

1 cumulative total of COVID-19 cases of 291,502.¹ Though daily new cases calculated by a 14-
2 day moving average dropped significantly between April and June 2021, July and August have
3 seen a resurgence of cases with daily new cases exceeding 1,000.²

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5 On September 4, 2020, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued an
6 order staying the execution of eviction orders against tenants meeting certain criteria for
7 nonpayment of rent for eligible tenants (Federal Register Document Number 2020-19654).
8 Based on concerns of transmission of the Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2 and the need to allow
9 states and counties across the nation sufficient time to disseminate federal funding for rental
10 assistance, the CDC most recently extended this order through October 3, 2021 for counties
11 experiencing substantial or high transmission levels. As of August 11, 2021, the CDC reports
12 Clark County, Nevada as a high level of community transmission.
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14 *CLOSURE OF TRAFFIC DIVISION LOBBY*

15 Both the Eighth Judicial District Court and the Las Vegas Justice Court are provided
16 occupancy of the Regional Justice Center by Clark County; however, the Eighth Judicial District
17 Court has been charged with the responsibility of the safety and security of the entire facility.³
18 On March 17, 2020, then Chief Justice Kristina Pickering and Chief Judge Linda Bell issued
19 joint Administrative Order 0009, 20-04, respectively, ordering the temporary closure of the Las
20 Vegas Justice Court traffic customer service counter located on the first floor at the Regional
21 Justice Center in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This same order provided, "To the
22 extent possible, traffic-related matters should be conducted by telephone, video, or other remote
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26 ¹ Nevada Health Response Dashboard as of August 12, 2021.

27 ² Nevada Health Response Dashboard as of August 12, 2021.

28 ³ This does not include the deputy marshals appointed and performing duties pursuant to NRS 4.353.

1 electronic means.” On June 1, 2020, Chief Justice Pickering and Chief Judge Bell further
2 ordered, “Due to the limited capacity at the Regional Justice Center as a result of social
3 distancing, the Las Vegas Justice Court and the Las Vegas Municipal Court traffic customer
4 service counter located on the first floor of the Regional Justice Center should remain closed
5 until social distancing restrictions are lifted. Traffic-related matters should be conducted by
6 telephone, video, or other remote electronic means.”⁴ This order remains in effect for all traffic-
7 related matters.
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9 *TEMPORARY USE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE WINDOWS*

10 On May 13, 2021, the Las Vegas Municipal Court vacated thirteen customer service
11 windows located on the first floor of the Regional Justice Center. Through a collaboration
12 between the courts and the Civil Law Self Help Center, both the Eighth Judicial District Court
13 and the Las Vegas Justice Court have temporarily converted that space to assist tenants facing
14 eviction. Beginning June 2021, the thirteen customer service windows have been and will
15 continue to be staffed by the Civil Law Self Help Center, Help of Southern Nevada, and Clark
16 County Social Services. Assistance will be provided to tenants to electronically file documents
17 with the Court, initiate rental assistance applications, upload documents to rental assistance
18 applications, and check the status of rental assistance applications. Given the pandemic’s
19 financial impact on tenants and the CDC’s stated finding that “Evicted renters must move, which
20 leads to multiple outcomes that increase the risk of COVID-19 spread,” the Las Vegas Justice
21 Court prioritizes temporary use of this space for summary eviction matters over traffic-related
22 matters.
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⁴ EJDC Administrative Order 20-17.

