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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 24, 2021

PRESIDING JUDGE ERIC C. TAYLOR RESCINDS SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENT IN ALL LA COUNTY COURTHOUSES, EFFECTIVE JUNE 28

Face Masks Remain Mandatory Inside All Courthouses Under Cal/OSHA Workplace Standards

Los Angeles County courthouses will open Monday without any public access restrictions, eliminating the requirement for advance appointments for service as well as the need to make an online request for in-person courtroom seating, Presiding Judge Eric C. Taylor announced today.

“Expanding access to justice safely remains the Court’s top priority,” Presiding Judge Taylor said. “During the pandemic, the Court adopted alternative services and solutions to offer safe access to justice. Today, I am pleased to announce the Court is aligning with, and responsibly following, federal, state and county public health and Cal/OSHA workplace guidance that eliminates social distancing in public spaces. Public health guidance also dictates safety measures, including mask-wearing, to protect workers and the public from spread of the virus and those persons not yet vaccinated. This is a huge step forward in our rise from the pandemic.”

Presiding Judge Taylor today issued a new General Order, which is attached, that encourages the public seeking services from the Clerk’s Office, court support services, and/or the Self-Help Centers to continue scheduling advance appointments to reduce lines.

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“The silver lining to our pandemic challenges has been the development of our remote access tools through LACourtConnect,” Presiding Judge Taylor said. “This positive access feature will remain a staple in our Court into the future, offering less expensive and convenient alternatives to in-person appearances.”

Here are other important updates and requirements under the Order:

- All persons, regardless of vaccination status, must wear a face mask over both the nose and mouth while in public areas of the courthouse, including courtrooms. Children under the age of two (2) are exempt from the Order. Court employees must wear face masks that meet the Cal/OSHA requirements.
- Individuals with a physical or mental health impairment or disability who seek an exemption from the face mask requirement must contact the ADA liaison at the courthouse prior to their appearance to request a reasonable accommodation pursuant the Americans with Disabilities Act or Rule 1.100 of the California Rules of Court. A list of ADA liaisons is available at www.lacourt.org/ada/adahome.aspx.
- Individuals who decline or refuse to wear a face mask without a court order exempting them from the mask requirement will be denied entry to the courthouse and/or courtroom.
- Individuals who remove their face masks after entering the courthouse or courtroom will be reminded to wear them. If they refuse, they may be denied services, may have their legal matters rescheduled, and/or will be asked to leave the courthouse or courtroom immediately. Persons who refuse to leave voluntarily will be escorted out of the courthouse and/or courtroom by Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department personnel.
- No advance permission will be required for in-person courtroom seating for hearings on or after June 28, 2021.
- Drop boxes will remain outside courthouses as a filing option.
- While snack bars and cafeterias will reopen, over the next few weeks, eating or drinking is prohibited in courthouse hallways.

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- Effective June 28, the Court will no longer offer the Remote Audio Attendance Program (RAAP) to listen remotely to courtroom proceedings. The Court implemented this temporary program during the pandemic recognizing there may be abuses of the Court's orders prohibiting recording, filming, and distribution of proceedings. Widespread breaches by the public in a recent court proceeding highlighted the need to return to in-person, open courtroom proceedings, which is a welcome development.

"For many months, we have required everyone in a courthouse to socially distance and remain six feet apart – at entrances, and in hallways, elevators, courtrooms, and offices," Presiding Judge Taylor said. "Beginning June 28, it will no longer be required to stay six feet apart from other people. I want to extend my sincere gratitude to everyone who has made this day possible by following federal, state and L.A. County public health protocols and who led the efforts towards public vaccination. This is a great day for everyone who visits and works in our courthouses."

