
Welcome to DEPARTMENT R NORWALK COURTHOUSE

An individual direct calendar, general jurisdiction, civil courtroom

Judge: Honorable Brian F. Gasdia

Judicial Assistant: Sharlene Huynh

Courtroom Assistant: Heidi Hankins

Location: 12720 Norwalk Blvd, Norwalk, CA 90650 [6th Floor]

Telephone Number: (562) 345-3717

Email: NORDept-R@lacourt.ca.gov

Public Hours: Monday to Friday 8:30-12:00 & 1:30-4:30

Trial Hours: Generally, no dark days. 9:30/10:00-12:00 & 1:30-4:15

GENERAL INFORMATION

Department R is one of four independent/calendar courtrooms here in the Norwalk Courthouse. As of June 2, 2025, all civil cases in the Southeast District are working their way through these four courtrooms.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The schedule for Department R, other than trials, is the following:

Case Management Conferences (CMC's) will be heard every day at 9:00 AM, and law and motion matters on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 AM.

Other miscellaneous matters, if a hearing is necessary, as well as Final Status Conferences (FSC's), will be heard on Fridays at 9:30 AM.

Check-in for all hearings begins at 8:30 AM.

Note: Ex parte applications are considered each day and are decided at the end of the morning calendar, usually in chambers, and without oral argument.

TRIALS

The Court generally sets court trials and jury trials to begin at 9:30 AM on Mondays.

GUIDELINES FOR CIVILITY IN LITIGATION

The Court expects all attorneys and parties to treat each other, witnesses, jurors, court personnel, and the Court, with the highest level of civility, courtesy, and professionalism, both inside and outside the courtroom. [See Rule 3.26 and Appendix 3.A of the Los Angeles County Court Rules.]

REMOTE APPEARANCES

Remote appearances are permitted except Final Status Conferences, trials or matters calendared for an evidentiary hearing. Parties shall arrange telephonic or video appearances through LACourtConnect.

INTERPRETERS

Only Court certified or registered interpreters can assist limited English proficiency litigants. Govt. Code § 68561. You may request an interpreter under the “Online Services Tab” at www.lacourt.ca.gov (Civil - Interpreter Request) or you may call the Court's Interpreter Services Division at (213) 628-7744.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION

If you need an accommodation, please inform the courtroom staff in advance, so we can attempt to facilitate your request. Requests may be made using form MC-410 or in any other written format.

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS

The Court's commitment to fairness and justice extends to all litigants, including those who represent themselves rather than hire a lawyer. Self-represented litigants are expected to comply with the rules of civil procedure, evidence, and decorum.

CASE MANAGEMENT

The Court's goal is to help the parties obtain a fair, timely, and efficient resolution of their cases. Effective case management, in turn, requires counsel to communicate with each other and the Court, and to work together cooperatively to advance the case. The Court applies the case management rules set forth in CRC Rules 3.700 et seq. and SCLAC Rules 3.24 - 3.25.

CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCES: Trial counsel are required to meet and confer by video conference, telephone or in person no later than **15 calendar days** before the date set for the initial and any succeeding Case Management Conference to consider each of the issues identified in CRC Rules 3.724 and 3.727. Case Management Statements must be filed at least **15 calendar days before** the date scheduled for the conference.

Counsel appearing at the Case Management Conference (including appearance counsel) must be knowledgeable about the case and prepared to discuss all the issues set forth in CRC Rule 3.727.

LAW AND MOTION

HEARING DATES

Parties must obtain a motion date via the online Court Reservation System (CRS) on the Los Angeles Court website. Go to "LA Court Online Services, Court Reservation System," at www.lacourt.ca.gov to reserve a date prior to filing any motion papers. Motion fee payments are required at the time reservations are made online.

Please do not call the courtroom to reserve a motion date.

Note: As of March 2, 2025, all court users must create an account in order to access the CRS.

FILING YOUR MOTION

Once you have reserved your hearing date in the CRS system, you must file your motion within three (3) business days of making the reservation or your reservation will automatically be cancelled. You must e-file all motion related pleadings unless exempt.

The court encourages reserving motion dates as soon as possible, particularly Motions for Summary Judgment or Summary Adjudication. Failing to timely reserve a motion date does not constitute irreparable harm.

MULTIPLE MOTIONS

It is the Court's desire, if possible, that all motions concerning a matter be heard on the same date. If you have motions reserved under the Court Reservation System (CRS) for multiple hearing dates, please submit a proposed order for the motions to be heard on one date. Make sure the motions are reserved on the Court Reservation System (CRS) before you submit a proposed order.

CHANGES

Parties must also use CRS to continue or withdraw motions; Please also call the courtroom so we are aware of the change.

TENTATIVE RULINGS

Tentative rulings on motions are usually posted at www.lacourt.ca.gov the afternoon before the hearing. **Do not call** the department to inquire about the posting of the tentative. Not all tentative rulings are posted. Monitor the Court's website for the posting of the tentative ruling. Counsel may submit on the posted tentative ruling without appearing at the hearing by emailing Department R the day before, or morning of, the

hearing date. Instructions and Department R's email will be provided at the top of the tentative ruling.

