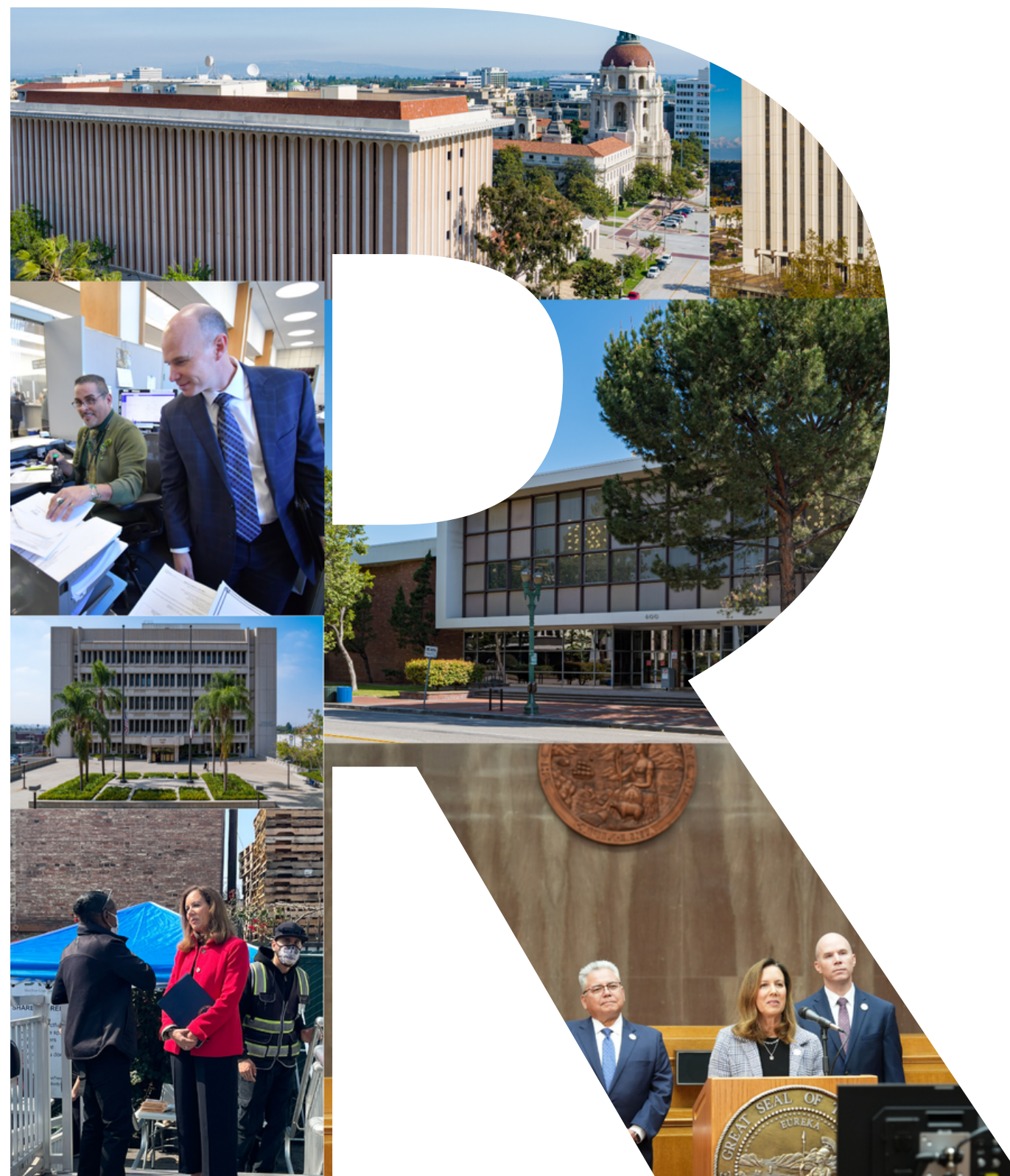




SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES



BIENNIAL REPORT

Presented by

- Presiding Judge Samantha P. Jessner
- Assistant Presiding Judge Sergio C. Tapia II
- Executive Officer/Clerk of Court David W. Slayton

