



CHAMBERS OF
The Superior Court
Matthew P. Guasco, Judge
HALL OF JUSTICE
800 SOUTH VICTORIA AVENUE
P.O. BOX 6489
VENTURA, CA 93009

TRIAL SETTING CONFERENCES IN COURTROOM 20

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chief Justice and the Ventura Superior Court Presiding Judge have issued administrative orders affecting civil actions. Effective June 9, 2020, the Presiding Judge implemented the Civil Reopening Plan. You may obtain a copy of this plan at: <http://www.ventura.courts.ca.gov/covid19/CivilReopeningPlanFinal.pdf>.

Section 2 of the Civil Reopening Plan states that all trial dates occurring on or after June 15, 2020, have been vacated and converted to Trial Setting Conferences (“TSC”s). The TSC must be attended by counsel of record who will be trying the case and all self-represented parties.

For TSCs occurring on or after July 1, 2020, the parties must serve and file a single, written, Joint TSC Statement not exceeding five (5) pages containing the following information at least 10 calendar days before the TSC:

- (1) A brief summary of the nature of the case, including the date(s) of the incident(s) or event(s) or transaction(s) which is (are) the subject(s) of the action; a concise description of the incident(s) or event(s) or transaction(s) which is (are) the subject(s) of the action; the causes of action in the complaint and any cross-complaint; the primary monetary damages and/or other relief being claimed; and the primary defenses being alleged.
- (2) The status of discovery, including that which has been completed as well as that yet to be completed, and the dates upon which the parties anticipate discovery will be completed.
- (3) Any issues of statutory priority.
- (4) Readiness for trial, including the date requested to begin trial.
- (5) Whether the case will be tried before a jury or the Court in whole in or in part. Please note that, for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Court will strictly follow mask and social distancing protocols for all trial participants, including jurors, attorneys, parties, witnesses, court staff and judge. Based upon the current status of the COVID-19 pandemic and projections by the CDC and California State Department of Health, Judge Guasco is not setting any matters for jury trial sooner than February, 2021. Judge Guasco is setting matters for court trial beginning the week of August 17, 2020. **All trial dates set at the TSC are dates certain.**
- (6) The timing of dispositive motions prior to trial.
- (7) Amenability of the parties to Alternative Dispute Resolution (“ADR”), including mediation, arbitration, and Mandatory Settlement Conference (“MSC”). In light of the lengthy delay in setting and the severe restrictions in conducting jury trials during the COVID-19

pandemic, Judge Guasco urges the parties to consider some form of ADR as a method of achieving finality and closure on mutually acceptable terms.

- (8) Reasonable time estimate for trial.
- (9) Any issues of bifurcation.
- (10) Any other issues or circumstances materially affecting resolution of the case.

Please type the date, time, and courtroom of the TSC to the right of the case caption on the front of the Joint TSC Statement.

The Joint TSC Statement may identify the parties' respective positions as to each of the items, including any areas of agreement or disagreement. The parties must meet and confer in good faith in the preparation of the Joint TSC Statement.

If the case is scheduled for a court trial at the TSC, the Court will give the parties a schedule for the service and filing of witness lists, exhibit lists, exchange of exhibits, and filing of trial briefs and *in limine* pleadings prior to trial.

When the Court sets a case for jury trial, the Court will schedule a Final Trial Setting Conference ("FTSC") 90 days before the trial date. The procedure described above applies to the FTSC, including the requirement that the parties meet and confer in good faith in the filing of the Joint FTSC Statement. At the FTSC, the Court will confirm the trial date, or advance the trial date (only on the stipulation of the parties), or continue the trial date to a date available on the Court's calendar (by stipulation of the parties or otherwise). If the trial date is confirmed at the FTSC, the Court will give the parties a schedule for the service and filing of witness lists, exhibit lists, exchange of exhibits, and filing of trial briefs and *in limine* pleadings prior to trial.

Pursuant to the current COVID-19 administrative orders of the Presiding Judge, all counsel of record and self-represented parties shall appear at the TSC or FTSC telephonically via Court Call. There are no exceptions. Counsel for plaintiff is responsible for making the necessary arrangements with Court Call. If the plaintiff is self-represented, then counsel for the defendant shall make the arrangements. If both parties are self-represented, then the plaintiff must make the necessary arrangements with Court Call. You may contact Court Call as follows: www.courtcall.com, or call 888-882-6878.

The Court entertains stipulations of the parties and proposed orders thereon modifying any of the orders made at the TSC or FTSC, provided that any such stipulation sets forth the good cause for doing so.