions@cafc.uscourts.gov](mailto:casequestions@cafc.uscourts.gov). For all other inquiries, please contact [publicinformation@cafc.uscourts.gov](mailto:publicinformation@cafc.uscourts.gov). By modifying this procedure, it will allow Clerk's Office staff to better manage the increased call volume with reduced on-site court staff. Please review the full notice for additional information.

#### NOTICE OF MODIFIED PROCEDURES FOR PRO SE PARTIES (MARCH 20, 2020)

Pursuant to the court's March 20, 2020 Administrative Order, the Clerk's Office has implemented modified filing and service procedures for parties appearing without counsel ("pro se"). The Notice of Modified Filing Procedures for Pro Se Parties provides for how pro se parties can now submit all documents by email or facsimile. The Notice of Modified Service Procedures for Pro Se Parties provides for how pro se parties can now consent to service by email. These procedures are available on a new section of the court's website: Special Temporary Procedures for Pro Se Parties.

#### ADDITIONAL MODIFICATIONS TO COURT OPERATIONS (MARCH 20, 2020)

As part of the Federal Circuit's efforts to continue court operations in response to ongoing public health emergencies, the court is implementing additional temporary modifications to court operations, including suspending the filing of certain paper copies, establishing modified filing and service procedures for

parties appearing pro se, authorizing changes to how the Clerk's Office provides assistance to the public, and providing additional guidance to counsel concerning the scheduling of future court hearings. For additional information, please review the administrative order issued today, March 20, 2020.

#### MAY 15, 2020 FEDERAL CIRCUIT JUDICIAL CONFERENCE CANCELLED

In light of national efforts to contain the spread of the coronavirus, and in the interest of minimizing any unnecessary risk to all involved, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit has decided to cancel the May 15, 2020 Judicial Conference and all related events, including the judges-only activities scheduled for Thursday, May 14, 2020. It is our hope to be able to reschedule this conference.

All registration fees that have already been processed will be refunded. If you have not received your refund by the end of this month, please contact our office at [judicialconference@cafc.uscourts.gov](mailto:judicialconference@cafc.uscourts.gov).

If you reserved a room at the Renaissance Washington, DC Downtown Hotel, we are requesting that you please contact the hotel directly (800) 228-9290 and cancel your reservation as soon as possible.

The Federal Circuit sincerely appreciates the interest expressed by so many in attending our conference and the contributions of everyone who worked hard to prepare an outstanding program this year. We apologize for the inconvenience, and we look forward to seeing you at a future Judicial Conference!

#### UPDATED PUBLIC ADVISORY CONCERNING THE FEDERAL CIRCUIT'S APRIL 2020 SITTING (MARCH 18, 2020)

Based on current public health guidance and efforts to continue to minimize community transmission of COVID-19 within Washington, D.C. and the National Capital Region, the court has decided that all cases scheduled for argument during the April 2020 sitting will now be conducted by telephonic conference and no in-person hearings will be held. Parties in all cases previously advised that in-person argument will receive an updated notice in their respective cases. The court will continue to release same-day audio for all arguments on its website (available at <http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/oral-argument-recordings>).

#### **U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York**

The United States District Court for the Southern District of New York continues to monitor the most current information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as all the Administrative Office of the U. S. Courts (AO), regarding the COVID-19 virus (coronavirus). The court is following recommended guidance in order to protect the public health. In accordance with this guidance, court operations have been adjusted in several areas and access to the courthouses restricted.

Details about current court operations and access may be found on the SDNY website at <https://www.nysd.uscourts.gov/covid-19-coronavirus>.

## **U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York**

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York has posted several Administrative Orders relating to the coronavirus. These can be found on the court's home page, at <https://www.nyed.uscourts.gov/>.