If the tentative is not posted, it may be available in the department the day of the hearing and provided at the time of check-in. Please inform the Judicial Assistant or Courtroom Assistant if you are submitting on the tentative. If ALL parties submit without oral argument, then the matter will not be called and parties may be excused by the Judicial Assistant. The tentative will become the final ruling. Counsel for the moving party shall give notice of the final ruling.

COURT REPORTERS

The Court does not normally provide a court reporter. The parties may bring a court reporter to the hearing, and the court's website contains information regarding the procedure to follow. The Court may provide a court reporter for parties with fee waivers who file a timely request.

DISCOVERY MOTIONS

All civil actions filed after January 1, 2024, are subject to the initial discovery disclosures requirements of CCP § 2016.090.¹ The Court may enforce the requirements of Section 2016.090 on its own motion or on the motion of a party.

The Court strongly discourages discovery motions and encourages informal resolution of discovery disputes.

Counsel with authority to compromise the dispute (preferably trial counsel) must meet and confer by telephone, videoconference, or in person to resolve or narrow the discovery dispute. Merely exchanging letters or emails is insufficient. The Court expects the parties to work together in good faith to resolve discovery issues. If the dispute remains unresolved, counsel can request an Informal Discovery Conference (IDC) by filing an IDC request [LACIV094]. The Court will review the request and issue an order granting or denying the request. If granted, the Courtroom Assistant (CA) will schedule an IDC. The IDC should eliminate any need for a motion. Absent a showing of good cause, the Court may continue any discovery motion filed before the IDC process is concluded. California Code of Civil Procedure § 2016.080 has been **repealed**, therefore the scheduling of an IDC does not toll the deadline for filing a discovery motion unless the parties stipulate to toll deadlines.

At least five court days before the IDC, the moving party must file and serve a memorandum no longer than three pages setting forth the outstanding issues. The first paragraph shall be formatted as follows: (1) a neutral statement of the dispute; and (2)

¹ This section does not apply to any party who is self-represented.

one to three sentences describing (not arguing) each parties' position. The responding party may file and serve a responsive memorandum of no more than three pages at least two court days prior to the IDC.

The relevant discovery requests and responses may be attached. Brevity is encouraged. The responding party may file and serve a responsive memorandum of no more than three pages at least two court days prior to the IDC.

In the event a discovery motion is heard, the Court recommends that trial counsel appear to argue it. Counsel should be fully prepared to negotiate a resolution to the dispute that is the subject of the motion, as well as to discuss a detailed schedule of all further discovery.

EX PARTE APPLICATIONS

All Ex parte applications and documents in support thereof must be electronically filed no later than 10:00 a.m. the court day before the hearing.

Any written opposition shall be electronically filed by 8:30 a.m. the day of the hearing. Pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 2.253(b)(2), self-represented litigants are exempt from these mandatory Electronic Filing requirements.

PLEASE CAREFULLY REVIEW WHETHER YOU HAVE A PROPER BASIS TO SEEK EX PARTE RELIEF. There must be an affirmative showing of "irreparable harm, immediate danger, or any other statutory basis for granting relief ex parte." (See Cal.Rules of Court, rule 3.1202 (c).) You will need to demonstrate to the court the reason(s) why you cannot seek the requested relief by other means, such as a noticed motion, or continuance of the trial.

Pursuant General Order 2020-GEN-018-00 and Code of Civil Procedure § 166(a)(1), the court may rule from chambers and may not necessarily hear oral argument for an ex parte application for relief.

SETTLEMENT CONFERENCES / ADR PROGRAMS

Besides giving counsel and the parties time to settle their case through private mediation, the Court has available a variety of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and settlement programs. These can be found at lacourt.org/adr/ and the link below.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Programs Civil Unlimited Link:

<https://lacourts.sharepoint.com/Forms/Forms%20Comprehensive%20List/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2FForms%2FForms%20Comprehensive%20List%2FLASC%20ADM%20201%2Epdf&parent=%2FForms%2FForms%20Comprehensive%20List>

The Court may refer you to the Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) office for assignment to an appropriate ADR program. Or, instead, the Court may refer you directly to the Mediation Volunteer Panel (MVP), Mediation Center of Los Angeles (MCLA) or Resolve Law Los Angeles for a Mandatory Settlement Conference.

Settlement Conferences may also be conducted by other judges in the Norwalk Courthouse. However, there are a very limited number of settlement conference "slots" available. There are not enough "slots" to conduct a settlement conference in every case, therefore, Judge Gasdia encourages parties to participate in court ordered or private mediation whenever reasonably possible.

The Court is also willing to personally conduct settlement conferences for cases assigned to this Department. Please contact the Courtroom Assistant to arrange a conference. Contact the Judicial Assistant to obtain and execute a Stipulation for settlement conferences conducted by the trial judge.

NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT / REQUEST FOR DISMISSAL

Notice of Settlement must be eFiled by plaintiff using Judicial Council Form CM-200, even if the case is settled at a Judicial MSC. Once notice of settlement of the entire case is eFiled, all future appearances will be taken off calendar and an OSC re dismissal will be scheduled approximately sixty (60) days from the filing date. If trial binders were lodged prior to settlement, they must be picked up within two weeks of filing the Notice of Settlement or they will be discarded. Refer to CRC 3.1385 for duties upon settlement.

TRIAL PROCEDURES

In the event your case does not settle, or is not otherwise dismissed, the following rules apply:

FINAL STATUS CONFERENCE

Final Status Conferences generally are held on a Friday at least 10 days before the trial date. Lead trial counsel must appear, unless previously excused by the Court. SCLAC Rule 3.25 (f)(2). The Court requires trial counsel to meet by video conference, telephone or in person well before the Final Status Conference concerning the submission of joint trial readiness documents. SCLAC Rule 3.25 (g).

TRIAL BRIEFS

Trial Briefs are welcomed in bench trials, but are not required for jury trials.

The following FSC documents must be provided to the Court prior to the FSC:

1. MOTIONS IN LIMINE AND BIFURCATION MOTIONS

Must have been filed and served with proper statutory notice and set for hearing on the FSC date. SCLAC Rule 3.25 (f)(2). Compliance with SCLAC Rule 3.57, including the declaration and meet and confer requirements, is mandatory. Boilerplate or form motions in limine are disfavored.

No later than five court days before the FSC, the moving party for each motion in limine must lodge directly in Department R an indexed and tabbed three-ring binder containing conformed copies of all moving, opposition, and reply papers for their motions in limine.

2. JOINT STATEMENT OF THE CASE

(Will be read by the Court to the prospective jurors)

This is a brief, neutral statement of what the case is about.

3. JOINT EXHIBIT LIST AND EXHIBITS

Counsel must comply with SCLAC Rules 3.52, 3.53 and 3.151. Each exhibit must be separately numbered, with the numbers corresponding to the number of the exhibit on the joint exhibit list. If an exhibit contains more than one page, the pages must be internally numbered, i.e., 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 etc.

Counsel must prepare a separate set of exhibits for each of the Court, the witness stand, and the Judicial Assistant.

4. JOINT WITNESS LIST AND TRIAL SCHEDULE

The parties must submit a joint list of all witnesses each party actually intends to call. Next to each witness, indicate the total time estimated for that witness's testimony (including direct, cross, redirect). Make realistic time estimates. At the end of the list, total the time estimated for testimony. Absent good cause, the total number of hours listed for testimony shall not exceed the trial estimate given at the case management conference, including the allocation of one day of the trial estimate for jury selection and sufficient time for opening statements and closing arguments. The parties shall discuss with the Court at the final status conference which witnesses will appear in person and which will appear remotely or by video.

The Court will consider imposing time limits in appropriate cases.

5. PAGE AND LINE DESIGNATION FOR DEPOSITION AND FORMER TESTIMONY

If the parties/counsel intend to use deposition testimony or former trial testimony in lieu of any witness's live testimony, the parties/counsel shall meet and confer and jointly prepare and file a chart with columns for: 1) the line and page designations of the deposition or former testimony requested, 2) objections, 3) counter-designations, 4) any responses to the objections, and 5) the Court's ruling. The chart shall be submitted to the Court in a three-ring binder, along with all deposition transcripts necessary for the Court to rule on the objections.

6. PROPOSED JURY INSTRUCTIONS

The parties are to submit an indexed and tabbed three-ring binder containing (a) a joint set of instructions, (b) any instructions proposed by Plaintiff and objected to by Defendant; and (c) and instructions proposed by Defendant and objected to by Plaintiff. The parties shall provide the full text of all requested instructions (not just a list). Before submitting the instructions, counsel must fill in the blanks, make any appropriate modifications, and comply with SCLAC 3.170 - 3.171. Use CACI for form instructions. Leave at least four inches of blank space of the top of every page of any proposed special jury instructions, or any addenda to form instructions. Citation of authority and identity of the party requesting the instruction will be removed after the jury instruction conference and before submission to the jury for deliberation.

The Court leaves it up to counsel whether it will instruct the jury before closing arguments, or to instruct the jury after closing arguments are given.

7. JOINT PROPOSED SPECIAL VERDICT FORMS:

Use CACI model verdict forms where applicable. The Court requires a single, finalized special verdict form, initialed by all counsel, for use by the jury.

MISCELLANEOUS

USE OF EXHIBITS

Counsel may publish exhibits to the jury upon prior stipulation or court order. If counsel agree, counsel may publish agreed-upon exhibits to the jury during opening statement.

COURT REPORTERS AND SETTLED STATEMENTS

The Court strongly encourages the parties to retain a court reporter for trial. It is recommended, but not required, that Court reporters retained for trial utilize real-time/Live Note reporting.

If no court reporter is used, the parties must jointly prepare a summary of the day's proceedings, and lodge it in the courtroom the next morning before proceedings resume.

CONTINUANCE OF TRIALS

Trials may be continued by stipulation, ex parte application or noticed motion. The Court will decide whether good cause has been shown, and if so, the dates it has available for the continued trial.