



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

JUVENILE COURT
222 PAUL SCANNELL DRIVE
SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA 94402

SUSAN IRENE ETEZADI
PRESIDING JUVENILE COURT JUDGE

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The Court's Efforts to Facilitate "Social Distancing" During Period of Concern over COVID-19 Virus

By order of our Presiding Judge, Judge Jonathan E. Karesh, the Juvenile Court in San Mateo County will only be operating with one judge, rather than two, for the foreseeable future, 30 -60 days. Judge Etezadi and Judge Jakubowski will rotate during this period of time. All cases currently in trial will be suspended and continued. It is the Court's intention to continue all cases for 60 days with understandable exceptions that relate to dependency and juvenile justice time not waived cases. These cases shall be handled on a case by case basis.

Presiding Judge Jonathan E. Karesh has requested that the Chief Justice extend time lines in dependency and juvenile justice cases because of this pandemic emergency and the Chief Justice has granted that request. As it relates to Juvenile Dependency and Juvenile Justice matters, the order from the Chief Justice from March 16, 2020, reads in part as follows:

"Because of the COVID-19 epidemic, leading to health and safety concerns resulting in the temporary cessation of jury services and substantial operational impediments, and the proclamation of a state of emergency by federal, state, and local officials, it has been determined that the conditions described in section 68115 of the Government Code are met with regard to the Superior Court of San Mateo County. Upon the request of Presiding Judge Jonathan Karesh, it is ordered that the Superior Court of San Mateo County is authorized to do the following:

Declare that March 16, 2020, through March 31, 2020, be deemed holidays for purposes of computing time under Penal Code section 825 and Welfare and Institutions Code sections 313, 315, 334, 631, 632, 637, and 657 (Gov. Code, § 68115(a)(5));

Extend the time period provided in section 313 of the Welfare and Institutions Code within which a minor taken into custody pending dependency proceedings must be released from custody to not more than 5 days, applicable only to minors for whom the statutory deadline otherwise would expire from March 16, 2020, through April 14, 2020, inclusive (Gov. Code, § 68115(a)(11));

Extend the time period provided in section 315 of the Welfare and Institutions Code within which a minor taken into custody pending dependency proceedings must be given a detention hearing to not more than 5 days, applicable only to minors for whom the statutory deadline otherwise would expire from March 16, 2020, through April 14, 2020, inclusive (Gov. Code, § 68115(a)(11));

Extend the time periods provided in sections 632 and 637 of the Welfare and Institutions Code within which a minor taken into custody pending wardship proceedings and charged with a felony offense must be given a detention hearing or rehearing to not more than 5 days, applicable only to minors for whom the statutory deadline otherwise would expire from March 16, 2020, through April 14, 2020, inclusive (Gov. Code, § 68115(a)(11));

Extend the time period provided in section 334 of the Welfare and Institutions Code within which a hearing on a juvenile dependency petition must be held by not more than 15 days, applicable only to minors for whom the statutory deadline otherwise would expire from March 16, 2020, through April 14, 2020, inclusive (Gov. Code, § 68115(a)(12)); and

Extend the time period provided in section 657 of the Welfare and Institutions Code within which a hearing on a wardship petition for a minor charged with a felony offense must be held by not more than 15 days, applicable only to minors for whom the statutory deadline otherwise would expire from March 16, 2020, through April 14, 2020, inclusive (Gov. Code, § 68115(a)(12)). “

Therefore, the period from March 16, 2020 to March 31, 2020, inclusive, has been deemed a holiday/holidays for purposes of computing time under Welfare and Institutions Code sections 313, 315, 334, 631, 632, 637 and 657 by the California Supreme Court, Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye.

Further, the Chief Justice has extended the time period provided in Welfare and Institutions Code sections 313, 315, 334, 632, 657 and 637 only to minors for whom the deadline otherwise would expire from March 16, 2020 through April 14, 2020.

The Court will continue or reset all dependency and juvenile justice cases unless the Court is able to resolve time not waived matters in an expeditious fashion, without objection and in the best interests of the minor.

