

2023 RIVERSIDE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT FAMILY LAW UPDATES ~ TOWNHALL RECAP ~

Recap provided by RCBA Family Law Section Chairs, Jeremy Roark and Goushia Farook.

On January 12, 2023, Judge Gerard, Supervising Family Law Judge, held a townhall Zoom meeting to discuss various updates taking place in Riverside County. The updates were almost exclusively to the Downtown (Western) and Southwest (Hemet) areas of Riverside County family law. The goal of the changes is to reduce the time for trials, reduce congestion for domestic violence matters and streamline the calendars county wide.

DOWNTOWN (WESTERN)

We are adding a new Paternity/Dissolution family law department and will have five general family law departments. We can expect around 3-6 months for the transition to be completed.

New Department 55

The new department is in the Hall of Justice (5th floor, department 55) with Commissioner Sharunne Foster. This department will handle the DCSS matters. DCSS matters will be Mon-Thu.

In department 55, Fridays are reserved for Case Status Conference (CSC) Hearings. Department 55 will handle CSC hearings for both Downtown and Hemet. The CSC hearings will be remote. The schedule will be discussed below.

Further, in department 55, downtown Riverside Parental Terminations will be Thursday at 1:30 p.m. and Adoptions will be Friday 1:30 p.m.

Previously noticed hearings for Adoption/Terminations for department F502 will continue to be heard in the noticed department (F502) until phased out and such time the court can get caught up on the notices.

Notices are going out with the plan to hear Adoption/Termination matters moving forward commencing February 1, 2023 in department 55.

Department F301 (Judge Gerard's department)

It is now a traditional family law department handling parentage and dissolution matters. F301 had previously been hearing stand-alone domestic violence matters.

Department F502 (New Judge Jay Kiel)

This department will be handling the stand-alone DV matters.

Domestic Violence matters with paternity/dissolution case numbers will now be heard in their assigned department. This may cause some calendaring issues for trials that have been long set. The court will do their best to avoid delaying these matters further for the

DV matters that have statutory priority. It will be a department specific approach to resolving as quickly as possible the scheduled matters.

The changes for above in Downton Riverside go into effect on **January 17, 2023.**

SOUTHWEST (HEMET AND SOUTHWEST JUSTICE CENTER)

Hemet will also now have five general family law departments. We can expect around 3-6 months for the transition to be completed.

H1

This department had been hearing stand-alone domestic violence matters. This department will now hear traditional family law matters (paternity and dissolution). Judge Wood is taking over this department.

Domestic Violence matters with paternity/dissolution case numbers will now be heard in their assigned department.

New department S205

The stand-alone (matters that do not have paternity or dissolution case numbers) will now be heard in S205 at the Southwest Justice Center in Murrieta. Judge Kirk will be hearing these matters.

Further, in department S205, Southwest Freedom/Parental Terminations will be Thursday at 1:30 pm and Adoptions will be Friday 1:30 pm.

Previously set matters in H1 and the parties that have not received a notice of change of courtroom will still be heard in Hemet until they are phased out. Notices are being sent out for matters heard in S205

H4

DCSS matters in Hemet will remain the same. DCSS will still meet and confer in the department outside the courthouse. H4 will hear the matters with the new commissioner, Commissioner Newstrom.

These changes also go into effect on **January 17, 2023.**

Intervening Mandatory Settlement Conferences

The court will continue to utilize the intervening MSCs. The department can and will schedule them for you. Currently Judge White handles the calendar until end of April 2023. In May through the end of the 2023 year, the MSCs will be conducted by returning judge, Jude Altamirano. The hope is that we will continue to have intervening MSCs in 2024.

Child Custody Recommending Counselling (CCRC)

CCRC is returning to in-person meetings. The parties will be doing them in person UNLESS they get permission from the court or Local Rule 5155 (D) applies. There is a local form RI FL 066 to file with the court which allows parties who live outside of Southern California, or other exceptions, to request seven (7) court days in advance of the CCRC to appear telephonically.

Case Status Conferences (CSC)

In department 55 on Fridays there will be the Case Status Conference (CSC) Hearings for both Downtown and Hemet. CSC hearings will be remote. The schedule will be as follows:

- 8:30 a.m. pro per CSC for Downtown.
- 10:30 a.m. pro per CSC for Hemet.
- 1:30 p.m. CSC for litigants with attorneys.

Riverside County Attorney Cards

Private Attorney ID badges for Riverside County are available for streamlined and expedited entry into the Riverside County Courthouses for the 2023 year. The \$10 payment and form can be processed at Historic Courthouse, Larson Justice Center, Palm Springs Courthouse, or the Southwest Justice Center. You must be in good standing with the Bar, provide the State Bar Card or proof of good standing.

2022 cards will work until the end of January 2023. New cards will be required for February 1, 2023 and forward.

Riverside Family Law Security Line

This is a reminder that there are items brought into the courthouse that are clearly prohibited even as counsel. Apparently, an attorney walked through security with a knife. Further, some attorneys were getting upset with putting items through metal detector. The ID badge and security line is to allow expedited entry. It is not to allow to avoid general courthouse compliance.

Bench Officer List

Riverside

F201: Commissioner Furbush

F301: Judge Gerard

F401: Judge Murphy

F402: Commissioner Harris

F501: Judge Vineyard

F502: Judge Kiel

55: Commissioner Foster

Hemet

H1: Judge Wood

H2: Judge Lafferty

H3: Judge Anderson

H4: Commissioner Newstrom

H5: Judge Mandio

S205: Judge Kirk

Judgments

Hemet judgments are behind due to staffing issues.