

1
2 **IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF BUTTE**

3 **EMERGENCY ORDER OF THE PRESIDING JUDGE**

4 **AFFECTING COURT OPERATIONS**

5 **FOR THE BUTTE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT**

6
7 In response to the Governor’s Order on November 16, 2020, and the placement of Butte County
8 in the COVID-19 “Purple Tier” (most restrictive tier), Butte County Superior Court operations shall be
9 modified as Ordered herein. These Orders are in addition to any prior Orders of this Court, unless said
10 orders are in conflict with the orders stated herein, in which case this Order shall prevail. These orders
11 shall remain until Butte County is placed by the Governor’s Office in a lower Tier, or until otherwise
12 modified or rescinded by the Court.

13
14 The Presiding Judge of the court finds good cause for the orders listed herein based on the
15 placement of Butte County into the most restrictive Tier (Purple) which indicates a high rate of spread of
16 the coronavirus; and further finds the orders are necessary to protect individuals subject to court process,
17 and to protect court employees, court users, judicial officers, and justice partners. The orders are intended
18 to reduce the number of people coming into the courthouse and reduce the number of people who would
19 be seated together in gathering spaces for longer than 15 minutes in groups larger than 10.

20 **ORDER**

- 21
22 I. No new Jury Trials shall proceed the weeks of November 23rd or November 30th. Thereafter,
23 the Court will assess whether good cause exists to continue jury trials based on the status of the
24 Purple Tier designation. Any jury trial in progress as of the date of this Order shall proceed to
25 their conclusion.

1 II. All witnesses in Preliminary Hearings and Evidentiary Hearings in Criminal matters shall
2 appear by remote video technology. If an objection is made to the remote appearance, the
3 matter is to be rescheduled consistent with the extended time for Preliminary Hearing as
4 provided by the previously issued March 30th Order of the Chief Justice. If extended time is
5 unavailable, the judge presiding may allow an exception if in-person testimony is necessary and
6 notice requirements are followed.

7 III. Beginning November 30, 2020, all Family Law RFO calendars exceeding 15 matters shall be
8 evaluated by Court Operations, with selected matters continued to special-set calendars in order
9 to reduce the calendar sizes. Matters involving Domestic Violence and Contempt of Court shall
10 have priority and not be rescheduled.

11 IV. The Court's Self-Help and Referral Program (SHARP) shall limit in-person assistance to the
12 following:

13 A. Emergency Restraining Orders and Emergency Custody Issues (including
14 Guardianships).

15 B. Matters referred directly to SHARP from a Judicial Officer during a same-day Hearing.

16 C. Finalization/submission of paperwork completed offsite via remote SHARP assistance.

17 The primary SHARP offices at the Butte County Courthouse and North Butte County
18 Courthouse shall be closed, and all assistance described above shall be provided at a public
19 counter that provides adequate social distancing and substantial staff / public separation
20 barriers.

21 For the reasons stated herein, and under the authority of the Presiding Judge as found in California Rule
22 of Court, Rule 10.603, this emergency Order affecting court operations at the Butte Superior Court is in
23 effect effective immediately and until further order of the court.

24 **SO ORDERED.**

25
26 Date: 11/20/2020

27 Clare Keithley
28 Hon. Clare Keithley
Presiding Judge