

LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT 2015/2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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Michael D. Antonovich Antelope Valley Courthouse



Santa Monica Courthouse





Governor George Deukmejian (Long Beach) Courthouse



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## **Efficiencies Gained, Challenges Remain** A message from the Presiding Judge and Court Executive Officer

The Los Angeles Superior Court (LASC) is the largest trial court in the country, comprising over a third of the California judiciary. LASC is responsible for addressing the needs of millions of litigants and other court users yearly – real people who have real problems that can only be resolved by the Court. More than half of these litigants come to court without legal representation.

Severe state budget cuts imposed during the Great Recession forced LASC to lose a quarter of its support staff and close 79 courtrooms. Nevertheless, the Court remained committed to faithfully applying the laws enacted by the Legislature and providing hearings commensurate with due process for all those who seek justice under law.

While the Court's budget has not fully recovered, we have redoubled our efforts to fulfill our mission. Last year, we embarked upon an aggressive effort to reinvent the Court. We repurposed many of our courtrooms to improve efficiency through differentiated case management (for instance, using specialized procedures to encourage early case resolution and meet the needs of the parties in civil cases). We expanded automation throughout the Court to enhance service to the public and save resources. We trained our managers on how to use business process reengineering techniques to achieve administrative efficiencies. And we took savings that we could not spend on permanent staffing and invested in new case management systems – not only to replace severely outdated technology, but also to achieve future operating efficiencies and enhance services to the public.

We highlight some of those efforts in this Annual Report.

We have already seen the fruits of those efforts, as we have:

- Increased our capacity to hear backlogged family law cases;
- Added a desperately needed courtroom to hear foster care cases;
   Opened criminal courtrooms;
- Expanded hearing capacity in probate;
- Expanded geographic access to justice in family law and unlawful detainer (eviction) cases;
- Provided free interpreter services for all civil harassment, conservatorship, dependency, domestic violence, family law, guardianship, small claims, and unlawful detainer (eviction) cases; and
- Eliminated long lines that clogged courthouses by expanding online services, self-service kiosks and other innovations.

Even with these innovations, inasmuch as LASC's state funding is only 70 percent of what its workload demands, we need additional resources. This underfunding is apparent in a number of areas where chronic problems linger:

- Increased filings in complex civil, criminal, dependency (foster care) and mental health related cases are time-intensive and drain judicial and staff resources.
- Court calendars remain overloaded, resulting in delays that deny litigants prompt access to justice, especially hurting small business owners and individuals with limited means.
- Self-help resources are insufficient to meet the growing needs of people who come to court without lawyers – more than half of all litigants.
- Although they deliver improved services, the concentration of certain types of cases into "hub" courthouses remain a geographic challenge for some litigants.
- A lack of court reporters in civil cases means that only those who can afford a private reporter will have access to a transcript of proceedings.

These are some of the ongoing challenges we face.

In the following pages, we catalog the most significant of the myriad improvements that LASC has made during the past year. We are proud of these achievements as they demonstrate the truth of our mission statement...

"The Los Angeles Superior Court is dedicated to serving our community by providing equal access to justice through the fair, timely and efficient resolution of cases."



Carolyn Stuck Min R Catto

Carolyn B. Kuhl Presiding Judge

Sherri R. Carter Executive Officer/Clerk

## PROCE A Year of Innovation

Severe, recession-driven state funding reductions have left the Los Angeles Superior Court with only 70 percent of the funding it needs to adequately handle its workload.

Recognizing the Court's constitutional and statutory responsibilities cannot be compromised, court leaders embarked on an aggressive campaign to create efficiencies and find new, creative ways of providing access to justice. Nearly every aspect of court operations has been examined and improved by expanding the use of technology and by adopting the concept of business process reengineering (BPR). (See next page.)

Every manager and supervisor in all 38 courthouses was trained in BPR techniques to analyze workflow and improve business processes. For the past year, staff has been reviewing policies and procedures and all aspects of operations looking for BPR opportunities. The reductions in costs, and in staff time, allow the Court to redeploy those resources elsewhere – to begin to partially fill the state funding gap.

At the same time, the Court is replacing the antiquated case management systems (see next page) that support its courtrooms – some of which are decades old. The new systems will not only bring more efficiencies, they will also make it easier for litigants and attorneys to do business with the Court.

The Court has achieved significant savings and efficiencies without the severe impacts on staff that often characterize such efforts. No employees have lost their jobs due to reengineering or the expansion of technology. Recognizing that its employees are its most valuable assets, the Court negotiated an innovative agreement with employee representatives that makes it easier for the Court to retain employees whose jobs are impacted by BPR and redeploy them to the areas with the greatest need for assistance.

Governor Jerry Brown called upon the California trial courts to find more "elegant and efficient" ways to do business.<sup>2</sup>

The Los Angeles Superior Court has met that challenge.

> 1 Judicial Council workload-based allocation funding methodology, Fiscal Year 2016-2017.

2 "Brown boosts judicial branch funding, but service cutbacks remain likely," *Daily Journal*, May 14, 2014.



## **Business Process Reengineering**

"The idea of reengineering was first propounded in an article in Harvard Business Review in July–August 1990 by Michael Hammer, then a professor of computer science at MIT. The method was popularly referred to as business process re-engineering (BPR), and was based on an examination of the way information technology was affecting business processes..."

"...BPR promised a novel approach to corporate change, and was described by its inventors as a "fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical measures of performance such as cost, quality, service and speed."

"Business process re-engineering," The Economist.com, Feb. 16, 2009, The Economist Newspaper Limited 2016.

## **New Case Management Systems**

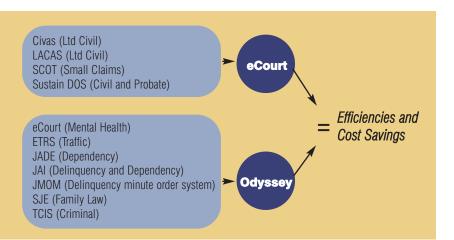
Beginning in May 2016, and continuing for the next two years, LASC will replace multiple outdated case management systems, some of which are more than 30 years old, running on software no longer supported by vendors.

With the introduction of new, state-of-the-art technology, the Court will replace some functions still accomplished manually, integrate its financial data, improve records and exhibits management, provide greater access to case information internally and remotely, and incorporate efiling in all litigation types, thereby improving the level of service provided to court users and expanding access to justice.