2023-2024

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Published by the

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County of Los Angeles
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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

8

A Message From Presiding Judge Samantha P. Jessner, Assistant Presiding Judge Sergio C. Tapia II and Executive Officer/Clerk of Court David W. Slayton



10

About the Court



TRANSFORMATIVE INNOVATION

14

New Executive Officer/Clerk of Court David W. Slayton Hits the Ground Running



16

Pre-Arrest Release Protocols: A New Approach to Pre-Arrest Release for Non-Violent, Non-Serious Offenses in Los Angeles County



18

Building Lasting and Collaborative Relationships with Elected Officials



20

An Upgrade Seven Years in the Making – Modernizing the Criminal Division’s Case Management System



22

Digital Evidence System



23

eWarrants



24

A Groundbreaking New Partnership with Stanford Law School



25

Highlights from the Judicial Leadership Academy



26

A New Judicial Coaching Program Supports Career Success



DATA-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

28

Understanding and Measuring Judicial Resource Needs Through Data



30

Leveraging Data to Design and Launch a New Website



31

The Positive Impacts of Holding Informal Discovery Conferences



33

Dismantling the Personal Injury Hub and Returning These Cases to the Districts



34

The “Pathway” Approach to Handling Cases – A Toolkit for Judicial Officers for Evaluating the Needs of Cases



COLLABORATION

37

Strengthening Community Bonds Through Outreach



39

Mentoring the Next Generation of Judicial Officers: Deepening and Widening the Pipeline to the Bench



40

Forging Meaningful Partnerships with the Bar



42

A Volunteer Effort Expands to Resolve Cases Early



43

Emergency Preparedness: The Importance of Working Together



44

A Collaborative Goal in Addressing Bias



45

Launch of CARE Court



PEOPLE-CENTRIC

48

Homeless Courts



50

The Court Addresses a Court Reporter Shortage and Issues An Electronic Recording General Order To Ensure Litigants' Right To Appeal



52

The Future of the Downtown Los Angeles Courthouses, the Two Largest Courthouses in the Country



54

Expanding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion by Leveraging Data



55

Celebrating Employees with 50+ Years of Service



56

Human Resources Meets the Challenges of Post-Pandemic Job Market



58

Employee Newsletter 'On the Record' Celebrates Staff and Core Values



LOOKING AHEAD

60

Looking Ahead with Assistant Presiding Judge Sergio C. Tapia II



COURT DIVISION REPORT

62

Appellate Division 

63

Civil Division 

64

Criminal Division 

65

Family Law Division 

67

Juror Services Division 

68

Juvenile Division 

70

Mental Health Division 

72

Probate Division 

74

Self-Help Services 

76

Traffic Division 

77

Filing Information 

78

Financial Information 

79

Courthouse Contact Information 

A MESSAGE FROM **PRESIDING JUDGE SAMANTHA P. JESSNER, ASSISTANT PRESIDING JUDGE SERGIO C. TAPIA II AND EXECUTIVE OFFICER/CLERK OF COURT DAVID W. SLAYTON**



The general public's trust and confidence in democratic institutions, including courts, has been steadily eroding. Where respect for courts, including judicial officers and court staff, was once assumed, that is no longer the case. Courts, more than ever and like other institutions entrusted with upholding constitutional principles and the law, must be more intentional and diligent in efforts to actively earn the respect, trust and confidence of the constituents we serve.

Emerging technology and lessons learned from the worst global pandemic since the early 1900s have created expectations on the part of those we serve in which they prefer, and expect, to access justice in a variety of ways. Remote hearing and remote assistance options, chatbots, electronic filing and more provide court users with convenient options to access justice without visiting a courthouse. Modern case management systems arm judicial officers and court administrators with readily available data to make informed decisions that improve efficiency and expand access to justice.

