

Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles

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NEWS RELEASE



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CAL/OSHA ISSUES REPORT FOLLOWING INVESTIGATION AT FOLTZ COURTHOUSE

In a report issued yesterday, Cal/OSHA “determined that no standard, rule, order or regulation ... has been violated in connection with the” unfortunate loss of an employee who worked at the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center following the employee’s struggle with COVID-19 in December.

“This is a significant finding,” said Sherri R. Carter, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court. “Court management has worked very hard to develop policies, procedures, online and remote programs, training and guidance to enforce Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health directives in an effort to support an environment as safe as possible during the unprecedented pandemic.”

Included with the report was a notice of proposed penalties, **not yet assessed**, due to administrative instances:

- 1) Failure to report a COVID infection within eight (8) hours (corrected during inspection);
- 2) Failure to provide COVID-19 Prevention Training to all court interpreters (currently being abated by Court management); and

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**CAL/OSHA
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- 3) Failure to ensure that physical distancing of at least six (6) feet was maintained between employees in the Interpreters' Employee Lounge (corrected during inspection).

"The Court will be appealing these proposed penalties due to important information we believe Cal/OSHA has not been provided," Carter said.

The additional information includes:

- 1) Based on Court records, the COVID-related hospitalization was reported within eight (8) hours of the Court receiving notice that the hospitalization was COVID-related.
- 2) Throughout the pandemic, the Court has provided extensive health and safety information, communication, FAQs, Town Halls and training regarding COVID prevention.
- 3) Court management has developed strict policies around social distancing, including disciplinary actions for employee violations, and an anonymous hotline to report COVID violations.

In addition, over 100,000 signs throughout all 37 courthouses, including the Interpreters' Employee Lounge included in the report, were installed to further enforce social distancing.

"While the Court looks forward to providing Cal/OSHA with more information during the appeals process, Court management is open to hearing if there are ways we can improve," Carter said. "We have prioritized the health and safety of all who work in and use our courthouses since March 2020 while continuing to provide access to justice. We are concerned by each COVID infection and look forward to a future when the pandemic no longer endangers the public we serve or the employees we so highly value and protect in the largest trial court in the nation."

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