



UPDATE March 31, 2020. The following summarizes the policies of the Family Law Bench which we anticipate will be in effect through April 17, 2020. [The Clerk of the Superior Court continues to accept family law filings.](#)

The Family Law Bench of the Pima County Superior Court continues to put forth best efforts to meet the needs of the community we serve while also being mindful of issues, recommendations, and orders relating to COVID-19 concerns.

Hearings will be set on essential matters, only.

- All family law filings will be classified by the Family Law Presiding Judge (or designee) to determine whether a hearing must be set before April 17, 2020.
- Family law divisions will continue to process filings and schedule hearing dates as the Court's calendar permits.

Essential matters are as follows:

- **Ex parte protective order requests.** The Court will allow telephonic appearances for *ex parte* hearings.
- **Contested protective order proceedings.** Hearings will be held within the applicable time frames, and consistent with any applicable administrative orders including Arizona Supreme Court Administrative Order [No. 2020-48](#) and local Administrative Order [No. 2020-12](#).
- **Rule 48 requests.** Requests for Rule 48 relief will be handled based upon the filing(s). No hearings will be held on the *ex parte* requests.
- **10-day Rule 48 contested hearings.** Rule 48(d) hearings will be scheduled in a timely manner. Hearings will be held consistent with any applicable administrative orders.
- **In custody hearings** (child support warrants, etc.)

For essential hearings

- The Court will try to assign these hearings to the assigned [Family Law](#) Division.
- When possible, the Court will hold hearings telephonically.
- In-person proceedings will be avoided to the greatest extent possible, consistent with core constitutional rights and applicable administrative orders.
- The Clerk of the Superior Court is still accepting exhibits to be pre-marked before scheduled hearings via normal practice.

Protective Orders

Protection orders may now be completed telephonically, for most domestic violence requests. **However, the courts will continue to accommodate healthy individuals who visit in person for protection requests.**

You **MUST** start your protection order process online using the Arizona Protective Order Initiation & Notification Tool ([AZPOINT](#)) website from any computer, tablet, or mobile phone. **You will need an email address.** Please make sure that the device you are using is safe, and, that you are not being monitored by the person causing you harm.

After you complete your application in AZPOINT, you will receive a reference number. Then, call any Clerk of Court's office number below, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., and provide that reference number.

- **Superior Court 520-724-3221**
- **Justice Court 520-724-3942**
- **Tucson City Court 520-791-4971**

The Clerk will review your paperwork, make sure you meet the requirements for a hearing, then arrange a time for a judge to call you back. If your petition is granted during your telephonic, on-the-record hearing, the Court will send the Order of Protection out for service the same day. (You may request service be delayed for up to 72 hours.)

Facts:

- The information you provide on the AZPOINT website is held securely for 90 days. You can save and return to finish your application at any time in that 90-day window.
- Both the application and service of a domestic violence Order of Protection are free of charge to the filing party.
- The domestic violence Order of Protection will be served by local law enforcement.
- Although the initial process of an Injunction Against Harassment (IAH) can be telephonic, applicants must visit the courthouse to pay their IAH fee (or apply for a fee waiver or deferral) and pick up the injunction paperwork.
 - The IAH applicant must also arrange service.

For the safety and health of the community and court staff during the COVID-19 crisis, the courts hope to process most protection order requests telephonically. **Again, the courts will continue to accommodate healthy individuals who visit in person for protection requests** – however, if you are ill, please do not come to the courthouse.

For more information about AZPOINT or filing an order of protection, visit <https://azpoint.azcourts.gov/> call one of the three Clerk of Court office numbers, bolded, above, or contact communityrelations@sc.pima.gov.

Non-essential hearings

- All currently calendared non-essential matters through April 17, 2020, will be reset after that date.
- Parties will receive notice of their new hearing date via U.S. Mail.
- If you have questions about your hearing, please contact the assigned [Family Law](#) Division. Messages should be returned by the close of the next business day. If you do not receive a return call by the close of the next business day, please contact the Family Law Presiding Judge.

Default Matters

- Where appropriate, the Court encourages the use of Rule 44.1 motions so that default decrees may be entered without a hearing.

Filings at the Courthouse

- Self-represented litigants (SRL's) may continue to come to the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court to file or pick-up needed paperwork.
- For the legal community and court-runners, the Court has a centralized drop-off and pick-up location for bench copies of filings. Drop-off is at a cart located outside Window 7 in the Clerk's office, and pick-up for runners is at the Clerk's mailroom on the first floor.
- Runners will still need to process the papers before leaving the building.

IV-D Child Support Hearings

- All calendared non-essential IV-D child support hearings through April 17, 2020, will be reset to a new date after April 17, 2020.
- Parties will receive notice of their new hearing date via U.S. Mail.
- If you have questions about your hearing, please contact the assigned [IV-D Division](#) (see 59/J or 53/D). Messages should be returned by the close of the next business day. If you do not receive a return call by the close of the next business day, please contact the Family Law Presiding Judge.

Mandatory Family Law Settlement Conferences

- There will be no mandatory in-person settlement conferences through April 17, 2020.
- The Court will accommodate as many settlement conferences as possible through the continued use of *pro tems*, as well as phone and video conferences.
 - Parties and counsel, if applicable, must agree to proceed remotely.
- Settlement conferences that cannot be covered will be reset to available dates on or after April 27, 2020.
 - Parties will receive notice of their new conference date via U.S. Mail.
 - Counsel, if applicable, will receive notice of the new conference date via normal court practice.

Conciliation Court Services

- The Legal Services Building, where the Conciliation Court is located, is not open to the public at this time.
- The Conciliation Court is currently conducting mediation and petitions for conciliation exclusively by phone.
- As of Thursday March 26, 2020, any existing ARFLP (Rule 12) child interview appointments are suspended and will be rescheduled for a later date.
- The Conciliation Court has temporarily postponed any evaluation-related family observation, child interviews, and home visit appointments.
 - Individuals scheduled to bring their children for an interview should contact the Conciliation Court at 520-724-5590 or fccc@sc.pima.gov to determine the status of their session, and, if necessary, to reschedule their appointment.
- **Parent Education Classes**
 - As of March 31, 2020, **in-person** parent education classes are suspended until further notice.
 - Individuals scheduled to attend a parent education class should contact the Conciliation Court at 520-724-5590 or fccc@sc.pima.gov to determine the status of their session, and, if necessary, to reschedule their appointment.
 - **While the Court is operating under administrative orders relating to COVID-19, individuals needing to complete parent education classes are granted permission to complete one of two online parenting classes: positiveparentingthroughdivorce.com (\$60.00) or parentingchoice.com (\$39.99).**
 - Parties pay a \$45.00 parent education fee with the Clerk of Court's office at the time of filing.
 - If parties intend to take the **online class** during the timeframe that the Court is operating under COVID-19 protocols, they will need to specify to the Clerk's office at the time of filing that they do not wish to have the \$45.00 fee included.
 - A party who previously paid the \$45.00 fee but takes the parent education course online because the in-person class is not available must request a refund of that fee through the Clerk's office.
 - **All parties who take an online parent education class must file their certificate of completion with the Clerk's office.**

Family Law Contact Information / Family Law Webpage Information

Contact information for the divisions of the Pima County Superior Court Family Law bench can be found on the [Family Law Bench](#) page of the Superior Court website. Rules of practice, forms, and information for Family Law matters can be found on the [Family Law](#) page of the Superior Court website.