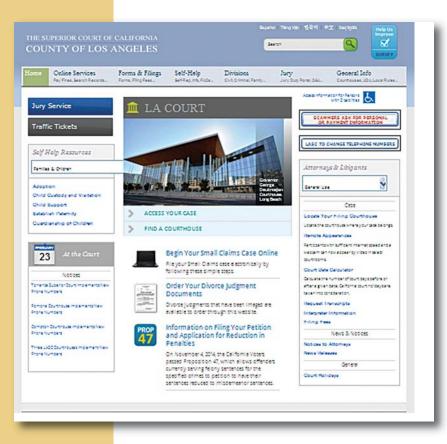
One-time fiscal savings were used to purchase the new systems and pay for the conversion costs. Once fully implemented, the ongoing maintenance costs are expected to be substantially less than those paid to maintain the legacy systems.



Two new case management systems will replace multiple systems



## **Online Improvements**



## Get online, not in line!

The Court has continued to make a great number of changes and improvements to its website, **lacourt.org**.

In 2014, a fully redesigned lacourt.org was launched. Since then, the Court has introduced a number of new features and enhancements and now offers extensive online services. Features of the website include extensive traffic ticket options, calendar and case information, program orientations, a filing court locator, and much more.

In March 2015, the Court implemented a new, lower fee structure for online services. Registered users of lacourt.org are able to conduct name searches, purchase online documents, and pay traffic tickets at reduced rates<sup>\*</sup>.

\*Lacking a funding stream for information technology, the Court recoups the actual costs of providing certain online services pursuant to California Rule of Court 2.506

## **Court Reservation System**

The Court Reservation System (CRS) allows attorneys to schedule civil motions online via computer or smart phone, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. CRS has been implemented in most civil courtrooms at 12 courthouses across the county, and is slated for adoption in all independent calendar courtrooms at the Stanley Mosk Courthouse in early 2016. This award-winning innovation has made the scheduling process easier for attorneys and courtroom staff.

CRS won the Process Enhancement Award at the Los Angeles County's 29th Productivity and Quality Awards in 2015.

## Electronic Access to Criminal Cases

A new register of actions function has been added to the criminal section of LASC's website. Called "Criminal Case Summary,"users can now use the register to view criminal case information online. The function provides the names of each defendant on a case, the courthouse at which the case was filed, the charges, past and future events, and bail and sentencing information as applicable.

Additionally, the Court has provided justice partners and law enforcement a new online system that allows those agencies to view case information electronically. Previously, law enforcement and members of the public had to call or visit a courthouse to obtain criminal case information.

## **Language Services**

Public access to lacourt.org's online services has been enhanced by the installation of language translation software. With the simple click of a link, the homepage and traffic section of the Court's website can now be translated in their entirety to one of five different languages, aside from English. Users apply this translation software more than 12,000 times per month.

A new web portal was introduced to allow litigants to request the assistance of an interpreter, at no cost, for unlawful detainer (eviction) hearings and small claims cases for languages other than Spanish prior to their court dates. (Spanish language interpreters are permanently assigned to unlawful detainer courtrooms.) Users can request interpreter assistance in Armenian, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese. An expansion of this service for small claims matters is planned for 2016.









## Customized Help for Traffic Citations

Throughout 2015, the Los Angeles Superior Court encouraged Southern California drivers with traffic citations to "*Get online, not in line*," a campaign launched to encourage litigants to take advantage of lacourt.org's new-and-improved, web-based services and lowered fees to resolve their ticket needs – saving them, attorneys, and others time and money.

Website users with traffic citations can now use their ticket or driver's license number to gain access to a menu of services online:

Pay a ticket;

- Request traffic school;
- Make a partial payment on a court-ordered fine;
- Establish a payment plan;
- Request an extension; and
- Schedule a hearing before a judge.

The law provides several options for people with traffic citations and LASC wants to help them make the best choices. People performing traffic ticket transactions online can also utilize "Gina," an automated online assistant who provides customized help depending on the type and status of a citation. LASC is the first and only trial court in the country utilizing an avatar to help website visitors. Over 28,000 people accessed Gina in English and Spanish in 2015. The addition of language assistance in Armenian, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese was completed in 2016.

The Court further marketed its "*Get online, not in line!*" campaign to the public through the use of its van fleet. Covered with Gina's image and the website address, these rolling billboards promote the use of the Court's online services to drivers throughout the county in English and Spanish with the message, "Got a traffic ticket? I can help! Get online – not in line."

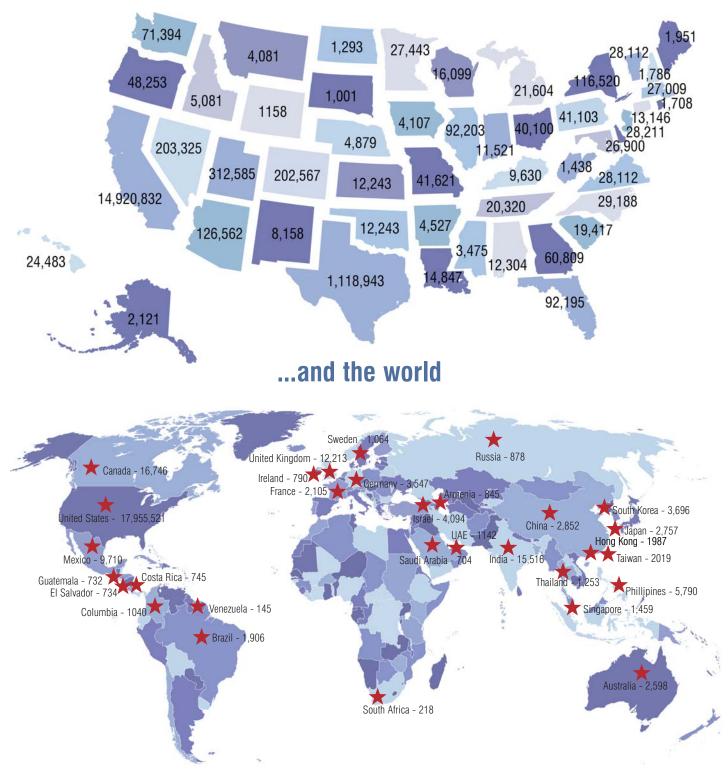
Affene una boleta de tránsito? Yo puedo ayudarle! Hágalo en línea - no haga cola. Macourt.org/online/traffe

Los Angeles Superior Court Van-bassadors

As a result of the expansion of online services offered to resolve traffic matters, wait times at the traffic court locations have been reduced dramatically. The time spent standing in line at the Metropolitan Courthouse (the largest traffic court location) has gone from **hours** to **minutes** on most days.