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FILED
 Superior Court of California
 County of Los Angeles

JUN 24 2021

Sherri R. Carter, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court
 By Paula Hernandez Deputy
 Paula Hernandez

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER OF THE
 PRESIDING JUDGE RE MANDATORY
 USE OF FACE MASKS DURING THE
 COVID-19 PANDEMIC

GENERAL ORDER
 (Effective June 28, 2021)

In response to the rising number of residents who have received the COVID-19 vaccine, the decrease in the number of COVID-19 cases, and the desire to reopen the economy, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)), recently lifted mask mandates and physical distancing requirements for vaccinated persons in most public spaces. As of June 15, 2021, the California Department of Public Health ([CA DPH](#)) and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health ([LA DPH](#)) both issued updated guidance to align with the CDC. Public health authorities acknowledged the right of businesses and entities to retain mask requirements. Workplaces such as the Court are subject to the revised COVID-19 Prevention [Emergency Temporary Standards](#) adopted by Cal/OSHA on June 17, 2021.

To continue to protect the health of court users, pursuant to Cal. Const. art., VI §1, Code Civ. Proc. § 128, Gov. Code § 68070, Cal. Rules of Court, rule 10.603, and the inherent powers of the Court (*In re Reno* (2012) 55 Cal.4th 428, 522), and in compliance with federal, state, and local public health guidance, **THIS COURT HEREBY FINDS, AND ORDERS¹ AS FOLLOWS:**

1. Face Coverings:

- a. All persons entering any courthouse - regardless of vaccination status - shall wear a face mask over both the nose and mouth while in public areas of the courthouse,

¹ This order supersedes and replaces the Court's February 25, 2021, General Order on face coverings.

1 including courtrooms. Children under the age of two (2) are exempt from the order.

2 Court employees must wear masks that meet the Cal/OSHA requirements.²

- 3 b. Individuals with a physical or mental health impairment or disability who seek an
4 exemption from the face mask requirement must contact the ADA liaison at the
5 courthouse prior to their appearance to request a reasonable accommodation pursuant to
6 the Americans with Disabilities Act or Rule 1.100 of the California Rules of Court. A
7 list of ADA liaisons is available at www.lacourt.org/ada/adahome.aspx.
- 8 c. Individuals who decline or refuse to wear a face mask without a court order exempting
9 them from the mask requirement will be denied entry to the courthouse and/or
10 courtroom.
- 11 d. Individuals who remove their face masks after entering the courthouse or courtroom
12 will be reminded to wear them. If they refuse, they may be denied services, may have
13 their legal matters rescheduled, and/or will be asked to leave the courthouse or
14 courtroom immediately. Persons who refuse to leave voluntarily will be escorted out of
15 the courthouse and/or courtroom by Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
16 personnel.

17 2. Public Access and Social Distancing:

- 18 a. [General Order 2020-GEN-025-00](#), dated November 23, 2020, is hereby rescinded.
- 19 b. Paragraph 1a (Courthouse Access and Remote Appearances) of [General Order 2021-](#)
20 [GEN-022-00](#), dated June 17, 2021, is modified as follows:
- 21 The Court encourages persons seeking services from the Clerk's Office, court
22 support services, and/or the Self-Help Centers to schedule an appointment. The
23 telephone numbers to schedule appointments for each courthouse are listed at
24 courthouse entrances and are posted on the Court's website, www.lacourt.org.
- 25 c. Paragraph 2b of [General Order 2021-GEN-022-00](#), dated June 17, 2021, is rescinded.
- 26

27 ² The ETS defines a face covering as "a surgical mask, a medical procedure mask, a respirator worn voluntarily,
28 or a tightly woven fabric or non-woven material of at least two layers. A face covering has no visible holes or
openings and must cover the nose and mouth. A face covering does not include a scarf, ski mask, balaclava,
bandana, turtleneck, collar, or single layer of fabric." 8 Cal. Code of Regulations § 3205(b)(8).

3. Other Protective Practices:

All persons are encouraged to use hand sanitizer when entering the courthouse, practice good handwashing hygiene, and cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, preferably with a tissue.

THIS ORDER IS EFFECTIVE JUNE 28, 2021, AND WILL REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, OR UNTIL ITS PROVISIONS EXPIRE BY THEIR TERMS, ARE RESCINDED, AMENDED, OR ARE SUPERSEDED BY SUBSEQUENT ORDERS. GOOD CAUSE APPEARING THEREFOR, IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: June 24, 2021



Eric C. Taylor
ERIC C. TAYLOR
Presiding Judge