By way of example, Administrative Order No. 2020-08 sets forth restrictions to visitors to U.S. courthouses in the Eastern District of New York (Brooklyn, Queens, Long Island), including:

Security will only permit access to the following persons:

- Persons who have been ordered to appear by any judge of the Eastern District of New York;
- Debtors, creditors and their attorneys who have case-related business before the Bankruptcy Court;
- Government employees who work in the courthouse and are authorized to appear by their employer;
- Defendants who are required to report to Pretrial Service or the Probation Department, and only when directed by an officer;
- Contractors who are authorized to appear by the Office of the District Executive;
- United States Postal Service mail carriers, private mail carriers and private delivery services;
- Law enforcement personnel;
- Credentialed courthouse press;
- Family members of criminal defendants who are attending scheduled proceedings;
- Victims and their family members who are attending scheduled proceedings;
- Jurors in ongoing trials and grand jurors; and
- Persons with an interest in attending scheduled criminal trials.

## **U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia**

All non-case related outside events and gatherings are postponed until further notice. All naturalization proceedings scheduled through May 1, 2020, are postponed.

For more detailed information please see General Order 2020-04 In re: COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY THE OUTBREAK OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19): POSTPONEMENT OF OUTSIDE EVENTS AND TEMPORARY POSTPONEMENT OF NATURALIZATION PROCEEDINGS

March 16, 2020

Starting March 17th and continuing through March 31st, the Court has suspended all criminal and civil proceedings in each of our courthouses, with the exception of: (1) critical or emergency criminal and civil matters; and (2) any proceeding expressly excepted by order of the presiding judge.

Additionally, the Court has temporarily restricted certain visitors to our courthouses, to include those who have recently traveled to certain places with high levels of the virus, and those who have been, or

are in close contact with a person who has been, instructed to self-quarantine by a physician or local health official.

For more detailed information please see General Order 2020-03 In re: COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY THE OUTBREAK OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19): TEMPORARY CONTINUANCE OF COURT PROCEEDINGS AND RESTRICTIONS ON VISITORS TO COURTHOUSES

March 13, 2020

Starting Monday, March 16, 2020 and continuing through April 17, 2020, all civil and criminal (grand and petit) jury empanelments, jury trials, and grand jury proceedings before any district or magistrate judge in any courthouse in the Eastern District of Virginia are CONTINUED until further Order of the Court, with the exception of the sessions of Grand Juries 20-1 and 20-2, which will continue in the Alexandria courthouse as scheduled.

For detailed information please see General Order 2020-02 In re: COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY THE OUTBREAK OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19): JURY SELECTIONS, JURY TRIALS, AND GRAND JURY PROCEEDINGS

March 12, 2020

All misdemeanor, traffic, and petty offense dockets scheduled in all Divisions of this Court from March 16, 2020, through April 30, 2020, are hereby CONTINUED.

Please see General Order No.2020-01 In re: COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY THE OUTBREAK OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19): MISDEMEANOR, TRAFFIC, AND PETTY OFFENSE DOCKETS FOR ALL DIVISIONS OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

### **U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas**

The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas has issued the following General Order:

In response to Centers for Disease Control advisements to take precautions regarding the COVID-19 virus (coronavirus) outbreak by limiting exposure to the virus, while also being mindful that the court facilities within the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas (EDTX) are public buildings in which the public is welcomed, EDTX will enforce the following targeted visitor restrictions effectively immediately and through May 1, 2020.

IT IS ORDERED, effective immediately, that the following persons shall not enter any United States Courthouse or Bankruptcy Court within EDTX:

- Persons who have traveled to any of the following countries within the preceding 14 days: People's Republic of China, South Korea, Japan, Iran, or Western Europe.

- Persons who reside or have had close contact with someone who has traveled to one of the countries listed above within the preceding 14 days.
- Persons who a medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, hospital or public health agency has directed to self-quarantine, during such period of self-quarantining.
- Persons who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and who have not obtained express medical verification as now being non-communicative/noncontagious from a medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, hospital or public health agency.
- Persons who present for entry to any such court facility and exhibit fever, cough or shortness of breath.