As a result of this shift in people's expectations of access to courts and court technology innovation, the court has been gifted with an opportunity to think creatively and expansively about how to communicate consistently and clearly the need for the neutral, third independent branch of government to peacefully resolve disputes. In addition, the Court has an opportunity to think broadly about how to address society's challenges, while continuing to provide members of our community with a neutral, safe and equitable place to settle disputes and access justice.

This opportunity to do things differently has defined our tenure as the leaders of the largest trial court in the nation, serving nearly 10 million residents in 36 courthouses across a geographic area of over 4,000 square miles. We are redefining the Court's approach to our mission – serving our community by providing equal access to justice through the fair, timely and efficient resolution of all cases – by using four core values as guiding principles that will serve as the framework for this 2023-2024 Biennial Report: transformative innovation, data-informed decision-making, collaboration and a people-centric approach to the way we operate.

INTRODUCTION

The initiatives and programs that fill the pages of this 2023-2024 Biennial Report align with these values.

The September 2023 opening of the Community Outreach Court on Skid Row, providing unhoused residents with an opportunity to engage with the Court in the community to clear minor misdemeanor and infractions to remove barriers to housing and job opportunities is just one example of the Court's people-centric approach of meeting people where they are.

The December 1, 2023, early implementation of the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court in Los Angeles County to assist those with serious mental health disorders and their families was the result of a collaborative effort among the Court and its justice partners, including the LA County Board of Supervisors and the LA County Executive Office, the LA County Department of Mental Health, the Office of the Public Defender and Independent Defense Counsel's Office, and others.

The November 2023 implementation of a new electronic case management system in the Court's Criminal Division – which was the largest implementation of a single case management system in the world – is an example of the Court's commitment to improving access to justice through transformative innovation.

The February 2024 launch of a data dashboard to provide the public and the media with access to real-time data on outcomes relating to the Court's Pre-Arrest Release Protocols signifies the Court's commitment to leveraging data to make informed decisions and to provide transparency where possible.

It is the honor of our lifetimes to lead the largest trial court in the nation, implementing a culture change that has resulted in the Court engaging more openly and collaboratively with justice partners, elected officials, the media and the communities we serve.

The pages that follow are full of accomplishments large and small, only made possible by the talented army of court staff and judicial officers who come to work each day ready to serve the residents of Los Angeles County. We are proud of what we have collectively accomplished together as a court. We look forward to continuing to implement programs and initiatives that align with our four core values, with the goal of improving and enhancing public trust and confidence in the judicial branch and ensuring equal and timely access to justice for all who seek it.