## Online visits to LACourt.org hail from all over the country...

The Court's website has proven to be a valuable tool with almost **100 million** page views in 2015 alone. The Court is contacted regularly by people from all over the county, the country, and even internationally who visit the website.



\*Numbers represent visits to LACourt.org in 2015

# ACCESS DATABASE SFIC AFTER A BANK AND A CONTRACT AN

The Court's paper records increase at approximately **60,000** linear feet per year, making it critical to manage this growth both by following statutory destruction rules and digitizing records.

In 2015, **47,012** exhibits were destroyed and **538** weapons were transferred to the Sheriff for disposal.

Nearly **5,000** boxes of case files and court reporter notes eligible for destruction were destroyed.

All probate and small claims cases can now be viewed electronically.

## Updated Phone System

In 2015, the Court completed the installation of a new voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone system and new telephone numbers replacing more than **6,000** old telephones. The system, now implemented in all courthouses, is much less expensive to operate than the old system, providing significant savings annually.

## **BenchView**

Produced by LASC's own IT development team, BenchView is a program that allows judicial officers sitting in probate, small claims and traffic courtrooms to view documents electronically. This has significantly reduced both staff time and the resources to prepare daily courtroom calendars. A BenchView program is also being developed for other litigation types.

## New Jury System

The new Jury Management Information System (JMIS) was implemented in June 2015, replacing the 30-year-old JMS mainframe system. This new technology will allow the development of future jury information technology projects and provide substantial annual savings. A new automated system to support telephonic juror assistance will be in place within the next several months.

## Expanded Training Opportunities

Employee training has been increased and expanded. More than **350** classes were provided for 6,169 participants. Supervisory classes are being offered to non-supervisors for succession planning. A new Leadership Essentials program was developed and offered four times with a waiting list for future classes. A Financial Wellness Training program was implemented and 111 employees have participated in the four-session class.

## Automated Bail Refund Process

Automating the bail refund process, county-wide, has saved the equivalent of 15 employees now free to work on other tasks and backlogs.

This program was awarded the 2015 National Association of Counties Achievement Award.

## INTERNET LAPTOP MOBILE Improvements 2015-2016

## Improving Language Access

The Los Angeles Superior Court provides interpreter services in **86** languages. With increased funding and enabling legislation, interpreter services are now provided to litigants, regardless of income, for all case types.

The Los Angeles Superior Court is the only court in California to expand interpreter services to this extent and provides approximately **12,000** instances of interpreter service per week.

Telephonic Audio Remote Interpreting (ARI) has been implemented in clerk's offices at 79 public-counter windows, in the Self-Help centers court-wide, and at the Mosk Restraining Order Center. With ARI assistance, the Court is able to provide professional interpreter services in **200** languages any time during the day at every courthouse.

In 2015, the Court expanded services for deaf and hard of hearing jurors allowing them to fulfill their jury service obligation.

## Online Record Access for Law Enforcement

A new online system has been provided to justice partners and law enforcement to electronically view criminal and mental health case information.

In traffic, law enforcement officers are now able to view all citations and scheduled court dates electronically according to their badge numbers. Previously, this information was only available by calling or visiting a courthouse.

These projects and dozens of other innovations from courts across the state can be found on the Judicial Council's website at: **www.courts.ca.gov.** 

Los Angeles Superior Court Annual Report

## The Work of the Judiciary

LASC judicial officers hear every case type under state law - civil, criminal, family law, juvenile delinquency and dependency, mental health, probate, and traffic.

#### Criminal Courts

Judges in criminal cases are called upon to ensure public safety, while protecting our constitutional rights. They must also determine fair and just sentences for convicted offenders.

In 2015, judges hearing criminal matters disposed of 56,234 felonies and 257,205 misdemeanor traffic and non-traffic matters. The Court also resolved 1,215,033 traffic and non-traffic infractions.

#### Community Collaborative Courts

LASC is a pioneer in the creation of community collaborative courts and provides alternative sentencing programs.

Judges in collaborative courts consider how the needs of a criminal defendant and the public's need for public safety might be better served by treatment for drug addiction, mental illness, or some other underlying disorder, than by incarcerating a convicted offender.

#### **Proposition 47**

Passed in 2014, Proposition 47, also known as "The Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act", allows qualifying offenders currently serving felony sentences for specified crimes (outlined in the legislation) to petition the sentencing court to have their sentences reduced to misdemeanor sentences. In addition, certain offenders who have already completed a sentence for a felony that qualifies under the new law may apply to the sentencing court to have their felony conviction designated a misdemeanor.

#### Section Two of Prop. 47 states:

"The People enact the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act to ensure that prison spending is focused on violent and serious offenses, maximize alternatives for nonserious, nonviolent crime, and invest the savings generated from this Act into prevention and support programs in K-12 schools, victim services, and mental health and drug treatment. This Act ensures that sentences for people convicted of dangerous crimes like rape, murder, and child molestation are not changed."

In 2015, Los Angeles Superior Court judicial officers adjudicated more than 29,000 Prop. 47 applications and petitions and heard an additional 3,300 motions related to the proposition.

#### **LASC Collaborative Courts**

Co-Occurring Disorders Court
 Dependency Drug Court
 Drug Court
 Homeless Court
 Juvenile Mental Health Court
 Veteran's Court
 Women's Re-Entry Court



#### **Family Law Court**

Family law judges not only resolve divorces, establish how assets will be divided, and who will support and raise children, they also provide protective and restraining orders to protect the victims of abuse.

## In 2015, approximately one-third of new family law filings were for domestic violence (21,492) and civil harassment restraining orders (11, 279).

It has been estimated that nearly 80 percent of family law cases have one party who is self-represented at some time during the course of the litigation. The Los Angeles Superior Court operates three Resource Centers which provide legal services for people with family law and probate conservatorship and guardianship cases who do not have an attorney. These centers are equipped with forms-generating software used in Court workshops attended by self-represented litigants. The Court also offers one-on-one and small group assistance for various legal needs related to these case types. The intent of this assistance is to educate the litigants so that they understand the process and can manage their own cases.

A critical resource in making these services available is JusticeCorps. Part of the AmeriCorps National Service program, JusticeCorps was developed by LASC in 2004. JusticeCorps volunteers are undergraduate students who receive 30 hours of training and commit to providing 300 hours of service, over the course of one year, in the Court's Resource and Self-Help centers. Volunteers who successfully complete the program receive a \$1,000 education award at the end of their service.

Through partnerships with the County of Los Angeles and community legal service providers, Self-Help centers in nine courthouses provide help to self-represented litigants with some family law and unlawful detainer matters. In addition, the Court collaborates with the Los Angeles County Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to provide family law self-help legal clinics for veterans at the historic Bob Hope Patriotic Hall in Los Angeles.

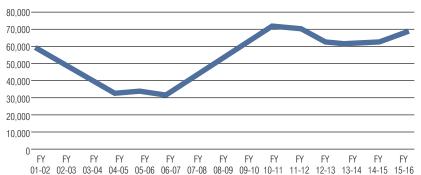
200,000 incidents of service are delivered annually by the Court's self-help staff and community assistance associates

#### **Civil Courts**

Judges hearing civil matters must unravel legal complexities with an eye toward justice and fairness in matters that can range from a dispute regarding failure to pay rent, to compensation for someone who has suffered a terrible injury, to mediating multimillion-dollar contracts.

After five years of declining numbers, civil filings appear to have bottomed out and are again increasing (see chart below).

#### General Civil Filings (2001 - Present)



#### National Adoption Day

In November, 160 Los Angeles County foster children were adopted during a celebration of National Adoption Day at the Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court in Monterey Park. A press conference kicked off the event with Juvenile Court Presiding Judge Michael Levanas, Director of Los Angeles County's Office of Child Protection Michael Nash (former presiding judge of juvenile court), and actress Jordana Brewster (Fast and Furious) in attendance.

In 2015, the Court heard over 2,000 adoption cases. Since 1998, 34,578 children have left the county's foster care system to join new adoptive families.

#### **Juvenile Courts**

Judges who hear juvenile delinquency and dependency cases work to repair the lives of children, whether by determining the best interests of a child whose parents have been accused of abuse or neglect or by providing guidance to a minor who has committed a criminal offense.

- Juvenile Dependency cases pertain to the protection of children who are at risk of or have been abused or neglected
- Juvenile Delinquency cases pertain to children who have committed acts that would be criminal if they were adults

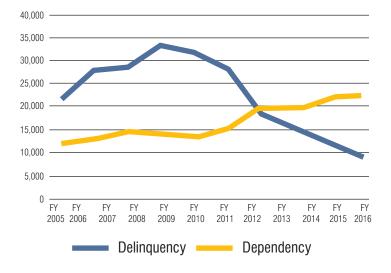
LASC's juvenile court system oversees the safety and well being of more than 30,000 children in 25 dependency courtrooms and more than 9,000 children in 20 delinquency courtrooms each day.

#### **Reallocation of Juvenile Court Resources**

As a result of dramatic increases in filings, the number of cases heard in the juvenile *dependency* courts has doubled since 2008. During that same time period, the number of **juvenile** *delinquency* cases has steadily decreased (see chart below).

In order to address these shifts in caseload, and without the ability to develop new resources, in the last quarter of 2015 the Los Angeles Superior Court reassigned some courtrooms hearing juvenile delinquency cases to handle dependency cases.

#### Delinquency v. Dependency Filings (2005 - Present)



#### **Probate Courts**

Probate judges not only resolve conflicts over wills and estates, they are also responsible for determining whether someone is capable of handling his or her own affairs, and, if not, appointing and overseeing a conservator to handle them.

More than one third of the probate cases filed in 2015 were petitions for guardianships (people under 18 years old) and conservatorships (people 18 years and older).

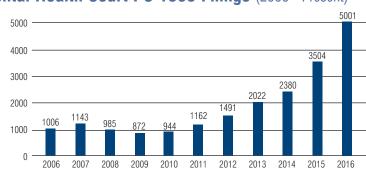
#### **Mental Health Courts**

Judges in mental health courts hear cases involving mental disorders and mental health legal issues such as involuntary commitments and criminal cases where the defendant may be incompetent to stand trial. Some of these cases involve Lanterman Petris Short (LPS) conservatorships. Unlike probate conservatorships, LPS conservatorships authorize involuntary civil commitment to a mental health facility for evaluation and treatment.

#### **Penal Code Section 1368**

California Penal Code Section 1367 declares that "A person cannot be tried ... while that person is mentally incompetent..." and section 1368 states that whether or not a person is competent is to be determined by a judge. Over the past five years, the number of PC 1368 filings heard in the Mental Health Courts has skyrocketed (see chart below). Experts continue to research the reasons for the surge in these cases: an increase in homelessness, a rise in drug use, greater recognition and identification of people suffering from mental health issues, or all of these together.

In California, LASC is the only court that uses a centralized court for cases involving mental disorders and mental health legal issues.



Mental Health Court PC 1368 Filings (2006 - Present)

One of the Court's partners in providing legal services, **Bet Tzedek** (Hebrew for "house of justice"), provides free probate assistance to litigants without attorneys at several courthouses throughout the county.

#### Lanterman-Petris-Short Act

A California law governing involuntary civil commitment for psychiatric treatment. The LPS Act is used to end inappropriate lifetime commitment of people with mental illness and establishes the right to due process in the commitment process.





### **STAR Court Program**

The STAR (Succeeding Through Achievement and Resilience) Court program operates in a courtroom in the Compton Courthouse.

The program provides enhanced supervision and tailored services to the growing population of sexually exploited young women.

There is growing awareness in this country and around the world that many people, especially children, involved in the sex trade should be treated as victims, not criminals, and this awareness is changing how the criminal justice system views, prosecutes, and sentences individuals charged with prostitution.

According to the State of California Department of Justice website, "the California Legislature has defined human trafficking as 'all acts involved in the recruitment, abduction, transport, harboring, transfer, sale or receipt of persons, within national or across international borders, through force, coercion, fraud or deception, to place persons in situations of slavery or slavery-like conditions, forced labor or services, such as forced prostitution or sexual services, domestic servitude, bonded sweatshop labor, or other debt bondage.'" It further states that "Federal law defines trafficking in persons as 'sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age..."