IT IS ORDERED that all Court Security Officers acting within EDTX (CSOs), following substantive guidance from this Order and administrative guidance from the United States Marshal for EDTX, shall deny entry to anyone attempting to enter any such court facility in violation of these protocols. In the event of any uncertainty as to a person's ability to gain entrance to a court facility hereunder, the CSOs shall immediately contact the U. S. Marshal for EDTX or his designated Deputy Marshal for a determination, which shall control. If you are scheduled or required to appear in district court, magistrate court or bankruptcy court during the period of this order and you are unable to gain entry because of these targeted visitor restrictions, you should proceed as follows:

- If you are represented by an attorney, please contact your attorney.
- If you are an attorney scheduled to appear in court before a judge, please contact the respective Chambers directly by telephone. Telephone contact information for the District Court is available at: <http://www.txed.uscourts.gov/>. Telephone contact information for the Bankruptcy Court is available at: <https://www.txeb.uscourts.gov/>.
- If you are scheduled to meet with a probation or pretrial services officer, please contact the Probation and Pretrial Services Office directly for guidance and instructions.
- For any other District Court matters, please contact the EDTX Clerk of Court at (903) 590.1111 in Tyler, Texas or the Deputy Clerk in Charge within the applicable division.
- For any other Bankruptcy Court matters, please contact the Clerk of Court at (903) 590.3200.

IT IS ORDERED that, unless extended by subsequent order, these restrictions shall remain in place until May 1, 2020, when they shall automatically expire.

### **U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California**

The Northern District of California has issued/updated two Notices related to coronavirus:

Notice Regarding Press and Public Access to Court Hearings (March 18, 2020)

Effective immediately, civil hearings held by teleconference will be conducted on a conference call line that will be available to members of the press and public free of charge, to the extent practicable. Dial-in information will be available on each case's docket on PACER. See Obtaining Information About Cases.

Members of the press and the public are expected to “mute” their end of the line and to not disrupt proceedings in any way.

Criminal proceedings before magistrate judges will be held in person only, at the San Francisco Courthouse. See General Order 72. Such hearings will not be accessible remotely (via video, teleconference, or otherwise). Members of the press and public may attend such hearings in person, and such attendance will be considered “official court business” within the meaning of General Order 73. However, courtroom spectators are reminded that a shelter-in-place has been ordered in San Francisco County, and that there are health and safety risks associated with attending an in-person court hearing.

All rules and prohibitions on the recording of proceedings remain in effect. See Court Rules Affecting the Media and General Order 58 at Paragraph III.

Any questions may be directed to [media@cand.uscourts.gov](mailto:media@cand.uscourts.gov)

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Important Notice Regarding COVID-19 and General Orders 72 and 73 (Updated March 17, 2020)

Chief District Judge Phyllis J. Hamilton has signed General Order No. 72, IN RE: Coronavirus Disease Public Health Emergency (effective March 16, 2020), and General Order No. 73, Temporary Restrictions on Courthouse Access due to Coronavirus Disease Public Health Emergency (effective March 17, 2020). General Orders can be read and downloaded [here](#).

Please note the following:

The intake desks at the San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose Divisions remain open during normal hours (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday) until further notice. Pro Se litigants may file documents in person, but are strongly encouraged to file by mail. Please see the Northern District of California’s Pro Se Handbook, Page 12, “Filing By Mail.”

No criminal or civil jury trials will be commenced before May 1, 2020. Any trial dates currently scheduled are vacated.

All civil matters will be decided on the papers, or if the assigned judge believes a hearing is necessary, the hearing will be by telephone or videoconference. For ADR matters, please see the ADR webpage

Initial appearances and other criminal proceedings before magistrate judges will continue but will be consolidated, and such proceedings for all divisions will be conducted in San Francisco (starting on Wednesday, March 18, 2020). Such proceedings will be conducted by telephone or by videoconference to the extent possible. All grand jury proceedings in this district are suspended until May 1, 2020.

The requirement under Civil Local Rule 5-1 that a courtesy copy of any filing be provided to the assigned judge’s chambers is suspended pending further notice.

All courthouses within the Northern District of California shall remain closed to the public until May 1, 2020. This period may be extended by further order. Only persons with official court business (including in-person filing of court documents) may enter any federal courthouse within the district.

General Orders 72 and 73 apply only to courthouse facilities and do not apply to executive branch agencies or their facilities at the identified locations.

Questions may be directed to the Media Liaison at [media@cand.uscourts.gov](mailto:media@cand.uscourts.gov) or (415) 522-4051.

