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Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **PRESIDING JUDGE KEVIN C. BRAZILE ANNOUNCES MODEL REMOTE ADOPTION PROCESS**

### ***No Court Appearance Needed to Finalize Uncontested Adoptions in Los Angeles County***

The Superior Court of Los Angeles County, in conjunction with the Judicial Council, Alliance For Children’s Rights (Alliance) and Public Counsel, has devised a remote process that allows for the finalization of uncontested Adoptions without the need for a court appearance. The new process, which could be replicated statewide, will help parents and their adoptive children quickly and efficiently obtain final court approval of their cases.

“I want to thank the Judicial Council, Alliance and Public Counsel for their insightful contributions to help the Court design and implement this innovative stipulated procedure,” Presiding Judge Brazile said. “Right now, there are 212 uncontested Adoption cases on hold since the Court transitioned to prioritizing emergency and time-sensitive matters during the COVID-19 crisis. With just one more step, these parents will be able to finalize their forever families without delay.”

The new process requires the adoptive parents to sign a stipulated, notarized Adoption agreement, declarations and submit other Judicial Council forms by email. After the

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## **ADOPTIONS**

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submission of the stipulated, notarized petition, court employees check that all forms have been prepared correctly and the entire process is done electronically within a few court days. Judicial Officers sign the Adoption paperwork in chambers and the Court sends the final, file-stamped order by mail to the parents' attorneys. Applicants may choose to wait for the in-person appearance; however it likely will be months before in-person Adoptions will be held in the courthouse.

Before the COVID-19 emergency, it generally would take eight weeks from the initial filing for a Judicial Officers to approve a final Adoption.

"These happy in-person proceedings are cherished and celebrated by parents, children, Judicial Officers and court employees," Presiding Judge Brazile said. "But with the social distancing requirements in place in our courthouses to slow the spread of COVID-19, this easy, model process offers a convenient, safe alternative to coming to a courthouse."

Public Counsel and the Alliance attorneys have the Adoption packets and instructions for how to complete the new process. The Court expects most parents will take advantage of this quick option.

The new model adoption process is part of the Court's *Here For You | Safe For You* initiative to provide a safe courthouse environment while offering services that allow court business to be conducted remotely. Whether appearing by phone, from home, the office or coming to the courthouse, the Court provides safe, efficient options to access justice. The Court's remote technology options promote social distancing by reducing the number of people appearing in person.

Information on *Here For You | Safe For You* can be found [here](#) and Twitter page ([@LASuperiorCourt](#)).

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