



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

IN RE:)
)
PROVIDING NOTICE OF)
PLANNED REOPENING OF)
COURTHOUSES ON JUNE 14, 2021)
)
_____)

GENERAL ORDER NO. 631

WHEREAS, the court previously has issued General Orders addressing the national, regional and local public health emergency posed by the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak by closing its courthouses to the public until further notice;

WHEREAS, since issuance of the court’s prior orders, effective COVID-19 vaccines have been developed and robust vaccination programs have succeeded in providing vaccines to significant portions of the population nationwide, in California and in the Eastern District of California;

WHEREAS, given the progress in vaccination programs and the resulting lowering of risk to public health as evidenced by reductions in rates of infection, hospitalization and death due to COVID-19, the Centers for Disease Control announced on May 13, 2021 that people who are fully vaccinated — meaning, two weeks removed from their last shot — no longer need to wear masks or physically distance themselves, indoors or outdoors in most circumstances;

WHEREAS, the Governor of California has stated the State of California will keep existing mask guidance in place until June 15, 2021 when it aims to fully reopen the economy, and after that, the State plans to allow fully-vaccinated Californians to go without a mask in most indoor settings;

WHEREAS, it remains to be seen whether any of the 34 counties within the Eastern District of California will continue to maintain local public health orders requiring measures to manage any ongoing threats posed by the virus;

WHEREAS, the Judges of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California, in consultation with the Clerk of Court, have continued to closely monitor developments and balance the various interests implicated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the court's response, including: the health of jurors, witnesses, parties, attorneys, the public whom it is our privilege to serve, Clerk's Office and all court staff, Probation and Pretrial Services staff, chambers staff and judges; the constitutional rights of criminal defendants and other parties; and the public's interest in, and the court's duty to ensure, the effective and expeditious administration of justice;

AND WHEREAS, given the improvement in the public health landscape within the Eastern District of California and the length of time certain criminal trials in particular have been pending, some Judges have begun to schedule jury trials and requested that jury pools be summoned, with the first jury trial currently scheduled to begin on June 2, 2021;

NOW THEREFORE, in light of the best information available to the Judges of the Eastern District of California at this time, on behalf of the Court, I hereby issue the following Order superseding prior General Order 618 issued on May 13, 2020:

1. Effective June 14, 2021, all courthouses of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California will reopen to the public. This order applies to the following divisional locations:

- (1) The Robert T. Matsui United States Courthouse, 501 I Street, Sacramento;
- (2) The Robert E. Coyle United States Courthouse, 2500 Tulare Street, Fresno;
- (3) The Redding Federal Courthouse, 2986 Bechelli Lane, Redding;
- (4) The Bakersfield Federal Courthouse, 510 19th Street, Bakersfield;
- (5) The Yosemite Federal Courthouse, 9004 Castle Cliffs Court, Yosemite; and
- (6) The Modesto U.S. Bankruptcy Court, 1200 I Street, Second Floor, Modesto.

2. Effective June 1, 2021, all persons wishing to attend or observe a trial shall be admitted to the common areas of the courthouse, and the Court Security Officers shall direct such persons to the courtroom in which the trial is being held.

3. Until further notice, General Order 621 requiring the wearing of face coverings in all public space and in private agency space where six feet of physical distancing cannot be maintained remains in effect.

4. Effective immediately, each Judge will determine whether to hold proceedings over which that Judge presides in person in a courtroom or by telephone or videoconference, in consultation with the Clerk of the Court and U.S. Marshal, as appropriate, to allow for coordination regarding the impact on court and security staff and operations.

5. To the extent any Judge conducts any criminal proceeding by telephone or video conference, General Order 630 implementing the CARES Act remains in effect until July 1, 2021, unless further extended, and continues to authorize the use of telephone or video conference with a defendant's consent.

6. In criminal cases before the District Judges, the assigned District Judge may exercise his or her authority to continue matters, excluding time under the Speedy Trial Act based on current public health conditions with respect to COVID-19, with findings to support the exclusion in the Judge's discretion.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: May 26, 2021.

FOR THE COURT:



CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE