



MARICOPA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT: FAMILY DEPARTMENT

Modified Family Department Operations during COVID-19 Pandemic

The Family Department is continuing to operate under modified procedures as we address the COVID-19 crisis. Over the past few months, as circumstances have allowed, there have been expanded services and resumption of hearings and proceedings. The following is a summary thereof:

- 1 Court Proceedings.** To maintain a safe environment for the public and the court community, the majority of family law related proceedings are being held through virtual means. Each judicial division is using the GoToMeeting platform, but the aspects for how the proceedings shall move forward may vary from division to division. Those details may be found in minute entries that set the proceeding or may be secured by contacting the assigned division. In-person proceedings are significantly limited. A matter may be conducted in-person only as instructed by the assigned judicial officer. If a party physically appears for a hearing, they may be directed to the Law Library Resource Center and assigned to a conference room equipped with a computer to serve as the virtual courtroom for that proceeding. If there is any question whether a proceeding will be conducted in-person or through virtual means, please contact the assigned judicial officer's division as much in advance of the proceeding as practical for further instructions.
- 2 Court Programs, Specialty Calendars and Services.** The various programs operated by the Family Department are also functioning with limited in-person appearances, either using the GoToMeeting platform (IV-D, ACE Workshop and Evidentiary Hearings associated with Specialty Court conferences) or telephonic appearances for hearings/conferences (Decree on Demand, Early Resolution Conferences, Mediation, Open Negotiation, Parenting Conferences, Conciliation Court Services and Specialty Court Conferences with Conference Officers). The Parental Conflict Resolution Class remains suspended until further notice. Court-ordered Child Interviews are being conducted in person. All interviews will be held in the Old Courthouse, 125 West Washington, Courtroom 101, in downtown Phoenix. This location provides for necessary social distancing, and everyone (Conciliator conducting the interview, all children participating in an interview, and any parent or adult supervisor who accompanies the child to the court location) is required to wear a mask. The Orders to Appear that are issued when an interview is set contains all the necessary instructions.
- 3 Drug Testing Court-ordered drug or alcohol testing** continues to be performed through Averhealth. For any case in which there has been an order for breath alcohol testing, the party so ordered shall submit to an ETG test through urine samples. No breath testing is being performed at this time.
- 4 Parent Information Program.** In pre-decree cases that involve children, parents are required to complete the Parent Information Program pursuant to ARS Section 25-351. At this time, no in-person classes are being conducted. Parents required to complete the program may do so online or through a virtual live program and a list of providers is available here: www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov/family/pip/



5 Court-Ordered Parenting Time. It continues to be the general policy of the family department that allowing children to maintain regular access to each parent is in their best interests. While the facts of any given case shall dictate the result, it is the general view of the family department that existing parenting plan schedules remain in effect and enforceable.

6 Each individual judicial division is conducting matters via telephonic or by video proceeding means. Information regarding any specific case should be sought from the assigned division.

- * **This remains a fluid situation. Services and procedures, may change, as circumstances dictate. The Family Department will make every effort to post any such changes to the Modified Department Operations section of the [Maricopa Superior Court's COVID-19 information site](#).**
- * **For more information about a specific service or any other family court case matters, please call Family Court Administration at 602-506-1561.**

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