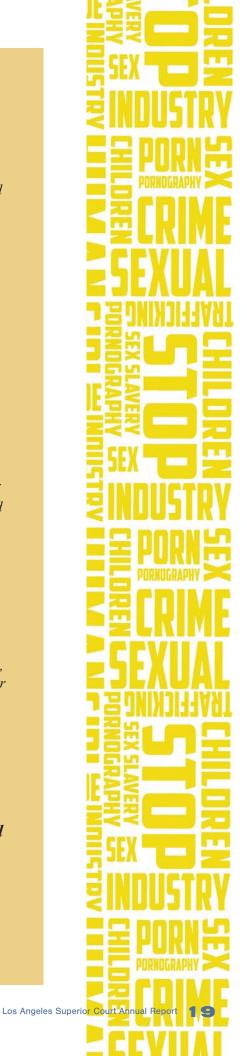
STAR Court provides these vulnerable young girls with the tools and support they need to escape from a life involving prostitutionincluding mentoring and education, means for independent living, emotional support and counseling, and a variety of other services that help establish a healthy personal esteem.

STAR Court relies on the collaborative efforts of the Court, the minors' attorneys, the LA County District Attorney's Office, and the County departments of Probation, Children and Family Services, Health Services, and Mental Health, as well as non-profit organizations including: Alliance for Children's Rights, Saving Innocence, and With Two Wings. Together, these organizations determine alternatives to incarceration and provide assistance that will enable these minors to avoid the repetition of the behavior and circumstances that have brought them before the Court.

STAR Court was funded by a federal grant for the first three years. When that funding source expired, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors worked with the Court to provide continued funding and has financially supported the program since 2014. The funding pays for educational advocacy services, schools supplies, simple travel needs, the purchase of personal care items, and other professional services.

Since its inception, 271 girls have participated in the STAR Court program. Of the girls whose cases are now closed, 25 percent are still voluntarily in touch with someone from their STAR Court team and 73 percent have not been re-arrested since starting the program, either as a juvenile or as an adult. In 2015, 50 percent of the 18 year olds graduated from high school. When the program began, girls in this group spent an average of 35 days per year in juvenile hall. Currently, the average stay is 25 days per year.

In September 2015, Judge Catherine J. Pratt was recognized at the White House by Valerie Jarrett, special advisor to President Obama, for her innovative work to help young girls make a better life than the one they have known.



#### **Diversity Summit**

Recognizing that public trust and confidence in the court is enhanced by a bench that reflects the diversity of the community it serves, the Court's Diversity Committee hosted a summit in April to encourage local attorneys, especially minority attorneys, to consider careers on the bench.

The Diversity Summit provided an opportunity for attendees to learn the "ins and outs" of California's judicial application process. During the seminar, newly-appointed judges described their experiences on the bench to an audience of 204 local attorneys. Opening remarks were provided by Presiding Judge Carolyn Kuhl and Assemblymember Reggie Jones-Sawyer, District 59. Panelists included Craig Holden, state bar president, Josh Groban, senior advisor to Governor Jerry Brown, Jason Lee, chair of the Commission on Judicial Nominees, and Helen Zukin, chair of the LACBA Judicial Appointees Evaluation Committee.



Lawyers attending the Diversity Summit at the Stanley Mosk Courthouse.

The Los Angeles Superior Court remains one of the most diverse courts in California. Since 2007, a combined total of 56 American-Indian, Asian, African-American, and Hispanic/Latino judges were appointed or elected to the Los Angeles Superior Court bench. As of 2015, judges who identify as something other than white make up almost 40 percent of LASC's bench.

The number of female judicial officers has also increased by almost 20 percent since 2007.



Alfred J. McCourtney Juvenile Justice Center



Inglewood Courthouse



Central Civil West Courthouse

Stanley Mosk Courthouse

## Providing Access to Justice in Traffic Court

More than 1 million traffic citations are issued each year in Los Angeles County. The Los Angeles Superior Court is committed to preserving due process in its handling of traffic matters.

The Court provides many options for resolving tickets at courthouses and online. The Court sends multiple notices which provide instructions for resolving the ticket as well as the status of the ticket. The first courtesy notice, which details the options available for addressing the ticket, is mailed as soon as the Court receives the ticket from the issuing agency.

Options for resolving a ticket include:

- Paying and closing the ticket;
- Requesting a court date\*;
- Requesting an extension;
- Requesting a payment plan; and
- Requesting traffic school.

\*It is not necessary to post bail before requesting a hearing before a judicial officer.

All of these options are available through the Court's website, **lacourt.org**, in six languages and come with the assistance of the new traffic avatar/online assistant.

A new "Pay Anywhere" program has been implemented that allows the public to resolve traffic citations at any of the 19 courthouses that processes traffic citations, rather than having to travel to the jurisdiction where they were cited.

## Traffic Amnesty

Signed by Governor Jerry Brown last June, Senate Bill 85 provided for the 18month-long Statewide Traffic Tickets/Infractions Amnesty Program for unpaid traffic and non-traffic infraction tickets.

The program, launched on Oct. 1, 2015, allows people with qualifying unpaid tickets originally due to be paid on or before Jan. 1, 2013, to have their debt reduced by 50 or 80 percent, depending on their income, and to have their driver's licenses reinstated.

GC Services, the collection agency for the County of Los Angeles, administers the program which runs through March 31, 2017. People are able to arrange to enroll in the program by telephone, online, or at any of the 19 courthouses that handle traffic matters.

## **Amnesty Program Data**

October 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015

In order to prepare for the program, the Court pre-qualified 1.2 million citations and letters were sent out informing people of the program.

**365,081** people made calls to General Collections Services to inquire about the amnesty program.

**30,963** people completed the application process to address **82,800 citations... ...99 percent** of the applications were submitted via the web.

Of the people who submitted an application and qualified for the program...

....91 percent were eligible to have their
fees reduced by 80 percent...
...\$3,115,924 were collected from

22,899 citations...

**...72 percent** of those payments were made through the use of a payment plan option.

**18,481** driver's license releases were sent to the Department of Motor Vehicles in the first three months of the program.

## The Court in the Community



## **Focusing on Youth**

Part of the Court's mission is to promote public trust and confidence in the judicial system. Community outreach initiatives aim to educate and help members of the public – of all ages and backgrounds – to better understand the system. Toward that end, the Court is engaged in several outreach programs, with a special emphasis on reaching out to young people. The programs that focus on junior high and high school students are Teen Court, SHADES (Stop Hate and Delinquency by Empowering Students), and Power Lunch.

