

Los Angeles Superior Court
Limited Jurisdiction
Department 77

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What types of cases are handled by Department 77?

Answer: Department 77 handles all non-collection limited civil case 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 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.

Please note that applications for, and any other proceedings in connection with, writs of attachment or possession are heard in Departments 82, 85, and 86 pursuant to Los Angeles County Court Rules, Rule 2.7(b)(1)(G).

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

Answer: 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 ex parte.

3. What types of court appearances are being set in Department 77?

Answer: In a typical case, the *only* appearance date that the Court will initially set is the trial date, whether a jury trial or a bench trial. The parties may properly notice a motion and/or ex parte application hearing.

4. What is the dismissal date set by Department 77?

Answer: In all limited non-collections cases, the Court sets a dismissal date three years from the filing of the Complaint. This is a non-appearance date that is meant to prompt a dismissal if no proof of service of the Summons and Complaint has been filed.

5. May the parties continue their trial date?

Answer: Yes, in advance of the scheduled trial date, the parties may stipulate to a continuance to a specific trial date (waiving notice) and submit the stipulation, along with the required filing fee. The parties are not required to appear in Court either by motion or ex parte. However, a proposed order must be submitted with the stipulation for signature by the

judge. If the stipulation is filed less than five court days before the scheduled trial date, a courtesy copy of the stipulation must be filed in Department 77.

6. What will happen on the trial date?

Answer: The parties are expected to be ready to be sent to a trial department when they appear in Department 77 the morning of trial. Trials are not conducted in Department 77. When the parties announce ready at trial call, they will be transferred to Department 1. Department 1 will assign the case to an open trial court for a jury or non-jury trial. Trial will begin on the same day, unless the assigned trial judge decides otherwise.

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

Answer: Parties and Counsel must have a binder with a table of contents containing conformed copies of the following behind a separate tab: **1)** Printed copies of the Current Operative Pleadings including operative complaint, answer to complaint, cross-complaint, if any, and answer to cross-complaint; **2)** Any Motions in Limine served and filed per Los Angeles County Court Rules, Rule 3.57; **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 used; **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.

8. What time are Ex Parte Applications heard?

Answer: All ex parte applications are heard in Department 77 at 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Ex parte application fees must be paid *no later than* 1:00 p.m. in Room 102 on the day of the hearing. The fees may not be posted in advance.

9. How does one schedule a motion and reserve a hearing date?

Answer: All motions are reserved, rescheduled, and cancelled through the Court Reservation System (CRS) online at <https://www.lacourt.org/mrs/ui/index.aspx>. Reservations are not required for Ex parte applications.

10. Are there any Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) services available in Department 77?

Answer: Yes, a limited number of voluntary mediators may be available to the parties on the day of trial at no cost. Please inform court staff or the judicial officer when your case is called if you are interested in participating in mediation.

11. What does one do if one agrees with the court’s tentative ruling?

Answer: If you desire to submit on the tentative ruling, you may do so by e-mailing Dept. 77 before 4 p.m. the day prior to the motion hearing. The e-mail address is SMCDept77@lacourt.org. The subject line on your e-mail should contain the case name and number, and that you submit. For example, “Smith v. Jones 14K01234, submit”. The message should indicate your name, contact information, and the party you represent. If all parties submit via email, the moving party is required to give notice.

12. May one appear for a hearing by phone or video conferencing?

Answer: Unless a personal appearance has been ordered by the Court, telephonic appearances are allowed for all hearing types — except trials. Video conferencing is not available.

If you wish to appear via telephone, please call CourtCall at (888) 882-6878 or visit them online at <https://courtcall.com/> to sign up. You must sign up by 3:15 p.m. the day prior to your hearing. As CourtCall is an independent entity, separate fees apply and a fee waiver from the Court may not be accepted.