



SHERRI R. CARTER
EXECUTIVE OFFICER / CLERK OF COURT

111 NORTH HILL STREET
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-3014

Superior Court of California
County of Los Angeles

June 3, 2020

Dr. William Scroggins
President & CEO
Mt. San Antonio Community College District
1100 N Grand Ave.
Walnut, CA 91789

Dear Dr. Scroggins:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles (Court) closed all courthouses on March 17, 2020, and reopened them on March 20, 2020, to handle essential emergency services only; matters with statutory deadlines that cannot be suspended or delayed, that involve fundamental rights, or that involve emergency circumstances.

Every day the Court's services remain unavailable denies litigants important legal relief. For that reason, the Court is planning how best to resume court services while implementing the measures recommended by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) to protect the public it serves, as well as its staff, judicial officers and justice partners. This is a challenge because, as is true for other public entities, our courthouses were not designed to facilitate social distancing.

By their nature, courts are places that bring large groups of people together, including jurors. The right to a jury trial is a hallmark of American jurisprudence. Assuring the well-being of prospective jurors and easing the burden of jury service will enable the Court to resume jury trials. For that reason, the Court is looking at creative ways to empanel juries while enforcing social distancing. Most courtrooms do not have adequate space to accommodate the 35-40 prospective jurors needed for jury empanelment. To that end, we ask that you allow the Court to use large venues within your district as a "jury empanelment center." The Court would call prospective jurors to that location and a judge, court staff and attorneys would question them (conduct voir dire) until they select the final jury panel, plus any alternates. The duration of that process varies on the complexity of the case. Once the final jury is selected, the group would return to the courthouse and the next case would start its jury empanelment proceedings. As you will note, the room needs to be large enough to accommodate at least 50 to 60 individuals, while observing social distancing requirements.

The Court anticipates summoning jurors in June for jury trials to start in July or August. Finding a large venue to use as a jury empanelment center is the Court's highest priority in meeting this statutory duty.

During these unprecedented times, it is imperative for all government agencies to work together to meet extraordinary challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has created. Any assistance you can provide will play a vital role in helping the Court achieve its mission of providing access to justice to all residents of Los Angeles County.

If you have any questions or if we can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Darrell Mahood, Director, Juror Services at DMahood@LACourt.org or 213-314-8800.

I greatly appreciate your consideration of this request and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Sherri R. Carter
Executive Officer/Clerk of Court