#### Teen Court

Teen Court offers students the chance to develop critical-thinking skills, exposure to careers in the justice system, and an understanding that actions have consequences.

There are two ways students participate in Teen Court: either as a defendant or as a juror. If a high school student commits a low-level offense, the Los Angeles County Probation Department can recommend that the student enters Teen Court, instead of the criminal justice system. In this diversion program, *the minors are offered help instead of punishment*. The offender appears before a jury of peers from other high schools in Los Angeles County and has to answer questions before hearing the verdict and potential sentence. Some of the creative sentencing options used in Teen Court include: participation as a juror in future Teen Court sessions; writing an essay on a relevant topic; participation in a mentoring program; and participation in a school or extracurricular club of interest.

If their diversion programs are successful, many of the minors remain involved in the program by serving as jurors in future Teen Court cases. A number of students who participate in Teen Court have not committed any offenses – *many Teen Court jurors simply have an interest in the process and learn valuable lessons about how courts operate*. Teen Court jurors hear testimony and are able to ask questions of the defendant, exercise critical thinking in determining whether the accused is guilty and, if so, recommend punishment to the judge.

Students interact with judicial officers, attorneys, and law enforcement officers during Teen Court sessions. This direct experience with crime, its consequences, and the people involved in applying the law is an invaluable learning experience. They also learn about the criminal justice system and its potential for improving the lives of those involved in it, developing respect for the rule of law.

Evaluation of the Los Angeles Superior Court Teen Court program has shown that it results in better outcomes for offenders than the standard probation approach. (2016, Gase, et al., "The impact of two Los Angeles County Teen Courts on youth recidivism: comparing two informal probation programs" in Journal of Experimental Criminology, v. 12.)

- Nine new Teen Courts were opened in 2015, bringing the total to 34.
  - Four high schools have been approved to open Teen Courts during the 2016-2017 academic year.
- More than 80 judicial officers devote their time to the project (with more on the waiting list!).
- Nearly 25,000 high school students participate in approximately 700 cases each school year.

### A Teen Court Success Story

In 2004, a then 15-year-old "Jane" was confronted by a classmate who was looking for a fight. A group had gathered, taunting Jane and encouraging the classmates to fight. Scared for her safety and what they might do to her, Jane decided to throw the first punch and knocked the girl down to the ground. The police were called. Charges were pressed. The arresting officer decided to refer the matter for Teen Court consideration as Jane had never been in trouble before.

After sharing her side of the story at the hearing, a Teen Court jury found Jane guilty of her offense, but urged a light penalty. They believed Jane was wrong in the act she committed, but sympathized with her circumstance. The judge ordered Jane to complete 20 hours of community service and write an essay on teen violence.

Jane, a CIF swimmer and junior lifeguard from the age of eight, was concerned that the school incident might make her ineligible for future employment opportunities, but her truthful disclosure regarding the incident did not preclude her from being hired for progressively responsible positions, including a job as a county lifeguard.

Jane faced the biggest challenge resulting from her youthful indiscretion when she applied for a position with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. During questioning by a background investigator, Jane expressed that she had learned a valuable lesson from her incident in high school. She conveyed a strong sense of honor and courage, which she attributed to her father and a firm moral code.

It has now been more than two years since Jane became a Los Angeles County Deputy Sheriff. She spends some of her off-duty time speaking to students about how their actions can affect their futures. She admits that she does not know where she would be today had it not been for the deputy who gave her a chance to participate in Teen Court rather juvenile court all those years ago.

## **SHADES**

Stop Hote And Delinquency by Empowering Students

In collaboration with the Museum of Tolerance, the SHADES (Stop Hate and Delinquency by Empowering Students) program is a specialized Teen Court that focuses on bullying/bias, hate incidents, and hate crimes targeting youth in the protected classes (race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability, etc.). SHADES teen jurors qualify to serve by participating in a mandatory five-day intensive human relations and Teen Court training at the Museum of Tolerance. SHADES has been honored as one of the LA County Quality and Productivity Commission's Top Ten and Best Teamwork projects, and has been recognized by the National Association of Court Management.





Dorsey High students participating in a Power Lunch session at the Mosk Courthouse.



Stu<mark>dents from Redondo Union High School sporting t</mark>heir Teen Court tees

#### **Power Lunch**

The Power Lunch program provides its students civic education, judicial mentorship, and exposure to the judicial branch. Approximately 75 students from various schools attend each lunch, coming to courthouses throughout Los Angeles County, where they meet justice system professionals including judges, lawyers, court reporters, interpreters, and law enforcement officers.

Students learn about the Constitution and the U.S. legal system and break into small groups for personal interactions with participating judges and lawyers. The project fosters a local connection to the legal system in a friendly, proactive way. While providing tangible civic education about the legal system, the lunches promote diversity by fostering curiosity and facilitating a more personal connection to the justice system among a traditionally neglected youth population.

## Thirty-eight Power Lunches have been offered since 2007.

#### More than 1,900 students, 300 judicial officers, and 400 attorneys have participated since the program's inception.

The Power Lunch program is made possible through the Los Angeles Superior Court's collaboration with bar associations including Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Bar Association Barristers, San Fernando Valley Bar Association, Mexican-American Bar Association, Langston Bar Association, South Asian Bar Association, and the American Board of Trial Lawyers.

#### **Teachers' Courthouse Seminar**

In December, 30 high school government teachers from schools throughout Los Angeles County attended a day-long criminal justice conference at the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center called the "Teachers' Courthouse Seminar." Hosted by the Court's Community Outreach Committee, the seminar gave teachers lessons on the criminal justice system and the constitutional protections built into the proceedings, encouraging and helping them provide richer and more extensive lessons to their students about the justice system. Although the attendees teach classes about government, there is little consistency as to the specific topics of the lessons taught in schools, and most of the teachers admitted to having little previous knowledge of the work of the state courts.

Attendees spent the day visiting criminal courtrooms, viewing proceedings, and meeting with judges to discuss what they had observed. During lunch at the newly refurbished Hall of Justice, the teachers met with LA County District Attorney Jackie Lacey.

The Constitutional Rights Foundation provided teaching materials about the court system for the educators to use in future classes.



Judge Richard Fruin addresses teachers at the seminar.



