

Superior Court of Los Angeles County – Media Relations

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NEWS RELEASE



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STATE, COUNTY OFFICIALS JOIN PRESIDING JUDGE KEVIN C. BRAZILE TO REOPEN HOLLYWOOD COURTHOUSE

Closed in 2013, Courthouse Reopens to Exclusively Handle Mental Health Cases

Presiding Judge Kevin C. Brazile today hosted State and County officials to celebrate the reopening of the Hollywood Courthouse, which resumed operations on October 21 as the only courthouse in California dedicated exclusively to handle Mental Health cases.

“The caseload now handled at the Hollywood Courthouse is crucial to countywide efforts to address and treat mental illness,” Presiding Judge Brazile said. “In light of the County’s ongoing mental health crisis, we are proud to be the only Superior Court in California with a dedicated courthouse to handle Mental Health cases. I want to extend my gratitude to the City, County and State officials who collaborated with us to bring the Hollywood Courthouse back online with facility and safety improvements to serve this critical purpose.”

Supervisor Sheila Kuehl added, “It is vitally important to have this dedicated mental health court back in operation as the County moves forward with programs designed to help people with mental illness get the treatment they need instead of going to jail.”

Assembly member Richard Bloom said, “I am delighted to see a courthouse solely dedicated to helping those with Mental Health issues being opened. Mental health courts are a crucial component to reducing recidivism rates, reducing incarceration cost, helping improve the lives of those with mental health issues in the justice system, and is a vital component in helping in the fight to end homelessness. I look forward to more courtrooms reopening in the future and access to justice being increased across the state.”

The Hollywood Courthouse handles cases involving individuals who are under the care of others: individuals in LPS conservatorships and others who are under the care of family members, county agencies, professional conservators, or medical facilities; individuals who often appear by video from state prison regarding their continued incarceration as a sexually violent predator; individuals under involuntary commitment in psychiatric hospitals; individuals petitioning to restore their rights to possess firearms; and individuals whose fitness to stand trial is being contested.

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HOLLYWOOD COURTHOUSE REOPENING

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Numerous hearings and trials are conducted by video from state hospitals, treatment facilities throughout the state, and county jail to reduce transportation of mentally ill individuals. In fiscal year 2017-18, 11,853 Mental Health cases were filed in Los Angeles County.

Built in 1986, the Hollywood Courthouse closed in 2013 due to state budget cuts. At the time, the facility handled Misdemeanor cases. Mental Health cases were handled at the Mental Health Courthouse on San Fernando Road since the 1970s. But when the roof collapsed in 2016, Mental Health cases were moved to the Metropolitan Courthouse.

Last month, three of the four Mental Health courtrooms which were located previously in the Metropolitan Courthouse, south of the downtown Civic Center area, relocated to the Hollywood Courthouse, along with clerical and support staff. One courtroom, Department 95A, remains at the Metropolitan Courthouse to hear LPS Conservatorship and Assisted Outpatient Treatment matters.

In addition to the three courtrooms, the Hollywood Courthouse includes a clerk's office and offices for the following Los Angeles County departments: District Attorney, Department of Mental Health, Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender and Sheriff.

The move to the Hollywood Courthouse enabled the Court to improve interview space for Mental Health evaluations; conduct video conference placement hearings and attorney interviews; and provide increased public service counter space. Other renovations include ADA improvements; increased holding facilities; roof, plumbing, HVAC and electrical system repairs; new security systems and safety upgrades; a new outdoor vehicle sally port; and new paint and flooring.

More information about Mental Health cases can be found on the Court's website at <http://www.lacourt.org/division/mentalhealth/mentalhealth.aspx>.

The Superior Court of Los Angeles County has 550 judicial officers and more than 4,600 permanent employees serving a diverse population of more than 10 million people. The largest trial court in the nation, the Court has 38 courthouses in 12 judicial districts located throughout the county's 4,752 square miles.

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