

Los Angeles Superior Court
Limited Jurisdiction
Central District

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What types of cases does the Limited Jurisdiction Civil hub (currently Departments 25 and 26 in the Spring Street Courthouse) handle?

The Limited Jurisdiction Civil hub handles all non-collection limited civil cases filed in Los Angeles County. Limited civil cases are those where the amount in dispute does not exceed \$25,000. Some of the rules governing limited civil cases can be found in sections 85 through 100 of the California Code of Civil Procedure.

The courthouses in Norwalk and Chatsworth handle all the limited jurisdiction collections cases filed in Los Angeles County. The definition of a collections case can be found in rule 3.740 of the California Rules of Court.

2. Does the Limited Jurisdiction Civil hub handle applications for and other proceedings relating to writs of attachment or possession?

No. For cases filed in the Central District, applications for, and any other proceedings in connection with, writs of attachment or possession are heard in Departments 82, 85, and 86 in the Stanley Mosk Courthouse pursuant to Los Angeles County Court Rules, rule 2.7(b)(1)(G).

3. Do I have to serve the Defendant?

Yes. The summons and complaint must be served on the defendant(s) within three (3) years after the complaint is filed. Failure to comply will result in dismissal of the action, without prejudice, as to all unserved parties who have not been dismissed as of that date.

4. How do I file a cross-complaint?

A cross-complaint may be filed by any party before or at the same time as his/her answer is filed. Any other cross-complaint maybe filed before the court has set a trial date. A party must obtain leave of court to file a cross-complaint once a trial date has been set. (Code Civ. Proc., §428.50).

5. Will there be an order to show cause hearing, case management conference, mandatory settlement conference, or final status conference scheduled before trial?

No. In most cases, there will be no future court hearings scheduled before a trial date is set, unless a party files a noticed motion or appears for a hearing on an ex parte application.

Further, Delay Reduction Rules do not apply to uninsured motorist claims. However, the plaintiff must file a Notice of Designation with the court, identifying the case as an uninsured motorist claim under the Insurance Code, section 11580.2.

6. Are certain dates calendared when a Limited Civil complaint is filed?

Yes. When a Limited Civil complaint is filed, the court will schedule a trial date 18 months from the date of the filing of the complaint and an OSC re Dismissal date three years from the filing of the complaint. If no proof of service of the summons and complaint has been filed by that date, the case will be dismissed.

7. What if the defendant does not answer?

If a responsive pleading is not served within the time to respond and no extension of time has been granted, the plaintiff shall file a Request for Entry of Default within ten days after the time to respond has elapsed. The plaintiff shall request a default judgment on the defaulting defendants within 45 days after entry of default. Requests for entry of default judgments will only be considered based upon written submissions.

8. May the parties stipulate to continue their trial date?

Yes, in advance of the scheduled trial date, the parties may stipulate to a continuance to a specific trial date (waiving notice). The parties are not required to appear in Court either by motion or ex parte. A proposed order must be submitted with the stipulation for signature by the judge. If the stipulation is filed less than seven court days before the scheduled trial date, all parties must appear on the date of the hearing if the stipulation is not granted prior to the date of the hearing. The standards for trial continuances can be found in California Rules of Court, rule 3.1203.

9. What will happen on the trial date?

The parties are expected to be ready to be sent to a trial department when they appear the morning of trial. Trials are not conducted in the Limited Civil hub. When the parties announce ready at the trial call, and they are in compliance with the operative Standing Order governing trial preparation, they will be transferred to Department 1 where they will receive a trial court assignment.

Department 1 will then assign the case to an open trial court for a jury or non-jury trial in one of the trial courts located around the county (with the exception of Antelope Valley). If a trial court is available, trial will begin on the same day, unless the assigned trial judge decides otherwise.

10. What do the parties need to do to answer ready for trial?

Parties and counsel must have a binder with a table of contents containing jointly signed conformed copies (if available) of each of the following behind a separate tab:

- 1) Printed copies of the current operative pleadings including operative complaint, answer to complaint, cross-complaint, and answer to cross-complaint, if applicable;
- 2) Any motions in limine served and filed pursuant to Los Angeles County Court Rules, rule 3.57 (required for a jury trial only);
- 3) Joint Statement of the Case (required for a jury trial only);
- 4) Joint Witness List, disclosing a brief offer of proof as to each witness' testimony, the anticipated length of that testimony and whether interpreters will be needed;
- 5) Joint Exhibit List;
- 6) Printed and edited Joint Proposed Jury Instructions (required for a jury trial only); and
- 7) Printed Joint Proposed Verdict form (required for a jury trial only). Parties and counsel must also prepare a separate Joint Exhibit binder with each exhibit appropriately numbered, if the materials are voluminous. Parties must meet and confer to prepare these materials.

11. What time are ex parte applications heard?

All ex parte applications are heard at 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

With the exception of self-represented litigants and any other litigants who have applied for and received an exemption from mandatory electronic filing, all parties must electronically file documents with the Los Angeles County Superior Court. *See* operative General Order Mandatory Filing for Civil.

As to represented litigants, all ex parte applications and documents in support thereof must be electronically filed *no later than* 10:00 a.m. the court day **before** the ex parte hearing. Any written opposition to an ex parte application must be electronically filed by 8:30 a.m., the day of the ex parte hearing. Counsel must provide a printed courtesy copy of any written opposition the day of the ex parte hearing.

Pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 2.253(b)(2), self-represented litigants are exempt from mandatory electronic filing requirements and papers must be filed at the filing window on the first floor, Room 102. Ex parte application fees must be filed *no later than* 11:00 a.m. in Room 102 on the day of the hearing, and must comply with CRC 3.1200 *et seq.* The fees may not be posted in advance.

12. How do I reserve a hearing date?

Regularly noticed pre-trial motions will be heard in Department 25 or 26 of the Spring Street Courthouse, on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays and will require parties to reserve a hearing date in advance. All motions must be reserved, rescheduled, and cancelled through the Court Reservation System online at <https://portal-lasc.journaltech.com/public-portal/>.

13. When are Claim of Exemptions and Judgment Debtor Examinations heard?

Claims of Exemptions and Judgment Debtor Examinations are heard Monday through Thursday.

14. Does the Court post tentative rulings?

Yes, tentative rulings for Departments 25 and 26 are posted on the Court's website the afternoon prior to the hearing and are available in the courtroom the day of the hearing.

15. How do I submit on the Court's tentative ruling?

If you would like to submit on the court's tentative ruling for Department 25 or Department 26, you may do so by emailing Dept 25 or Dept 26 until the morning of the motion hearing. The e-mail address for Dept 25 is SSCdept25@lacourt.org. The e-mail address for Dept 26 is SSCdept26@lacourt.org. The subject line on your e-mail should contain the case name, case number and hearing date and that you submit. The message should indicate your name, contact information, and the party you represent. Please note, the above e-mail address is only to inform the court of your submission on the tentative ruling. All other inquiries will not receive a response.

Due to overcrowding concerns of COVID-19, all parties shall make every effort to schedule a remote appearance via LACourtConnect (<https://www.lacourt.org/lacc/>) for their next hearing. The parties shall register with LACourtConnect at least 2 hours prior to their scheduled hearing time.

16. How can I get in contact with Department 25 or Department 26 if I have any further questions?

The direct number to Department 25 is (213) 310-7025. The direct number to Department 26 is (213) 310-7026. Telephone hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (except 12:00 to 1:30 p.m).

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