

Governor Newsom Issues Executive Order on Judicial Council Emergency Authority

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Order would enable California Chief Justice to take emergency actions for the state's courts to be able to conduct business during the COVID-19 pandemic

SACRAMENTO – Today, Governor Gavin Newsom signed an executive order to enhance the authority of California's Judicial Branch to take emergency action in the face of the COVID-19 crisis.

Specifically, the executive order empowers the Judicial Council and the Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court to take necessary action to be able to conduct business and continue to operate while responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The order does not affect any existing court order or rule.

The order allows the Judicial Branch to allow for remote depositions in every case (the law had previously required that parties be deposed in person) and electronic service of process. Additionally, the order leaves the Judicial Branch discretion to make any modifications to legal practice and procedure it deems necessary in order to continue conducting business.

“Our courts need to continue to do their business for the sake of the law and public safety, and to the extent they are able to, and it is my responsibility to do everything I can to give the Judicial Council and the Chief Justice the flexibility they need to take actions to meet this moment,” said Governor Newsom.

The California Constitution establishes the Judicial Council as the supreme administrative and rulemaking body for California's courts.

The Judicial Council, through the Chief Justice, has recently taken actions amid the COVID-19 outbreak, including [suspending jury trials for the next 60 days](#) and issuing [other emergency court orders](#).

A copy of the Governor's executive order can be found [here](#), and the text of the order can be found [here](#).

Learn more about the state's ongoing COVID-19 response efforts [here](#). Visit [covid19.ca.gov](https://www.covid19.ca.gov) for critical steps Californians can take to stay healthy, and resources available to those impacted by the outbreak.

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