## Los Angeles Superior Court Workload and Financial Data



Metropolitian Courthouse

Sylmar Juvenile Courthouse



Hollywood Courthouse



Catalina Courthouse



Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center

Mental Health Courthouse

Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court



Compton Courthouse



Eastlake Juvenile Courthouse





East Los Angeles Courthouse



Downey Courthouse



Van Nuys East Courthouse

## Los Angeles Superior Court by the Numbers

#### Fiscal Year 2015-16

Authorized judicial positions	
Authorized subordinate judicial officers	
Courthouses	
Annual Case Filings Summary	
Civil General	
Civil Limited (excluding Unlawful Detainers)	
Parking Appeals	
Unlawful Detainers (evictions)	
Small Claims and other civil	
Misdemeanors	
Felonies	
Habeus Corpus	1,058
Family Law	
Adoptions	
Juvenile Dependency	
Juvenile Delinquency	
Mental Health	
Probate	
Traffic Infractions	1,141,044
Non-Traffic Infractions	
Appellate	
Total Filings	

In January 2014, the Los Angeles Superior Court implemented changes to improve the accuracy of filings data. Comparisons with filings data taken from previous Annual Reports should be made with caution.

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#### Fiscal Year 2015-16

Jury Trials	2,961*
Juror Summonses Mailed	1,961,021
Jurors Responding	1,048,272
Average Days Served	1.34

\*Reflects the number of trials where a jury verdict was reached

## **Court Districts and Courthouse Locations**



Central
Central Arraignment Court1
Central Civil West2
Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court
Stanley Mosk Courthouse4
Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center5
East Los Angeles Courthouse6
Eastlake Juvenile Court7
Hollywood Courthouse8
Mental Health Courthouse9
Metropolitan Courthouse10
Hall of Records - Court Archives and Records Center,
CTS, Jury ServicesA
East
El Monte Courthouse11
Pomona Courthouse, South12
West Covina Courthouse13

#### orth Central N

North Central	
Burbank Courthouse1	4
Glendale Courthouse1	5
North District	
Lancaster Juvenile Justice Center1	6
Michael D. Antonovich Antelope Valley Courthouse1	7
North Valley District	
Chatsworth Courthouse1	8
Santa Clarita Courthouse1	9
San Fernando Courthouse2	
Sylmar Juvenile Court2	21
Northeast District	
Alhambra Courthouse2	22
Pasadena Courthouse2	23
Northwest District	
Van Nuys Courthouse, East	24
Van Nuys Courthouse, West	25

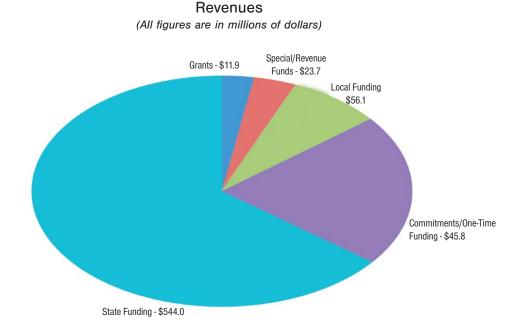
#### South Central District

Compton Courthouse	26
South District	
Catalina Courthouse	27
Gov. George Deukmejian Courthouse	28
Southeast District	
Downey Courthouse	29
Bellflower Courthouse	30
Norwalk Courthouse	31
Los Padrinos Juvenile Court	32
Southwest District	
Inglewood Courthouse	
Inglewood Juvenile Court	34
Torrance Courthouse	35
West District	
Airport Courthouse*	36
Beverly Hills Courthouse	37
Santa Monica Courthouse	38
* Geographically located in the Southwest District	

Geographically located in the Southwest District

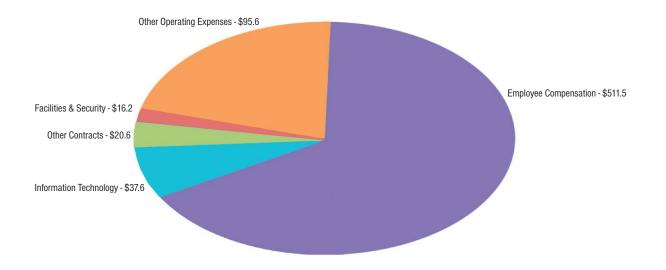


## **Revenues and Expenditures**



Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Total Budget \$789.0 Million

Expenditures (All figures are in millions of dollars)



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Inglewood Juvenile Courthouse

Los Padrinos Juvenile Courthouse



## Los Angeles Superior Court Court Services Phone Directory

## **Court Services** Locations and Contacts

#### Central District:

#### Stanley Mosk Courthouse

#### 111 N. Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

civil - limited and unlimited, family law, probate, restraining orders civil harassment and domestic violence, small claims, unlawful detainers (evictions) and the appellate division

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

• appellate ......(213) 633-1070 · civil - limited and unlimited/small claims/unlawful detainers

(evictions) .....

- family law/domestic violence TROs ......(213) 830-0830
- resource center for self-represented litigants .... (213) 830-0845

#### Central Civil West

#### 600 S. Commonwealth Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90005

civil - complex, L.A. County Child Support Services cases

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

- family law department (government enforced domestic support cases)

#### Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center

#### 210 W. Temple St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

felonies, misdemeanors

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

- felonies/misdemeanors/bail/bond .....(213) 628-7900

#### Metropolitan Courthouse

1945 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90007

felonies, misdemeanors, traffic and other infractions

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### Central Arraignment Courts

#### 429 Bauchet St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

parole violation hearings, post release community supervision (PRCS) violation hearings

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m

#### Mental Health Court

#### 1150 N. San Fernando Road, Los Angeles, CA 90065

appeals of medication capacity hearing, commitment to state developmental centers. LPS conservatorships, mental competency. probable cause hearings for sexually violent predators, writs of habeas corpus for persons on LPS holds

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m

- information line (conservatorship) .....(323) 441-1898

#### East Los Angeles Courthouse

#### 4848 E. Civic Center Way, Los Angeles, CA 90022

misdemeanors

CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### Juvenile:

- Alfred J. McCourtney Juvenile Justice Center
- 1040 W. Avenue J, Lancaster, CA 93534
  - juvenile delinguency, juvenile dependency

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### Eastlake Juvenile Court

- 1601 Eastlake Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90033
  - juvenile delinguency

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court

#### 201 Centre Plaza Drive, Monterey Park, CA 91754

administration - juvenile delinguency and dependency, adoptions, juvenile dependency



