

Superior Court of California, County of Riverside
Palm Springs Courthouse
Department PS4
Judge Michael C. Martin

Unless contrary orders are made by written order or on the record in open court, the following orders apply to all cases assigned to Department PS4. The Department PS4 rules discussed below will be incorporated by reference into all minute orders, including trial setting orders. References to “counsel” include self-represented parties. Failure to comply with these rules will subject parties/counsel to sanctions, including sanctions pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 177.5.

The court is open to the public and in-person hearings, but strongly encourages parties and counsel to appear remotely for non-evidentiary hearings (hearings with no oral testimony). Under rule 3.672 of the California Rules of Court, the court has adopted local rule 3132 for non-evidentiary hearings, such as hearings on motions, case management proceedings, etc. Notice requirements for remote appearances can be formal or informal, and are found in local rule 3132.

If for any reason the court disallows a remote appearance at a non-evidentiary hearing, the hearing shall be continued to a date at which the parties will be ordered to appear in person.

For remote appearances, parties can log in to Zoom or call in to the scheduled hearing by using one of the following telephone numbers and entering the meeting ID for this department:

- Call-in numbers: 1 (833) 568-8864 or 1 (669) 254-5252
- Zoom meeting ID: 161 650 1311

For additional information and instructions on telephonic appearances, visit the court’s website at: <https://www.riverside.courts.ca.gov/PublicNotices/remote-appearances.php>.

Court resources are limited, so before contacting staff all counsel should thoroughly review applicable statutes, the California Rules of Court, the Riverside County Superior Court’s local rules, the PS4 department rules, and the court’s website (<https://www.riverside.courts.ca.gov>; [Civil | Superior Court of California | County of Riverside](#) – Civil Trial Dept. Orders and Procedures). If these resources do not address your issue or concern, the courtroom assistant may be reached at (760) 992-3415. If you are ordered to provide documentation to the court via email, unless otherwise ordered you must email the courtroom assistant at DeptPS4@riverside.courts.ca.gov, cc’ing all counsel in the action. The messages sent to the courtroom assistant must be limited to information related to the request.

1. **Hearing times:** Unless otherwise indicated, the law and motion/case management calendar in Department PS4 begins at 8:30 a.m.
2. **Ex parte applications:** Ex parte applications are heard Monday through Friday, subject to the court’s availability. The court retains discretion to deny or grant an ex parte application without a hearing. Any opposition to an ex parte application must be served on the moving party/counsel as soon as it is filed with the court.

3. Law and motion:

- Pursuant to rule 3.1308(a)(1) of the California Rules of Court and local rule 3316, tentative rulings are posted by 3:00 p.m. on the court day immediately prior to the hearing at [Tentative Rulings | Superior Court of California | County of Riverside](#) (see the Desert Region). Tentative rulings are also available by telephone at (760) 904-5722.
- **Hearings will not be held on law and motion matters if oral argument is not timely requested.** To request oral argument, no later than 4:30 p.m. on the court date before the hearing you must:
 - Notify the judicial secretary for Department PS4 at (760) 904-5722; and
 - Inform all other parties.
- If no request for oral argument is timely made, tentative rulings become final effective on the date of the hearing, and the matter is taken off calendar.

4. Orders to show cause (OSC): If an OSC hearing is set by the court, litigants must comply with local rule 3116, which provides that a written response to any OSC be filed at least five court days in advance of the hearing. The sooner the court can review a 3116 declaration the sooner the OSC may be taken off calendar. Local rule 3116 further provides that “failure to file a timely declaration [may] constitute an admission by the responding party that there are no meritorious grounds on which to oppose the action that is the subject of the [OSC]. In that event, the court may vacate the hearing and issue any order consistent with that admission.” In other words, failure to respond in writing to the OSC may result in the court vacating the hearing on the OSC and making orders in chambers, including orders imposing sanctions on parties and counsel.

5. Trial setting conference (TSC):

- At least 10 court days in advance of any TSC, counsel are ordered to meet and confer and prepare and file a declaration addressing all the following:
 - **Three available dates for trial**, beginning on a Wednesday at 1:30 p.m., within three months of the TSC. Failure to select mutually agreeable dates, or to provide a detailed explanation as to why any dates selected are well outside the three-month window, may result in the court setting a trial date without input from the parties.
 - **Whether parties are requesting a bench or jury trial**, and the length of the anticipated trial in hours, if possible. If parties are unsure how to estimate the length of time needed, they should instead provide detailed information about the number of witnesses they anticipate calling, specifying the number of experts, and should note any special circumstances (e.g., need for interpreter, child witness, etc.).
 - **Whether the parties have participated or will be participating in ADR.**
- The declaration may also address any other issues that are relevant to setting trial.
- **Note:** The court strongly prefers that this declaration be jointly prepared and filed. Failure to file a declaration or to meet and confer as ordered may result in sanctions without further notice. Sanctions of up to \$1,500 may issue, jointly and severally as against counsel and parties.

6. Remote appearances at evidentiary hearings:

- Counsel, parties, and witnesses may not appear remotely at evidentiary hearings without prior court approval.
- Anyone wishing to appear remotely at an evidentiary hearing must comply with rule 3.672(h)(2) of the California Rules of Court and must provide good cause for a remote appearance. *Distance from the courthouse alone does not constitute good cause.*

- A party approved to appear remotely at an evidentiary hearing must provide all evidence it wants considered to all other parties and the court prior to the hearing. The party appearing remotely must also ensure it has access to all other parties' evidence before the hearing.
- Persons appearing remotely at evidentiary hearings without prior court approval are subject to sanctions. Parties that fail to provide their evidence to all other parties and the court, or that fail to ensure their own access to other parties' evidence, are also subject to sanctions. Sanctions may include monetary sanctions, the exclusion of a party's proffered evidence, and/or the party's waiver of access to others' evidence.

