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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 14, THE COURT WILL PRIORITIZE OFFICIAL COURT REPORTERS FOR CRIMINAL FELONY, JUVENILE CASES AS SEVERE STAFFING SHORTAGES PERSIST DESPITE NEW STATE FUNDING

**Court Reporters Currently Assigned to Family Law, Probate and Writs and Receiver
Matters will be Reassigned to Cover Statutorily-Mandated Case Types**

Despite significant increases in trial court funding designated to hire court reporters, a statewide court reporter shortage requires the Court to shift its court reporter workforce from family law and probate cases and matters assigned to the writs and receiver departments to departments hearing criminal felony and juvenile matters where the law requires the court to provide an official court reporter.

Effective Monday, November 14, 2022, the Court will no longer provide official court reporters in family law and probate matters and in the writs and receiver departments due to a continually shrinking workforce of official court reporters, a staffing shortage that mirrors nationwide and California trends, among other factors. In Los Angeles County, the number of court reporters leaving court service continues to significantly outpace the number of new court reporters entering court service. The Court's court reporter workforce has dropped from 430 in 2017 to 330 today despite efforts on the part of the Court, including monetary bonuses and generous benefits, designed to attract new reporters to court service.

Effective November 14, the Court will amend its policies regarding the availability of official court reporters as follows:

- Official court reporters are statutorily required and will continue to be provided in felony criminal and juvenile matters.

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COURT REPORTERS

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- Official court reporters are not statutorily required to be provided in unlimited civil, family law or probate matters, and existing court reporter coverage will end November 14 for family law, probate and writs and receiver cases. (Court reporters were removed from Civil unlimited matters several years ago).
- Official court reporters were removed from limited civil, misdemeanor and infractions over the past several years. In accordance with Government Code § 69957, these proceedings are electronically recorded to make the official verbatim record.

Please note that, pursuant to Government Code § 69957, electronic recording in general jurisdiction matters, including family law, probate and writs and receivers, is not permitted. Parties will need to arrange for a court reporter to be present when their matter is called in courtrooms that will no longer have official court reporters and pay for those services.

Parties with fee waivers may request an official court reporter pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 2.956 (c)(2) and Local Rule 2.21 (*see also Jameson v. Desta*, 5 Cal 5th 594 (2018)). The law requires the Court to provide a court reporter when a litigant with a fee waiver has timely-filed a request for a court reporter but only when a court reporter is available. Given the limited availability of official court reporters, notice of the availability of a court reporter may not be given until the day of the hearing.

For more information, a fact sheet is attached to this news release.

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FACT SHEET: OFFICIAL COURT REPORTERS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

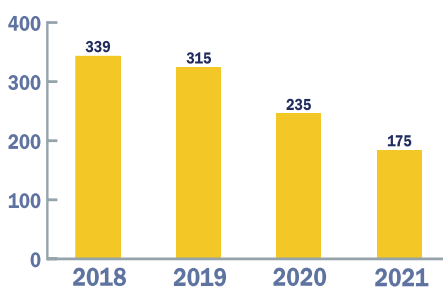
Despite significant increases in trial court funding designated to hire court reporters, a statewide court reporter staffing shortage requires the Court to shift court reporters from family law and probate cases and matters assigned to the writs and receiver departments in order to provide court reporters for criminal felony and juvenile proceedings as required by law.

Staffing Shortage Problem – Not a Funding Problem

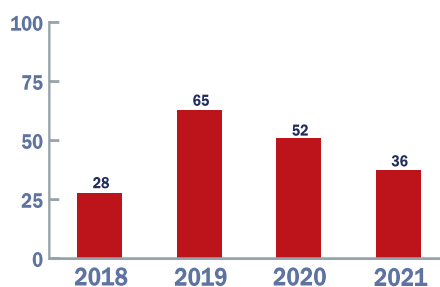
The court reporter shortage is not unique to Los Angeles County – it is a statewide and national problem. As shown by the data provided below, notwithstanding a record budget year for the judicial branch in California, trial courts are simply unable to hire enough court reporters to replace those leaving court service.

