



# NEWS RELEASE

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## MANDATORY SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE PROGRAM EXPANSION

SUPERIOR COURT OF  
CALIFORNIA  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE  
4050 Main Street  
Riverside, CA 92501

**Release Date: March 13, 2023**

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**RIVERSIDE COUNTY:**

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As part of the Court's ongoing effort to relieve congestion and alleviate as many case dismissals as possible, effective Monday, April 3, 2023, the Court will implement an expanded Mandatory Settlement Conference (MSC) calendar at the Larson Justice Center in Indio. These conferences will be conducted on every misdemeanor case prior to the confirmed trial date and will specifically involve the District Attorney, defense counsel, and the defendant. The targeted purpose of these conferences will be to engage in meaningful discussions related to settlement prior to trial. The expanded MSC program will initially run through the month of April, Monday through Thursday and will be conducted by a retired judge. Additionally, the Riverside Superior Court will open another criminal trial courtroom in combination with the expanded MSC program to further address the issue of case dismissals in the Desert Region. The opening of this additional trial department is made possible by the recent appointment of a new judge to the Riverside Superior Court.

This expansion augments the current mandatory settlement conference program established by the Riverside Superior Court. Early in the pandemic, the court established mandatory settlement departments in each region of the county wherein judicial officers work directly with counsel to facilitate pretrial resolution. In December 2020, the Chief Justice launched the *Covid-19 Pandemic Readiness Conference* program, a statewide effort to address and help ease criminal case backlogs that accrued as a result of the pandemic utilizing retired judges from the Judicial Council's Temporary Assigned Judges Program (TAJP). Riverside has participated in this program since the inception. Settlement conferences remain a critical piece of the case management process to reduce the criminal case backlog.

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