




CHAMBERS OF  
**VICTOR H. GREENBERG**  
SUPERVISING JUDGE  
DEPENDENCY COURT

JUVENILE DIVISION  
**The Superior Court**  
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April 9, 2020

**TO:** All Juvenile Court Judicial Officers  
**FROM:** Victor H. Greenberg, Presiding Judge   
Los Angeles County Juvenile Courts  
**SUBJECT: EXTENSION OF OPERATIONAL LIMITATIONS**

Presiding Judge Kevin Brazile has extended present operational limitations until a new reopening date of June 22, 2020. This decision was made to best protect the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, justice partners, staff and the bench.

As a result, our courts will continue to perform only Essential Functions until the modification or expiration of these limitations. Hearings classified as Non-Essential which are presently calendared prior to reopening must be continued beyond that date. This includes those hearings set to commence after April 16 which were previously continued pursuant to the initial General Order.

The Presiding Judge and the COVID-19 Workgroup believe June 22 is a reasonable date to anticipate that courtrooms will re-open and calendars can begin to be repopulated. However, given the likelihood that strict social distancing guidelines will continue to be necessary, as well as the backlogs created during our period of limited operations, it is not feasible to expect an immediate return to normal operations. In addition, while the juvenile courts were fortunate to move quickly to remote hearing capability, the capacity of the court to expand development, support, and implementation of such services is limited by available resources.

Court leadership, in consultation with our administrators, have worked to establish priorities and developed plans to sequentially re-establish court functions throughout the entire court. We who work in the juvenile courts know that both delinquency and dependency litigants have needs, all of which are important and time sensitive. Youth in detention pending adjudication on serious and violent offenses, parents and guardians entitled to their day in court and the provision of service plans, delinquent minors seeking early release or modification of court orders, abused and neglected

children awaiting permanency, and our desire to receive frequent information to ensure the well being of the youth and children for whom we are responsible are but a few of the competing interests which must be considered in developing plans for the juvenile courts. In addition, our needs must be assessed relative to priorities from other disciplines, including those with statutory deadlines which are not subject to statewide suspension orders and if unmet, result in consequential remedies.

Beyond Essential Hearings, we have endeavored to prioritize hearings in which the court makes factual determinations regarding allegations of illegal activity, abuse and neglect, in order to provide for due process and the safety of youth, children and our communities. We have further focused upon those hearings where release from detention, return home, or the establishment of a permanent plan is under consideration. In making these decisions, we have necessarily been forced to deem situations in which youth and children are stable and not at risk as less urgent, and to rely to a greater degree upon our justice partners to provide proper care, supervision, oversight, and identification of emergent issues.

I want to thank all of you for your hard work and support for the court during this difficult time. Although our primary focus remains on COVID-19 transmission and the implementation of public health practices, I know that this is a frustrating situation as we all do our best to provide justice to youth, children, and families while maintaining operations to the greatest degree possible. Unfortunately, circumstances do not permit the court to address all significant concerns in the timely manner they would otherwise deserve, and some litigants will be forced to endure continued delays. I would ask everyone to recognize the severity of our situation and understand that we must work together to successfully emerge from the pandemic. We must do so with compassion for those we serve, a realization that our service may remain imperfect for a time, and a commitment to the future of our court.

**EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**, Juvenile Judicial Officers are to communicate with their Judicial Assistants or the Clerical Office and continue all Non-Essential matters calendared before June 22 in accordance with the Prioritization Schedule below. If you have a particular Non-Essential hearing that you believe must be heard outside the Prioritization Schedule, you must receive approval from Judge Greenberg, Judge Lawson, Judge Arakaki, or Judge Bianco.

## **DEPENDENCY**

### **A. HEARING TYPE PRIORITIZATION**

- a. Essential Function Hearings will continue to be heard on an ongoing basis
  - i. Detentions
  - ii. TROs

- iii. Removal orders
- iv. Warrants
- v. Emergency Health and Safety
- vi. 388(e)

To be heard within # of calendar days after reopening

b.	Adjudication (out-of-home placement)	1-30
c.	Disposition (out-of-home placement)	1-30
d.	366.25	31-45
e.	366.22	31-45
f.	366.21(f)	31-45
g.	366.21(e)	31-45
h.	Adjudication (in-home placement)	45-75
i.	Disposition (in-home placement)	45-75
j.	366.26	75-90
k.	388	75-90
l.	366.3	75-90
m.	364	75-90
n.	Adoption hearings	75-90
o.	Progress reports	75-90
p.	Non-emergent walk-on requests	75-90

- B. Non-statutory hearings, including progress reports, should not be set unless absolutely necessary and should be non-appearance whenever possible.
- C. All out-of-home adjudications previously calendared within 30 days of reopening to remain as scheduled. Any out-of-home adjudications previously set beyond 30 days to be advanced to within 30 days and re-noticed
  - i. No continuances without good cause
  - ii. Do not set more than 3 adjudications per day to ensure social distancing

## DELINQUENCY

### A. HEARING TYPE PRIORITIZATION

- a. Essential Function Hearings will continue to be heard on an ongoing basis
  - i. Arraignments
  - ii. Adjudication and Disposition (detained minors)
  - iii. 777 hearings (detained minors)
  - iv. Transfer Hearings
  - v. Warrants
  - vi. Emergency Health and Safety

To be heard within # calendar days after reopening

- b. Adjudication and Disposition (non-detained minors) 1-45
- c. 777 hearings (non-detained minors) 1-45
- d. Competency Hearings 1-45
- e. 778 Hearings 1-60
- h. Progress Reports 60-90
- i. Termination of Jurisdiction 60-90

B. Non-statutory hearings, including progress reports, should not be set unless absolutely necessary and should be non-appearance whenever possible.

C. Remaining courtrooms to prioritize hearings according to priority list

- i. All out-of-home adjudications previously calendared within 30 days of reopening to remain as scheduled. Any out-of-home adjudications previously set beyond 30 days to be advanced to within 45 days and re-noticed
- ii. No continuances unless good cause
- iii. Do not set more than 4 adjudications, 777, and competency hearing per day in total to ensure social distancing

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