



PRESS RELEASE

To: Local Media
From: Hector X. Gonzalez, Jr., Court Executive Officer
Date: June 12, 2020
Re: Court to Resume Jury Trials on June 17, 2020 - Persons Summoned for Jury Duty on or after June 17th Need to Report

Jury trials for criminal cases in Tuolumne County will resume on Wednesday, June 17, 2020. The Superior Court of California, for the County of Tuolumne ("Court") is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for persons coming to Court facilities and facilities used for court functions. The Court continues to closely monitor the ongoing state of emergency related to the novel Coronavirus ("COVID-19").

The Court normally summons persons to report for jury duty on Mondays for misdemeanor trials and Wednesdays for felony trials. A large number of people are summoned for felony trial jury duty on Wednesdays. On Mondays, a smaller number of people are summoned for misdemeanor jury trial duty.

The Court recognizes its courthouses are not always large enough to allow adequate social distancing for individuals who report for jury duty. Accordingly, the Court is taking additional measures to protect the health and safety of persons summoned for jury duty as described below.

The resumption of jury trials will begin with a felony jury trial on Wednesday June 17th. Because felony jury trials require a larger pool of potential jurors, the Court will be using the Tribal Building (formerly the John Muir building) at the Mother Lode Fairgrounds. The Tribal Building will be used temporarily for felony trial jury selection for at least four weeks. The Mother Lode Fairgrounds are located at 220 Southgate Drive, Sonora, CA. Only persons who are summoned to appear on a Wednesday will report to the Mother Lode Fairgrounds for the jury selection process. Once a jury and alternate jurors are selected, the felony jury trial will be held at a courtroom in the Historic Courthouse located at 41 W. Yaney Avenue in downtown Sonora.

The resumption of misdemeanor jury trials will occur on Monday, June 22nd. Persons who are summoned for jury duty on a Monday will be directed to appear at the Court's 60 N. Washington Street court facility located in downtown Sonora. To have space for social distancing, the Court will use two courtrooms for jury assembly and selection. Potential jurors will be seated in both courtrooms. A video conferencing system will be used to allow all potential jurors to see and hear the judge addressing them during the jury selection process.

In accordance with current federal, state, and county public health orders and guidelines, the Court will implement the following safety protocols necessary for the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 while persons report for jury duty:

- All persons reporting for jury duty will go through a mandatory COVID-19 screening process prior to entering the Mother Lode Fairgrounds' Tribal Building or the courthouse at 60 N. Washington Street in downtown Sonora.
- All persons will be expected to maintain a minimum six-foot distance between themselves and others.
- All persons who sneeze or cough are expected to do so in a tissue or, if no tissue is available, into the crook of their elbow.
- All persons are expected to avoid shaking hands with each other and engaging in unnecessary physical contact.
- All persons will be strongly encouraged to wear a face mask for the protection of others. Masks will be available upon request.
- Hand sanitizer will be available for use.

End of Press Release