1 *BENCH WARRANTS*

2 In March 2020, the Las Vegas Justice Court recalled all bench warrants for all traffic-
3 related matters⁵ and suspended the issuance of any bench warrants for all traffic-related matters
4 given the temporary closure of the traffic customer service windows. Notice will be provided to
5 defendants in all traffic-related matters prior to the issuance or re-issuance of any bench warrant.
6 It is imperative that all defendants in traffic-related matters ensure the Court has current and
7 accurate contact information, including address and e-mail address, to ensure receipt of notice of
8 the issuance or re-issuance of any bench warrant. Updated information can be provided
9 telephonically at (702) 671-3444.
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11 *LEGISLATIVE CHANGES*

12 In 2019, the Nevada State Legislature passed and Governor Sisolak enacted NRS
13 484A.615 which states, “A court having jurisdiction over an offense for which a traffic citation
14 may be issued pursuant to NRS 484A.630 or its traffic violations bureau may establish a system
15 by which, except as otherwise provided in subsection 5, the court or traffic violations bureau
16 may allow a person who has been issued a traffic citation that is filed with the court or traffic
17 violations bureau *to make a plea and state his or her defense or any mitigating circumstances*
18 *by mail, by electronic mail, over the Internet or by other electronic means.*”
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21 Due to the consistent high occupancy of the traffic customer service counter and concern
22 of transmission of COVID-19 or other viruses, the Las Vegas Justice Court secured CARES Act
23 funding to establish an online platform for defendants to resolve traffic citations without the need
24 to travel to the Regional Justice Center. Though funding was received and the Matterhorn
25 platform was secured in 2020, development of the website has required significant programing.
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28 ⁵ For purposes of this order, traffic-related matters are all traffic citations issued for traffic offenses carrying four (4) or fewer demerit points.

1 Additional IT programming of the Court's case management system (Odyssey) for compliance
2 with findings from a January 2021 audit of traffic cases by the Administrative Office of the
3 Courts is being conducted in conjunction with the development of Matterhorn. Accordingly, the
4 launch of Matterhorn, originally scheduled for April 2021 has been delayed.

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6 In the 2021 legislative session, the Nevada Legislature passed and Governor Sisolak
7 enacted Assembly Bill 116. This bill reclassifies many traffic offenses from criminal
8 misdemeanors to civil infractions and provides substantial procedural changes for civil
9 infractions. Although this bill does not take effect until January 2023, the Las Vegas Justice
10 Court IT Division is working to ensure a seamless transition using the Matterhorn platform to
11 avoid any future impediments to processing traffic citations.

12 *ALTERNATIVE ELECTRONIC METHODS FOR RESOLVING TRAFFIC CITATIONS*

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14 Prior to the launch of Matterhorn, the Las Vegas Justice Court is offering alternative
15 electronic methods for resolving traffic citations for defendants who choose to resolve their
16 citation. In compliance with NRS 484A.615 and the joint administrative orders from the Nevada
17 Supreme Court and Eighth Judicial District Court referenced above, defendants may choose to
18 resolve their traffic citation online at www.lasvegasjusticecourt.us. Alternatively, defendants
19 may choose to resolve their traffic citations utilizing a written plea form which can be obtained
20 by calling a customer service representative at (702) 671-3444.⁶

21 *TRAFFIC TRIALS*

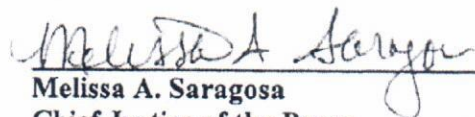
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23 The Las Vegas Justice Court has not resumed setting traffic trials for defendants who
24 wish to plead not guilty and have their case set for trial. Due to the resurgence of COVID-19
25 cases, delays in the construction of Courtroom 1D, IT programming necessary to develop and
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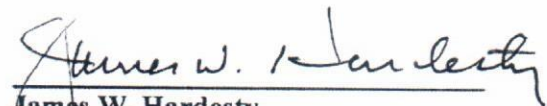
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28 ⁶ In either case, defendants should consider consulting legal counsel of their choosing prior to entering a
plea of not guilty and submitting a statement in defense or a written plea form to the Justice Court.

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launch Matterhorn, and redirection of Court resources, including hearing masters to assist with
eviction cases, it is not anticipated that traffic trials will resume until January 2022. Patience on
the part of traffic defendants and their counsel is requested during these unprecedented times.

Dated this 24th day of August, 2021.


Melissa A. Saragosa
Chief Justice of the Peace


James W. Hardesty
Chief Justice
Nevada Supreme Court