**PRESIDING JUDGE
SAMANTHA P. JESSNER**



**ASSISTANT PRESIDING JUDGE
SERGIO C. TAPIA II**



**EXECUTIVE OFFICER/CLERK OF
COURT DAVID W. SLAYTON**

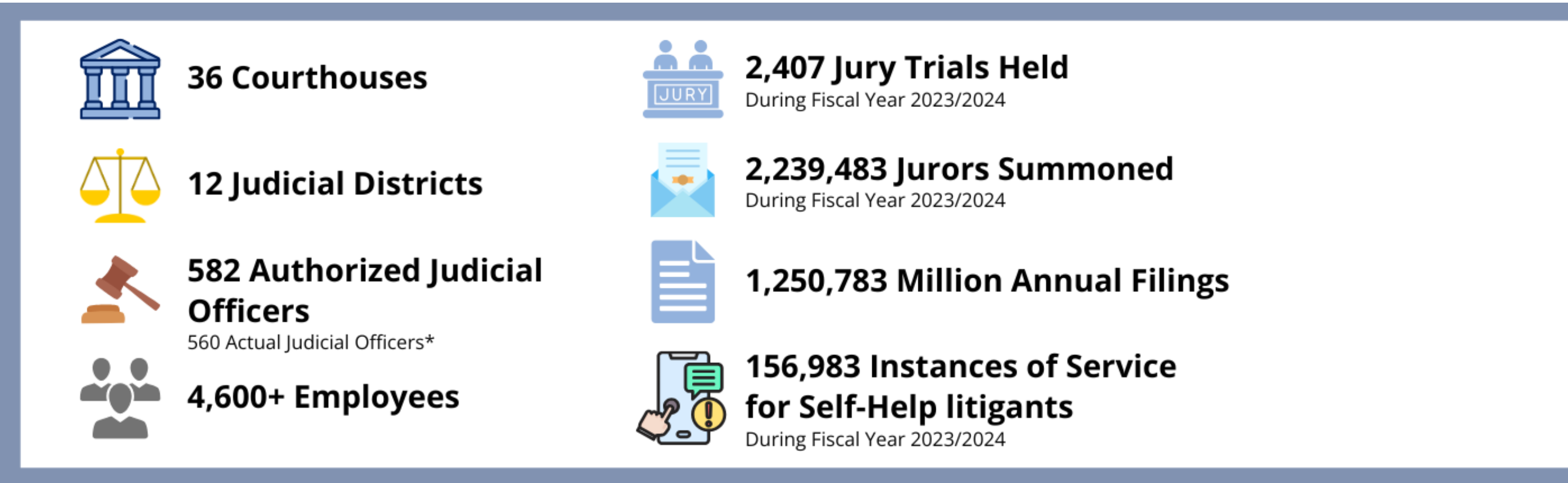
ABOUT THE COURT

The Superior Court of Los Angeles County (the Court) is one of 58 superior courts in California and the only superior court serving Los Angeles County. The Court’s jurisdiction covers an area that includes 88 cities, 140 unincorporated areas and more than 90 law enforcement agencies with a population of almost 10 million. The Court operates 36 courthouses located in 12 judicial districts within the county’s 4,084 square miles.

As the largest trial court in the nation, its judicial officers hear and adjudicate a comprehensive range of case types under state law, including civil, criminal, family law, juvenile dependency, juvenile justice, mental health, probate and traffic cases.

