



AMANDA TOSTE
Court Executive Officer

Superior Court of California, County of Merced

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 1, 2020

Merced Court announces Merced Senior Community Center as a temporary location for Jury Duty

The Merced Superior Court is utilizing an alternate location, Merced Senior Community Center, to assemble and voir dire jurors in select criminal cases beginning the week of September 8, 2020 through October 30, 2020. This will allow for increased social distancing and additional resources as the Court works through the jury trial backlog due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Once the jurors have been selected, the jury trials will be held in the main courthouse.

Juries are a vital component of the United States' justice system. Amid the current COVID-19 pandemic, the resumption of jury trials would not be possible without the collaborative effort with the Merced City Council, the Merced County Sheriff's Department and the justice partners. The Merced Superior Court extends its appreciation to the Merced City Council, Interim City Manager Stephanie Dietz and the Merced Senior Community Center for their willingness to allow the use of their facilities and the Merced County Sheriff's Department for their commitment to the safety and security of court operations.

Please note: that if in the last 14 days you have tested positive for or likely to have COVID-19, are scheduled for a COVID-19 test, are awaiting COVID-19 test results, have cold or flu like symptoms, have been exposed to someone that has tested positive for or is in quarantine for COVID-19, DO NOT report to jury service. Jurors with these issues or symptoms will be allowed to defer their service. See the Information for Jury Service Deferrals section below for details

Guidance for Summoned Jurors:

- Be sure to bring and wear a face mask or face covering.
- Temperature screening will occur at the entrance.
- Limit the number of personal items you bring with you as bags will be physically inspected.
- In order to be able to maintain social distancing, fewer jurors are being summoned. Please appear if you **do not** have health concerns related to COVID-19.
- If you have health concerns, please contact the jury commissioner's office at (209) 725-4121 to request that your jury service be deferred to a future date.
- To verify you are a summoned juror, bring your jury summons with you on the day you report.
- Bring your own bottled water, as a common water dispenser will not be available.
- Bring a book, cell phone, laptop, etc. to occupy yourself during jury assembly and selection, as there will be no reading or other materials available.

Jury Service at the Main Courthouse

If you are summoned for jury service to the Main Courthouse, small groups will be called in per the Court's social distancing protocols.

Information on Jury Service Deferrals

Contact the jury commissioner's office at (209) 725-4121 to request that your jury service be deferred to a future date.

Jurors that find it necessary to request a deferral of service should contact the jury office at (209) 725-4121 or jury@mercedcourt.org. Standing Order 2020-06 authorizes the jury office staff to grant deferrals for a specified time not to exceed 90 days. This allows jurors to self-defer on a one time basis.

Additional information regarding jury service can be found at

https://www.mercedcourt.org/jury_services.shtml and <https://www.mercedcourt.org/COVID-19.shtml>.

The Court is committed to providing a safe environment for jury service and trials by adhering to local and state public safety and social distancing guidelines, implementing health and safety precautions at Court locations, and implementing additional precautions for jury service.

The Court appreciates your willingness to serve as a juror, and to help the Court continue to provide this vital function of our democracy during these extraordinary times.

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