



**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF MONTEREY**

240 Church Street, Salinas, California 93901 - (831) 775-5400
www.monterey.courts.ca.gov

RAFAEL VAZQUEZ
Presiding Judge

JENNIFER J. O'KEEFE
Asst. Presiding Judge

KATY GRANT
Court Executive Officer

**MONTEREY COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT ANNOUNCES
UPDATED JUDICIAL ASSIGNMENTS FOR 2026**

2026 Judicial Assignments
Effective October 5, 2026

Hon. Rafael Vazquez, Presiding Judge

Salinas Courthouse

DEPARTMENT 1:
3rd Floor

HON. STEPHANIE E. HULSEY
Prison Cases
SVP and MDO cases
Parole & Post Release Community Supervision
(PRCS)
Criminal Writs
Felony Arraignment Department
Civil Grand Jury Advisor

DEPARTMENT 2:
3rd Floor

HON. ANDREW G. LIU
Felony Trial Department
Appellate Division

DEPARTMENT 3:
3rd Floor

HON. PAMELA L. BUTLER
Supervising Judge, Criminal Division
Presiding Judge, Appellate Division
Felony Trial Department

DEPARTMENT 4:
2nd Floor

HON. JENNIFER J. O'KEEFE
Assistant Presiding Judge
Felony Trial Department
Appellate Division

DEPARTMENT 5:
2nd Floor

HON. CARRIE M. PANETTA
Felony Trial Department

DEPARTMENT 6:
2nd Floor

HON. MARK E. HOOD
Felony Trial Department

DEPARTMENT 7:
1st Floor

HON. MURAT A. OZGUR
Misdemeanor Trial Department

DEPARTMENT 8:
1st Floor

HON. LINDSEY BERG-JAMES
Misdemeanor Trial Department

DEPARTMENT 9:
1st Floor

HON. BRIAN T. JONES
Misdemeanor Trial Department

DEPARTMENT 10:
B Level

HON. JARED JEFFERSON
Juvenile Dependency Department
Combined Drug Court
DUI Treatment Court
Military Diversion & Veterans Treatment Court
Criminal Mental Health (CNC, Diversion, 1370.01)
Withdrawal of Consent to Adopt

DEPARTMENT 11:
B Level

TO BE DETERMINED
Misdemeanor Arraignment Department

DEPARTMENT 12:
1422 Natividad Road Salinas

HON. SAM LAVORATO, JR.
Supervising Judge, Juvenile Division
Juvenile Justice Department
Juvenile Truancy Department

Monterey Courthouse

DEPARTMENT 13:
3rd Floor

HON. ELISABETH K. MINETA
Probate Department
LPS Conservatorships
CARE Court
Unlawful Detainers
Adoptions
Small Claims Appeals

DEPARTMENT 13A:

3rd Floor

HON. ELIZABETH LEITZINGER

Direct Calendar Civil Trial Department
Ex Parte Calendar
Labor Appeals
Collections
Fee Waiver Requests
Riese Hearings/Mental Health Writs
Civil Firearm Hearings

DEPARTMENT 14:

2nd Floor

HON. IAN A. RIVAMONTE

Supervising Judge, Civil Division
Direct Calendar Civil Trial Department
Complex Civil
Ex Parte Calendar

DEPARTMENT 15:

2nd Floor

HON. THOMAS W. WILLS

Direct Calendar Civil Trial Department
Complex Civil
Ex Parte Calendar

DEPARTMENT 16:

1st Floor

HON. VANESSA W. VALLARTA

Family Law Department

DEPARTMENT 16A:

1st Floor

COMM. MARIA L. MENDOZA

Civil Harassment Restraining Orders
Domestic Violence Restraining Orders
Elder or Dependent Adult Abuse Restraining Orders
Gun Violence Restraining Orders
Workplace Violence Restraining Orders

DEPARTMENT 17:

1st Floor

HON. HEIDI K. WHILDEN

Family Law Department

King City Courthouse

DEPARTMENT 18:

TRAFFIC COMMISSIONER

2ND Tuesday of the Month
Traffic Court

DCSS/COMM. STEPHEN A. SILLMAN

3RD Wednesday of the month (6x/year)

Marina Courthouse

DEPARTMENT 20:

COMM. MARIA L. MENDOZA

Traffic Court
Small Claims Court

DEPARTMENT 21:

COMM. STEPHEN A. SILLMAN

Child Support Department

COMM. MARIA L. MENDOZA

Thursdays – Long Cause Restraining Order Hearings

- Presiding Judge Vazquez will be in Salinas. He will handle judicial administration duties, cover criminal calendars, and will handle criminal jury trials when a judicial officer has more than one trial confirmed in his or her department. He will also serve on the appellate panel.