

Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles

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NEWS RELEASE



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**PRESIDING JUDGE ERIC C. TAYLOR ANNOUNCES VIRTUAL
MANDATORY SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE PROGRAM IN THE COURT'S
PERSONAL INJURY HUB IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL BAR
ASSOCIATIONS**

***Resolve Law LA Virtual MSC Program Website Launches June 21, 2021; Virtual
Mandatory Settlement Conferences Begin June 28***

Presiding Judge Eric C. Taylor today announced the launch of the Resolve Law LA Virtual Mandatory Settlement Conference (MSC) Program, a virtual program that leverages the talent of qualified volunteer lawyers from members of numerous Los Angeles County area bar associations to resolve cases pending in the Personal Injury (PI) Hub Courts before they proceed to trial. The Court is collaborating on the program with the Association of Southern California Defense Counsel (ASCDC), the Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles (CAALA), the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates (LA ABOTA), and the Beverly Hills Bar Foundation (BHBF).

"The Court is very pleased to partner with ASCDC, CAALA, LA ABOTA, and BHBF to offer this innovative virtual MSC program," Presiding Judge Eric C. Taylor said. "I would like to acknowledge Supervising Civil Judge David Cowan for working with our bar partners to organize this creative solution to increase access to justice. The Resolve Law LA Virtual MSC Program and its volunteers will help the Court address pandemic-related workloads and provide litigants in Los Angeles County another way to conveniently resolve their cases before trial."

The program is modeled after the in-person MSC program launched in the PI Hub at the Spring Street Courthouse in 2017 which had to stop due to the pandemic. Cases ordered

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VIRTUAL MSC 2-2-2-2

into that program were provided a free 3-hour MSC in which one defense attorney and one plaintiff's attorney partnered to act as settlement officers. Approximately 50% of the cases ordered into that program settled. Resolve Law LA's Virtual MSC Program replicates many aspects of the original program, but rather than in-person, it will handle MSCs for cases ordered into the program from the PI Hub via Zoom – again at no cost to litigants. The program will reside virtually at www.resolveawla.com, a website built and supported by the partner bar association groups and launched today.

CAALA President Genie Harrison and ASCDC President-Elect Marta Alcumbrac collaborated to design and build the Resolve Law LA system. "The Resolve Law LA volunteer attorney staffed MSC program is a product of disruptive thinking combined with cutting-edge technology and is made possible by strong teamwork between LA's bench and bar," CAALA President Harrison said. "Resolve Law LA is a fully automated and scalable system that revolutionizes volunteer staffed MSC services. Now we need our organizations' experienced attorneys to sign up and volunteer as settlement officers so the virtual MSCs can begin."

The Resolve Law LA Virtual MSC Program's ability to provide volunteer settlement officers to conduct virtual MSCs allows the Court to resolve cases faster and saves the parties a trip to the courthouse for their MSC. The program allows judges to focus on conducting trials in cases that could not settle at a time when the Court is expanding Civil jury trials as the pandemic outlook improves in Los Angeles County.

ASCDC President-Elect Alcumbrac said, "We are thrilled that the original in-person volunteer staffed PI MSC format could be replicated on a virtual platform. Approximately 50% of the cases ordered into the original in-person program settled; we expect this virtual program to be at least as successful. The determination and dedication of the settlement officers made the original program so effective. No doubt the settlement officers will continue to display that same resolve while conducting an MSC in Resolve Law LA's virtual platform."

Effective Monday, June 28, a standing order will enable judges to require counsel for appropriate trial ready PI cases to register for the program at www.resolveawla.com. Appropriate cases will be ordered into the program at the Final Status Conference. The virtual MSC must occur prior to the trial date. Settlement officers schedule the MSC service through [the website](#). Plaintiff's counsel also registers and schedules cases for the virtual MSC through the same system. Once a case is scheduled for a virtual MSC, the system will automatically send confirmation emails and texts with the date and time of the remote MSC, as well as Zoom link connection instructions to plaintiff and defense counsel, the parties, and any insurance company representative. Uploaded MSC briefs are available for review by the settlement officers in advance of the MSC.

On the date of the MSC, a judge will provide assistance to the parties virtually if needed.

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VIRTUAL MSC
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As Judge Cowan has said: "This new program brings the advantages of new technology – to provide an effective way for people to see and hear one another and work through their differences – together with the insights that experienced lawyers from both sides of the Bar can offer litigants as to the strengths and weaknesses of their positions. We are extremely grateful to the lawyers who volunteer to provide this invaluable service to our community and make this program possible."

Further details of the program, along with a copy of the Standing Order, will be provided in a forthcoming Notice to Attorneys.

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