- The number of active Certified Shorthand Reporter (CSR) licensees in California decreases every year. For example, there are about 15% fewer licensed court reporters in California than there were five years ago. More specifically, in 2021, there were 5,854 CSRs in California. In 2016, there were 6,842 CSRs in California. This represents a decrease of 988 CSRs over a five-year period¹.
- The number of court reporter training programs in California has significantly declined over the past decade. In 2021, there were only nine training programs open in California².
- The number of examinees taking the CSR licensing exam continues to decline every year. In 2018, 339 examinees took the licensing exam. In 2021, only 175 examinees took the licensing exam (see Graph 1).
- The pass rate is consistently low. In 2021, there were only 36 newly-licensed CSRs in all of California out of 175 examinees who took the licensing exam (see Graph 2). Between 2018 and 2021, the pass rate was between 8% and 22% (see Graph 3)³.

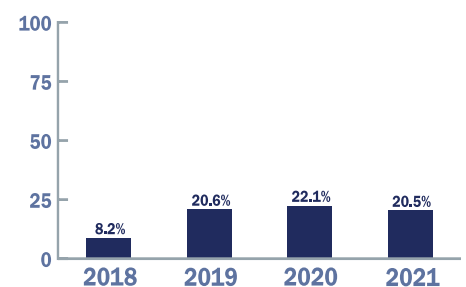
GRAPH 1: Total CSR Examinees



GRAPH 2: CSR Examinees Who Passed



GRAPH 3: Overall CSR Pass Rate



- In Los Angeles County, the number of court reporters leaving court service continues to significantly outpace the number of new court reporters entering court service. In 2017, there were 430 CSRs employed by the Court; in 2022, there were 330. Despite concerted efforts to recruit court reporters, as discussed below, the Court has struggled to fill vacancies due to lack of available CSRs in California.

¹ [CA Department of Consumer Affairs Court Reporters Board of California – Annual Reports \(Year Over Year Comparison\)](#)

² [California Court Reporters Association – Court Reporting Schools](#)

³ [Court Reporters Board Dictation Examination Statistics](#)

Mitigation Efforts: Recruitment and Flexible Work Schedules

The Court has taken strategic steps over the past several years to address the court reporter shortage in Los Angeles County to avoid this change including those listed below.

- Providing a competitive salary, excellent benefits package and a two-week training and onboarding program;
- Providing a \$2,000 hiring bonus after one year of service;
- Providing a \$500 annual equipment allowance;
- Regularly visiting local court reporter schools to recruit;
- Targeted recruitment of CSR retirees for daily as-needed assignments;
- Offering flexible, part-time and as-needed positions;
- Distributing recruitment flyers to all newly California-licensed CSRs after each exam;
- Advertising for recruitment in the Journal of Court Reporting and other Court Reporter industry publications; and
- Aggressively recruiting on public job sites such as LinkedIn, Indeed, GovernmentJobs.com and on the Court's own recruitment website.

Despite these efforts, the Court has been unable to recruit the number of official court reporters needed to continue to offer official court reporting services in family law, probate and writs and receiver matters while continuing to provide official court reporting in felony criminal and juvenile matters as required by law.

Resources and Other Information

Pursuant to Government Code § 69957, electronic recording in general jurisdiction matters, including family law, probate and writs and receivers, is not permitted. Parties will need to arrange for a court reporter to be present when their matter is called in courtrooms that will no longer have official court reporters and pay for those services. A list of Court-Approved Official Reporters Pro Tempore is [available here](#).

Parties with fee waivers may request an official court reporter pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 2.956 (c)(2) and Local Rule 2.21, see also *Jameson v. Desta*, 5 Cal 5th 594 (2018). The law requires the court to provide a court reporter when a litigant with a fee waiver has timely-filed a request for a court reporter but only when a court reporter is available. The request must be made by using the local form ([LASC LACIV269](#)), or [Judicial Council Form FW-020](#) at least 10 days before the hearing. Given the limited availability of official court reporters, notice of the availability of a court reporter may not be given until the day of the hearing.

Please note that unless otherwise required by law, the Court is not obligated to provide court reporter transcripts free of charge to a party who has been granted a waiver of court fees and costs. (See *Rohnert Park v. Superior Court* (1983) 146 Cal.App.3d 420; *Mehdi v. Superior Court* (1989) 213 Cal.App.3d 1198.) Assistance may be available through the Transcript Reimbursement Fund. Further information is available on the [California Court Reporters Board's website](#).

Other Helpful Resources

- [Understanding the National Court Reporter Shortage and What it Means for Your Firm - U.S. Legal Support](#)
- [Court Reporting Industry Outlook Report \(2013 - 2014\)](#)