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Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles

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## **PRESIDING JUDGE KEVIN C. BRAZILE ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF REMOTE COURTROOM APPEARANCES IN HUNDREDS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY CRIMINAL, FAMILY LAW COURTROOMS**

Audio and video appearances will be available this month in Criminal and Family Law courtrooms, vastly expanding remote appearance options the Court already has deployed this summer for Probate, Dependency, Delinquency, Appellate and Civil matters, Presiding Judge Kevin C. Brazile announced today. The availability of audio and video in 250 Criminal courtrooms expands the remote options the Court launched earlier this year when it worked with justice partners to offer video arraignments and preliminary hearings in 32 Criminal courtrooms.

"The Court has prioritized and expedited remote appearance options throughout the nation's largest trial court system to achieve social distancing and to provide safe, convenient alternatives to in-person court appearances during the COVID-19 pandemic," Presiding Judge Brazile said. "By next month, Webex and LACourtConnect (LACC), the Court-developed remote appearance solution, will be available in all litigation types throughout the Court."

Effective Monday, August 10, 2020:

- Audio and video appearances will be expanded to all 250 Criminal courtrooms for hearings using Webex. Since April, audio and video appearances have been an option in 32 courtrooms across the county for arrestees in custody who consent to

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## REMOTE APPEARANCES

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appear remotely for arraignment, and remote appearances for preliminary hearings also have been available since April. Remote hearings are held at the Judge's discretion and with the defendant's consent.

- LACC will be expanded for scheduling remote appearances for Family Law matters on calendar starting August 17.
- LACC will launch in courtrooms handling Small Claims, Unlawful Detainers and Collections cases on August 10.

To enforce social distancing and further reduce foot traffic, the Court has placed drop boxes outside courthouses for filings; established a virtual Clerk's Office; required pre-scheduled appointments to access in-person Clerk's Office services; enhanced virtual services to self-help litigants; and prioritized remote appearance solutions.

Under way at the pandemic's onset, the Court accelerated an 18-month deployment schedule for LACC to three months. The Court also is working on virtual options for safe jury selection and jury service for Criminal trials, which are expected to begin in September, followed by Civil trials in 2021.

"The Court has mandated stringent measures for enhanced cleaning, facial coverings and social distancing as we gradually resume hearings after the 3-month closure when we handled only statutorily mandated, emergency and time-sensitive matters," Presiding Judge Brazile said. "As we balance due process rights, social distancing and public health considerations in the midst of a pandemic, the safety and well-being of jurors, staff, judicial officers, justice partners, attorneys and court users remains our priority."

Part of the Court's *Here For You | Safe For You* plan, the court-wide expansion of audio and video courtroom appearances offers a safe and convenient alternative to in-person appearances. Information on *Here For You | Safe For You* can be found [here](#) and on the Court's Twitter page (@[LASuperiorCourt](#)).

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