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ATTORNEYS AT LAW

“One Day-One Trial” Now Available To Litigants

By: Jay B. Freedman

Several years ago many California counties revised their rules for jury duty so that prospective jurors would only have to attend one day of jury service if they were not selected for a trial. With the passage of AB 2284, effective January 1, 2011, parties to litigation can now get from jury selection to closing argument in a single day.

Entitled the Expedited Jury Trials Act, AB 2284 allows parties to agree to conduct their jury or bench trial in a single day. Each side has three hours to present its case (including jury selection), appellate rights are restricted, many post-trial motions are unavailable and juries are limited to 8 or fewer jurors. The rules of evidence, however, are not relaxed and no time limits are placed on the jury’s deliberation.

Unlike an agreement to arbitrate or submit to judicial reference, which can be incorporated into contracts, an agreement for an expedited trial may only be entered after a dispute has arisen and a complaint filed. Once entered, the agreement is binding unless all parties agree otherwise or the trial court finds good cause for the action to not proceed under the expedited rules.

The Act can be found in section 630.01 et seq. of the Code of Civil Procedure, and it sunsets on January 1, 2016 unless the repeal date is extended or eliminated beforehand. Click [here](#) for the full text of the Act.

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