



HERE FOR YOU | SAFE FOR YOU

Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles

NEWS RELEASE

www.lacourt.org | [@LASuperiorCourt](https://twitter.com/LASuperiorCourt)

Media Relations

publicinfo@lacourt.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 29, 2021

PRESIDING JUDGE ERIC C. TAYLOR ANNOUNCES NEW VOLUNTARY FAST TRACK PERSONAL INJURY BENCH TRIAL PILOT PROGRAM

Pilot Aims to Reduce Need for Personal Injury Jury Trials

Balancing safety and timely access to justice, the Superior Court of Los Angeles County is launching a new voluntary pilot program for litigants to obtain a prompt bench trial in cases assigned to the Personal Injury Hub courtrooms upon receipt of a stipulation by all parties to participate, Presiding Judge Eric C. Taylor announced today.

The Court offers this alternative in view of the current logistical concerns related to scheduling jury trials, resulting from the pandemic, as well as the high volume of cases in need of disposition. The 6-month pilot will take effect May 3, 2021 and end on November 1, 2021.

"Thanks to this pilot concept designed by Supervising Judge of Civil David J. Cowan and our Special Committee on Civil Jury Trials, our Civil bench hopes to provide this option to parties seeking swifter access to justice following pandemic-related delays," Presiding Judge Taylor said. "I am grateful for the support of our local bar groups, including CAALA, ASCDC, the LA Chapter of ABOTA, and LACBA, for reaching out to their members to publicize this pilot program as an option to resolve their cases. I understand how difficult these pandemic-related delays have been for attorneys and litigants. We

-MORE-

PI PILOT
2-2-2-2

will continue to explore and implement efficiencies and programs to expedite access to justice in Los Angeles County.”

Tamila C. Jensen, President of LACBA, said, “As the largest trial court in the country, the Superior Court of Los Angeles County has had its share of challenges during this unprecedented year. The new fast track personal injury pilot program is an important and much-needed step towards continued access to justice and above all else, safety for the litigants and judicial officers who serve the public. LACBA applauds this effort and the foresight of the court leadership in addressing these concerns for the betterment of all Angelenos.”

Parties to a case who are willing to waive their right to a jury may sign up for this program electronically by submitting a form. Once filed, their matter will be assigned to a Civil trial department for a bench trial within 60 days.

If requested, these bench trials also may be held remotely, potentially saving additional expense. Parties also may elect to enter into an agreement to a high-low valuation for purposes of trial. As a result, a defendant’s liability cannot exceed an agreed-upon amount and a plaintiff’s recovery could not be less than an agreed-upon amount. This agreement may be kept confidential until after trial.

To qualify for the program, counsel are required to represent they will be ready for trial within 60 days and will file all pre-trial documents at a final status conference that Dept. 1 in the Stanley Mosk Courthouse will schedule with the assigned trial judge. The parties retain all rights afforded them under Code of Civil Procedure Section 170.6.

“The Court appreciates the thoughtful assistance and cooperation of all attorneys and parties as we work to resolve pandemic-related delays,” Presiding Judge Taylor said. “By reducing the number of cases awaiting jury trial, the Court can make more efficient use of juror assets for criminal and other cases.”

###