

California Judicial Council Adopts Rule Tolling State of Limitations

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On April 6, 2020, the State Judicial Council adopted [emergency amendments](#) to the California Rules of Court in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. One important change that affects many real estate transactions and development projects tolls the statute of limitations for all civil causes of action from April 6, 2020, until 90 days after the Governor declares that the state of emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic is lifted. Among other things, this extends the date for initiating litigation challenging a CEQA document or a development approval, such as a tentative map or conditional use permit. This also affects the date of “final approval” under many real estate purchase agreements and creates additional uncertainty for project proponents.

As you are aware, things are changing quickly and there is no clear-cut authority or bright line rules. This is not an unequivocal statement of the law; instead, it represents our best interpretation of where things currently stand. This article does not address the potential impacts of the numerous other local, state, and federal orders that have been issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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