The following guidelines are provided to assist counsel and their clients in making decisions about whether to appear for, and the alternative means by which to participate in, court hearings. The Court encourages careful reflection on how to accommodate every party's and every family's individual circumstances, all for the purpose of facilitating “social distancing.”

The Court waives the two-day and written motion requirements. The appearances of the parties may be waived for all continuance requests if counsel agrees to accept notice on behalf of the client.

1. **Dealing with Clients & Family Members Who Present with Symptoms.** Please encourage anyone who presents with (or reports having) flu-like symptoms* not to come to court and, if already in the courthouse (e.g., for an initial hearing), not to enter the courtroom. We will find alternative ways to accommodate their participation.
2. **Continuances.** If a parent or child wants to be present in-person for a hearing but has symptoms, the Court anticipates being liberal in granting continuances.
3. **Telephonic Appearances - Parties.** Each courtroom has a conference call line which can accommodate multiple telephone lines. If parties want to participate in a hearing by telephone, we can accommodate them. The Court encourages use of this technology. The phone number for this line is 1-888-808-6929, access code 1135322#. When prompted, please press # again. However, before calling in on the Court's 1-888 number, please provide the clerk with your contact information, so that the clerk can contact you just before your matter is called. This is so that we can maintain confidentiality of our dependency and juvenile justice proceedings. Both courtrooms use the same 1-800 number and access code. However, the phone number for each department is different. Please call the clerk for Department 18, Judge Etezadi at 650-261-5118. Please call the clerk for Department 7, Judge Jakubowski at 650-261-5107. Provide the clerk with your telephone number, so that the clerk can call you just before your matter is

called. Once the clerk contacts you, please call your client and give them the 1-888 number, so that they can call the court at that same time. Please do not give the Court's 1-888 number to your client until your case is ready to be called. The reason for this, is that we don't want people waiting on the line during confidential proceedings.

4. **Telephone Appearances – Attorneys.** If an attorney wants to appear by telephone, the Court anticipates liberally accommodating such requests. (Please be proactive in identifying such opportunities.) For example, on some calendars, an attorney may have only one or two matters, and the hearings may be non-substantive in nature. Similarly, an attorney may know in advance his/her client plans not to attend, such that the attorney may feel comfortable appearing for even more substantive hearings by telephone. The Court will welcome requests to appear by telephone.
5. **Presence of Family Members.** Historically, the Court has welcomed having extended family members present (subject, of course, to the objection of the parties). During this extraordinary time, the Court encourages having extended family members participate by telephone rather than coming to court. If family members wish to listen in by telephone, the Court will allow this.
6. **Initial Hearings.** Initial hearings present unique challenges. Parents typically come to court without having had any prior contact with their appointed counsel. Extended family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) are also often present. Please assure parents we have their safety and the safety of others in mind. Please consider asking whether they have any flu-like symptoms and/or whether they have health-related concerns about entering the courtroom. If so, please assure them that the Court can facilitate their participation by telephone. (For example, if a parent presents with flu-like conditions, please consider asking to trail the matter, and then meeting with the client in advance of the trailed hearing by telephone or otherwise.) Please also consider asking parents whether they have family members present and, if so, whether any of them have flu-like symptoms.
7. **Courtroom Resources.** We have tried to provide ample hand-sanitizing lotions. If you notice our supply diminishing, please alert the clerk and we will try to replenish our resources. The Court's operations team has informed us it has hand-sanitizer on back-order.
8. **Flexibility & Suggestions.** The Court anticipates being flexible and working to accommodate each situation that presents itself. If you see opportunities to facilitate "social distancing," please share your suggestions.

As noted by our Presiding Judge, with this COVID-19 Pandemic, the San Mateo Superior Court, like every other jurisdiction in California, is operating in uncharted waters. None of us have experienced an emergency of this magnitude and I ask for your patience, understanding and flexibility. Most importantly, please remain healthy during this pandemic.

March 26, 2020



Susan Irene Etezadi
Presiding Juvenile Court Judge