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Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles

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HOMELESS COURT MOVING OUTSIDE IN REDONDO BEACH TO REACH MOST VULNERABLE DURING THE PANDEMIC

The Superior Court of Los Angeles County's Homeless Court that serves the City of Redondo Beach, today convened outside – the first time this Homeless Court was held in a location other than a courthouse.

For the next year, cases will be heard monthly at 200 N. Pacific Coast Highway, Redondo Beach, a gated parking lot, across the street from a church that serves a free lunch to the homeless community.

This move will allow people experiencing homelessness to appear in person to resolve Misdemeanor charges and Non-Traffic Infractions. At the same time, providers will offer on-site services for mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment and housing placement, which allows for more convenient and immediate access to services.

"The change of location of the Redondo Beach Homeless Court is crucial to countywide efforts to help people experiencing homelessness," Presiding Judge Kevin C. Brazile said. "It is imperative that this vulnerable population have access to justice and services at the same location. I want to extend my gratitude to the City of Redondo Beach, the Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and community partners who collaborated to make this move a possibility."

Since the onset of the novel coronavirus pandemic, the Homeless Court in Redondo Beach has only been in session once, but services for clients remained available.

"This wonderful project, in its new location, will be in the heart of the community where needed services and meals will be provided to the participating clients, including the 47 individuals scheduled for hearings on September 9," said Judge Rene C. Gilbertson, who presides over this Homeless Court. "The change in venue will greatly benefit the people who need help and will hopefully reduce some of the barriers the service providers face when assisting them."

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REDONDO BEACH HOMELESS COURT
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The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department provided security at the new location.

"We are happy to provide safety and security for this County partnership, which benefits our homeless community as they are connected with vital resources which will improve their quality of life," Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva said.

Redondo Beach City Attorney Michael W. Webb said, "This program is designed to reach those homeless individuals who are most resistant to accepting needed services often due to chronic mental illness or addiction. Locating Homeless Court outdoors and adjacent to meals, mental health counseling, and other essential services, creates the greatest chance for success in the safest way possible. It has been inspiring to see our justice system partners work cooperatively to make this possible and towards the same end goal of getting the defendants permanent housing."

The Homeless Court that serves the Redondo Beach area was previously heard in Dept. 2 at the Torrance Courthouse; an additional Homeless Court is located at the Airport Courthouse. The Court also has other programs that address the needs of individuals who are homeless and have a case in the system.

"We are very excited to join in this effort by the Superior Court, the City of Redondo Beach and our county justice partners to alleviate housing insecurity for our clients and the legal issues facing them," said Alternate Public Defender Erika Anzoategui. "This holistic approach to the challenges faced by the underserved community directly addresses the key obstacles to proper placement in treatment, housing, and mental health counselling. Bridging these gaps will make our communities safer. The Alternate Public Defender's Office is committed and determined to make this a success."

The move to the new location was made in partnership with the Court, the City of Redondo Beach, the Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and community partners.

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