#### Inglewood Juvenile Courthouse

110 Regent St., Inglewood, CA 90301

juvenile delinquency

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Los Padrinos Juvenile Courthouse

#### 7281 E. Quill Dr., Downey, CA 90242

juvenile delinguency

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### Sylmar Juvenile Courthouse

16350 Filbert St., Sylmar, CA 91342

juvenile delinguency

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### East District:

#### El Monte Courthouse

11234 E. Valley Blvd., El Monte, CA 91731

felonies, misdemeanors, traffic and other infractions

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### Pomona Courthouse South

#### 400 Civic Center Plaza, Pomona, CA 91766

civil - unlimited, family law, felonies, juvenile delinguency, misdemeanors, restraining orders - civil harassment and domestic violence, unlawful detainers (evictions)

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

- civil unlimited/TROs .....(909) 802-1198

#### West Covina Courthouse

1427 West Covina Parkway, West Covina, CA 91790

felonies, misdemeanors, traffic and other infractions

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### North District:

#### Michael D. Antonovich Antelope Valley Courthouse

42011 4th St. West, Lancaster, CA 93534

civil - and unlimited including personal injury, family law, felonies, misdemeanors, probate, restraining orders - civil harassment and domestic violence, small claims, traffic and other infractions, unlawful detainers (evictions)

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

civil - unlimited/small claims/unlawful detainers (evictions)
• family law/probate
• felonies/misdemeanors
• juror services

#### North Central District:

#### **Burbank Courthouse**

300 E. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91502

civil - unlimited, felonies, misdemeanors, traffic and other infractions

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

٠	civil - unlimited	
٠	felonies/misdemeanors	

#### Glendale Courthouse

#### 600 E. Broadway, Glendale, CA 91206

civil - unlimited, civil harassment temporary restraining orders, felonies, misdemeanors, traffic and other infractions



#### North Valley District:

#### Chatsworth Courthouse

#### 9425 Penfield Ave., Chatsworth, CA 91311

civil - collections and unlimited, family law, restraining orders civil harassment and domestic violence, small claims, traffic and other infractions

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

- family law/domestic TROs ......(818) 407-2271

#### San Fernando Courthouse

900 Third St., San Fernando, CA 91340

felonies, misdemeanors

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### Santa Clarita Courthouse

23747 W. Valencia Blvd., Santa Clarita, CA 91355

misdemeanors, traffic and other infractions

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### **Northeast District:**

#### Alhambra Courthouse

- 150 W. Commonwealth Ave., Alhambra, CA 91801
  - felonies, misdemeanors, small claims

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### Pasadena Courthouse

#### 300 E. Walnut St., Pasadena, CA 91101

■ family law, felonies, misdemeanors, restraining orders – civil harassment and domestic violence, traffic and other infractions, unlawful detainers (evictions)

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### **Northwest District:**

#### Van Nuys Courthouse East

#### 6230 Sylmar Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91401

civil - unlimited, family law, restraining orders - civil harassment and domestic violence, small claims, unlawful detainers (evictions)

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

٠	civil - unlimited	 901-4799
٠	family law	 901-4797
٠	juror services	 901-4796
•	small claims	 901-4798

#### Van Nuys Courthouse West

#### 14400 Erwin Street Mall, Van Nuys, CA 91401

felonies, misdemeanors, traffic and other infractions

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

٠	felonies/misdemeanors	
	troffio	(010) 000 6000

#### South District:

#### Catalina Courthouse

215 Sumner Ave., Avalon, CA 90704

domestic violence temporary restraining orders, misdemeanors

٠	criminal		(562) 256-1561
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## Governor George Deukmejian Courthouse 275 Magnolia Ave., Long Beach, CA 90802

civil - limited and unlimited, family law, felonies, juvenile delinquency, misdemeanors, restraining orders - civil harassment and domestic violence, small claims, traffic and other infractions, unlawful detainers (evictions)

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### South Central District:

#### Compton Courthouse

200 W. Compton Blvd., Compton, CA 90220

civil - unlimited, family law, felonies, juvenile delinquency, misdemeanors, restraining orders - civil harassment and domestic violence, traffic and other infractions

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

- felonies/misdemeanors/juvenile delinquency ... (310) 761-8658

#### **Southeast District**

#### Bellflower Courthouse

10025 East Flower St., Bellflower, CA 90706

felonies, misdemeanors, traffic and other infractions

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

- - traffic ......(562) 345-339

#### **Downey Courthouse**

#### 7500 E. Imperial Highway, Downey, CA 90242

felony arraignments, misdemeanors, small claims, traffic and other infractions

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### Norwalk Courthouse

#### 12720 Norwalk Blvd., Norwalk, CA 90650

civil - limited and unlimited, family law, felonies, misdemeanors, restraining orders - civil harassment and domestic violence, unlawful detainers (evictions)

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

٠	civil - limited	) 345-0898
•	civil - unlimited(562	) 345-0899
•	family law	) 256-2317
•	felonies/misdemenors	) 345-0896
•	juror services	) 345-0894
	(FCC	

• unlawful detainers (evictions) ......(562) 345-0897

#### Southwest District:

#### Inglewood Courthouse

One Regent St., Inglewood, CA 90301

felonies, misdemeanors, restraining orders - civil harassment and domestic violence, small claims, traffic and other infractions

#### CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

• felonies/misdemeanors	(310) 419-1398
• restraining orders	(310) 419-1397
• small claims	(310) 419-1396

#### Torrance Courthouse

#### 825 Maple Ave., Torrance, CA 90503

civil - unlimited, family law, felonies, misdemeanors, restraining orders - civil harassment and domestic violence, traffic and other infractions

<ul> <li>civil - unlimited/family law</li></ul>	97
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#### West District:

#### Airport Courthouse

11701 S. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90045

felonies, misdemeanors

CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### Beverly Hills Courthouse

9355 Burton Way, Beverly Hills, CA 90210

traffic and other infractions

CAN WE HELP YOU? Telephone hours 8:30-10:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### Santa Monica Courthouse

#### 1725 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401

civil - unlimited, family law, restraining orders - civil harassment and domestic violence, traffic and other infractions, unlawful detainers (evictions)

- civil unlimited/unlawful detainers (evictions) ...(310) 255-1963
- family law/TROs ......(310) 255-1962





This Annual Report was produced by the Los Angeles Superior Court to increase public understanding of the justice system. For additional copies, please contact:

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Or visit the Court's website: lacourt.org

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