

FILED

OCT 12 2021

CLERK OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
COUNTY OF STANISLAUS

BY *Maria Soto*

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS

GENERAL ORDER REGARDING
REMOTE APPEARANCE FEES
(Gov. Code §68115)

GENERAL ORDER
2021-019

CR-21-999999

On April 6, 2020, the Judicial Council of California approved Emergency Rule of Court 3 – “use of technology for remote appearances” - which provides, at Rule 3(a)(1) that “courts may require that judicial proceedings and court operations be conducted remotely.” Rule 3(a)(3) also provides that “conducting proceedings remotely includes, but is not limited to, the use of ... telephonic means for remote appearances” Emergency Rule 3 remains in effect until 90 days after the Governor declares that the state of emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic is lifted, or until it is amended or repealed by the Judicial Council.

1 Given the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency and based on the authority granted
2 to it in Emergency Rule 3, the Stanislaus County Superior Court (“Court”) previously ordered,
3 on September 8, 2021, in General Order No. 2021-017, that all parties and counsel are required
4 to appear remotely for case management conferences, law and motion hearings, and ex parte
5 hearings in Civil cases, unless prior to the hearing the Court grants a request to appear in person
6 or another exception applies.
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8 As recognized by Emergency Rule 3 and the Court’s General Order 2021-017, remote
9 appearances have become a critical tool in enabling access to justice during the COVID-19
10 pandemic. However, parties must pay a telephonic appearance fee to the Court in order to
11 appear remotely. (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.670.)
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13 In light of the above facts, the Court **HEREBY FINDS AND ORDERS AS**
14 **FOLLOWS:**

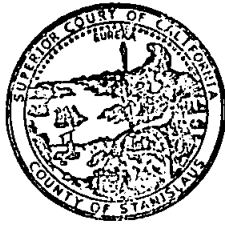
- 15 1. Beginning October 18, 2021, the Court will suspend the fee to remotely appear using
16 VCourt, the Court’s remote appearance platform; and
- 17 2. The Court will review the need to mandate remote appearances as a result of the COVID-19
18 pandemic within the next sixty (60) days; and
- 19 3. The suspension of the remote appearance fee will expire on December 17, 2021 - unless
20 earlier rescinded, extended or otherwise modified.
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24 This order is intended to supplement the statewide emergency orders issued by the Chief
25 Justice of the California Supreme Court, the Emergency Rules of Court adopted by the Judicial
26 Council of California, and the Court’s own local emergency orders. If there is any conflict
27 between the terms of the statewide emergency orders, the Emergency Rules of Court, and the
28

1 Court's local emergency orders, the statewide emergency orders, Emergency Rules, and local
2 emergency orders shall control.

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5 IT IS SO ORDERED.

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7 DATED: October 12, 2021




CARRIE M. STEPHENS,
ASSISTANT PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE
SUPERIOR COURT