7. Evidence:

- Unless more specific rules apply (see Trials, *infra*), in a contested matter all evidence—documents, photographs, videos, and the like—must be exchanged with the other party or parties before the matter is called for a hearing. The court will not consider evidence the other side has not seen, and will not delay a hearing while the parties exchange evidence.
- If the court retains evidence in a matter that has been taken under submission, that evidence will be destroyed after the court renders its decision. **If a party does not want the evidence destroyed it is their duty to alert the court to that fact when the matter is taken under submission.**

8. **Small claims hearings:** During a small claims hearing each side has a maximum of 10 minutes to present their case or defense. If there are multiple parties per side those 10 minutes may be divvied up among the parties as the parties wish, but the side will not be allotted additional time. The plaintiff's side may split its 10 minutes between the presentation of its case-in-chief and rebuttal, with a maximum of two minutes of rebuttal time.

9. **Trials (not including small claims, unlawful detainer, and collections cases):**

- **All parties must comply with Riverside County Superior Court Local Rule 3401**, which can be found on the court's website. Local rule 3401 requires the preparation of:
 - A joint pretrial statement;
 - A joint witness list;
 - A joint exhibit list;
 - Exhibits (BATES stamped in sequential order);
 - Requests for judicial notice (if any);
 - Motions in limine (if any) and a proposed order for each;
 - Oppositions to motions in limine (if any);
 - Trial briefs (if any); and
 - Stipulations of facts or issues of law (if any).
- **All trial documents must be filed by 8:30 a.m. the Monday before trial.** At the same time these documents are filed the parties are to deliver five tabbed binders containing their exhibits to Department PS4.
- Litigants are strongly encouraged to review *Reales Investment v. Johnson (2020) 55 Cal.App.5th 463* regarding possible ramifications of non-compliance with local rule 3401.
- **Enforcing compliance:** Section 11 of local rule 3401 states that "[p]arties or their counsel who fail to comply with any portion of this rule without good cause are subject to sanctions, including but not limited to orders striking all or part of that party's pleading, dismissing all or part of that party's action, entering a judgment by default against that party, postponing the trial, or imposing monetary, evidentiary, or issue sanctions."
- **Trial briefs** must not exceed 20 pages (inclusive of attachments).

- **Motions in limine** must be discussed and exchanged as outlined in local rule 3401. Motions should be specific to allow the court to make an enforceable order with respect to particular evidence. Counsel should not file motions in limine to enforce general legal principles e.g., to prohibit “golden rule” arguments, to prohibit general use of documents not disclosed during discovery, to prohibit use of hearsay evidence, etc.
- **Trial exhibits/deposition transcripts:** Exhibits must be BATES stamped in sequential order as required by local rule 3401. Plaintiff shall be assigned exhibit numbers 1-100. Defendant shall be assigned exhibit numbers 101-200. Deposition transcripts that may be read or referred to at trial must be lodged with the court by 8:30 a.m. the Monday before trial starts. Absent an agreement of all counsel/parties, the transcripts must be original/certified. If counsel intends to show the court any portion of the deposition, a PDF copy of the deposition must be included in the trial exhibits.
- **Impeachment exhibits** need not be in the exhibit binder(s). Such evidence must be provided to the court no later than the trial date. Exhibits offered solely for impeachment must be labeled, organized numerically, BATES stamped, and tabbed in the manner of all other exhibits, and should be enclosed in a labeled envelope or package that need not be shared in advance with opposing parties. Failure to provide impeachment exhibits to the court as required will result in the court precluding their use.
- **Trial hours:** Evidence will be heard Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (2.5 hours of court time per day/7.5 hours per week).
- **Witnesses:** Counsel is responsible for properly instructing witnesses of inadmissible/excluded evidence. Speaking objections are not permitted. Other than parties and retained expert witnesses, all witnesses are excluded from the courtroom until they are called to testify. No motion is necessary. While a witness is testifying, counsel must have at least one other witness in the courthouse ready to testify. Before leaving the courtroom, counsel must notify opposing counsel of the identity and order that each witness will be called the following day.
- **Requests to continue trial** shall be made by noticed motion. Ex parte applications are only considered if supported by exigent circumstances. Trial dates are firm and continuances are disfavored, so any motion should be specific in stating circumstances demonstrating good cause for a continuance. (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.1332.) Stipulations to continue trial should conform to Code of Civil Procedure section 595.2.
- **Post-trial matters:** At the conclusion of the trial, the clerk will return the exhibits that are unmarked or not admitted at trial to counsel for the party or parties who offered those exhibits.

10. Artificial intelligence: Parties and attorneys filing **any paper** with the court—application, brief, motion, pleading, etc.—must disclose whether they have used artificial intelligence (AI) in the preparation of that paper, and must verify that they have checked the accuracy of all AI-produced work product included in the paper. The failure to disclose the use of AI in a paper and/or to ensure that all citations, factual statements, and quotations generated by AI are accurate will subject the party or attorney to sanctions without further notice. (See generally *Noland v. Land of the Free, L.P.* (2025) 114 Cal.App.5th 426.)