#### **U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois**

The Northern District of Illinois has posted several coronavirus-related announcements on its homepage, <https://www.ilnd.uscourts.gov/>. You are directed to the court's website for more details.

#### **U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey**

The District of New Jersey has posted four coronavirus-related Notices on its website, <https://www.njd.uscourts.gov/>, including visitor restrictions and court operations under exigent circumstances.

#### **U.S. District Court for the District of Delaware**

The District of Delaware has posted several coronavirus-related Notices and Standing Orders on its webpage, <https://www.ded.uscourts.gov/news/current>, including the attached Standing Order - Courthouse Access During the COVID-19 Outbreak

#### **U.S. District Court for the Central District of California**

The Central District of California includes the following announcement on its homepage, <http://www.cacd.uscourts.gov/>:

The United States District Court for the Central District of California continues to closely monitor the national response to the respiratory illness caused by Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). We would like to assure the public that we are following all recommended guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to ensure the safety and health of our customers and staff.

Please see General Orders regarding access to court facilities, jury trials and other proceedings, General Order 20-02 and General Order 02-03.

Refer to the COVID-19 Notice for important information on courthouse access, court hearings, filing information and mandatory chambers copies.

Effective immediately and until further notice, the Court grants to mediators the authority to excuse a party, a party's representative, or an attorney from in-person attendance at a mediation conducted under General Order No. 11-10. At the discretion of the assigned mediator, mediations held through the Court's ADR Program may be conducted by video or telephone conference.

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The COVID-19 Notice reads:

The United States District Court for the Central District of California has activated its Continuity of Operations Plan (“COOP”), effective March 23, 2020 through and including May 1, 2020 necessary to ensure the continuous performance of essential functions and operations of the Court in light of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Court is taking the following actions to limit social interactions in its courthouses:

#### Access to the Courthouses

All of the Courthouses of the Central District of California will be closed to the public except for hearings on criminal duty matters, as indicated below.

All federal Pro Se Clinics in the district are closed.

#### Court Hearings

In civil cases, no hearings will go forward except for emergency time-sensitive matters, such as requests for temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions, as ordered by the assigned judicial officer. Any hearings on emergency civil matters will proceed telephonically only.

In criminal cases, criminal duty matters will go forward in the Edward R. Roybal Federal Building and United States Courthouse in Los Angeles only. Telephonic hearings on other criminal matters may proceed as directed by the assigned judicial officer.

#### Filing Information

The intake sections in each courthouse will be closed to the public. To post a bond or submit an emergency, time-sensitive filing such as a temporary restraining order, call the following telephone numbers:

Los Angeles – (213) 894-8288

Riverside – (951) 328-4450

Santa Ana – (714) 338-3958 or (714) 338-4760

All criminal duty matters handled by a district judge shall be filed in the appropriate division.

All magistrate judge criminal bench duty matters shall be filed in the Edward R. Roybal Federal Building and United States Courthouse in Los Angeles.

All criminal document duty matters handled by a magistrate judge shall be filed electronically.

For all other intake and records questions, call the following telephone numbers:

Los Angeles Civil Intake – (213) 894-3535

Los Angeles Criminal Intake – (213) 894-8288



Riverside Civil and Criminal Intake – (951) 328-4450

Santa Ana Civil Intake – (714) 338-2886

Santa Ana Criminal Intake – (714) 338-4786

Archival records requests are suspended because the Federal Records Center is closed.

The court's CM/ECF system is available 24/7 for electronic filing of documents.

Unrepresented litigants who cannot electronically file their documents and attorneys who are required to manually file documents pursuant to the local rules must mail their filings to the Clerk of Court at 255 E. Temple Street, Suite TS-134, Los Angeles, CA 90012-3332.

Non-paper physical exhibits or other exhibits exempted from electronically filing shall be sent via U.S. Mail or other commercial delivery to the Clerk of Court at the above address.

Mandatory Chambers Copies

Until further notice, all district judges and magistrate judges do not require mandatory chambers copies during the pandemic.

Any judge can require a chambers copy in a particular case if desired. The chambers copy shall be mailed to the judge via Fed Ex. Chambers copy cannot be hand-delivered to the courthouse.

Updates and other adjustments will be provided as more information becomes available.

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