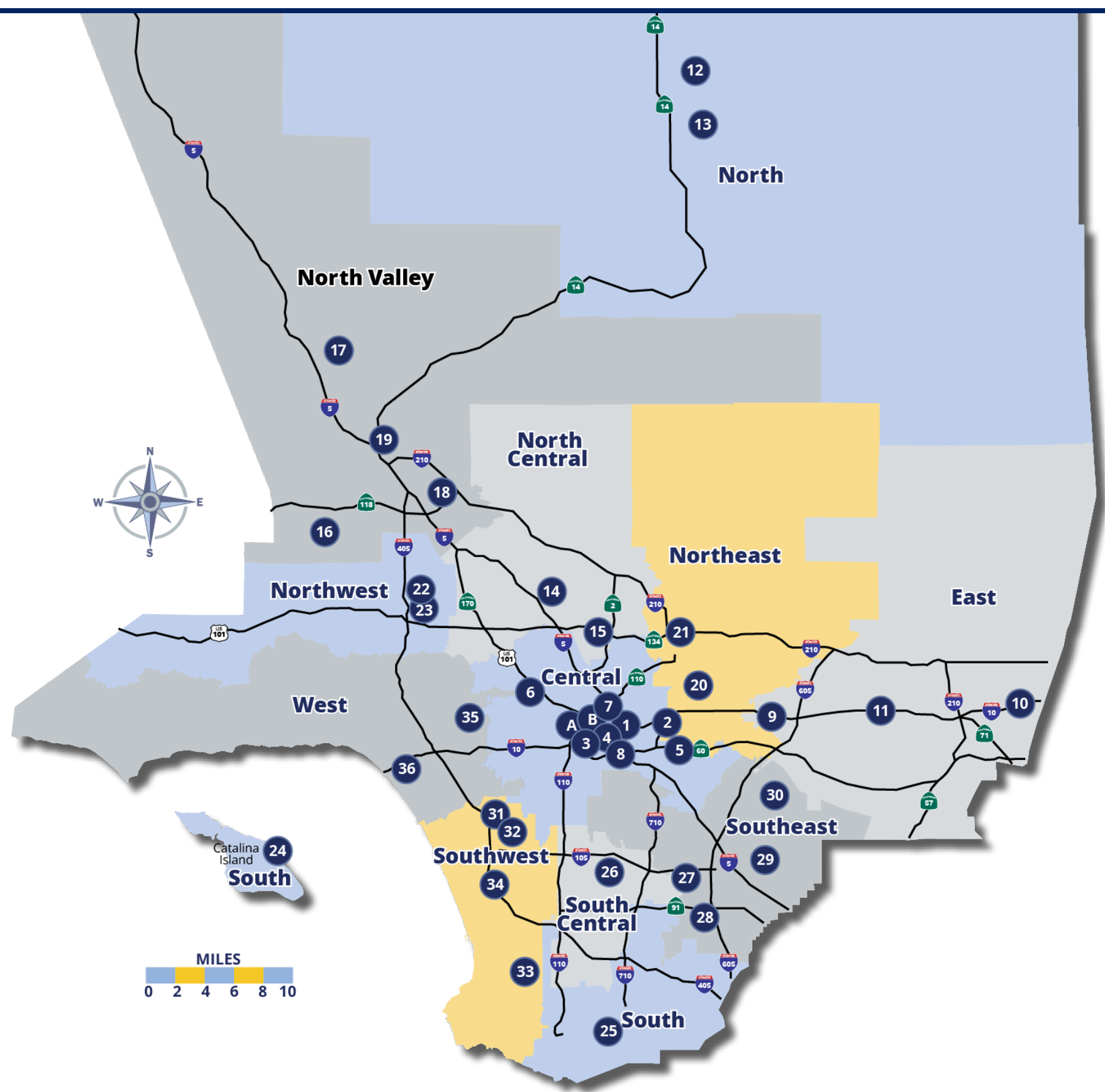
With an annual budget exceeding \$1 billion, the Court’s over 4,600 employees serve millions of court customers each year in clerk’s offices and 13 Self-Help Centers located in courthouses across the County. To accommodate the rich diversity of the most populous county in the United States, the Court's talented cadre of interpreters offer interpreter services in over 200 languages, including rare and indigenous dialects.

Superior Court of Los Angeles County – At a Glance:



**As of November 4, 2024, the Court has 582 authorized and funded judicial officer positions, however, the Court has consistently operated with anywhere between 15 to 30 vacancies at any given time.*

INTRODUCTION



COURT DISTRICTS AND COURTHOUSE LOCATIONS

CENTRAL DISTRICT

- 1 Central Arraignment Courthouse
- 2 Edmund D. Edelman Children's Courthouse
- 3 Stanley Mosk Courthouse
- 4 Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center
- 5 East Los Angeles Courthouse
- 6 Hollywood Courthouse
- 7 Spring Street Courthouse
- 8 Metropolitan Courthouse
- A CourtArchives and Record Center
- B Hall of Records (Court Technology Services, Jury Services)

EAST DISTRICT

- 9 El Monte Courthouse
- 10 Pomona Courthouse
- 11 West Covina Courthouse

NORTH DISTRICT

- 12 Alfred J. McCourtney Juvenile Justice Center Courthouse
- 13 Michael D. Antonovich Antelope Valley Courthouse

NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT

- 14 Burbank Courthouse
- 15 Glendale Courthouse

NORTH VALLEY DISTRICT

- 16 Chatsworth Courthouse
- 17 Santa Clarita Courthouse
- 18 San Fernando Courthouse
- 19 Sylmar Juvenile Courthouse

NORTHEAST DISTRICT

- 20 Alhambra Courthouse
- 21 Pasadena Courthouse

NORTHWEST DISTRICT

- 22 Van Nuys East Courthouse
- 23 Van Nuys West Courthouse

SOUTH DISTRICT

- 24 Catalina Courthouse
- 25 Governor George Deukmejian Courthouse

SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT

- 26 Compton Courthouse

SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

- 27 Downey Courthouse
- 28 Bellflower Courthouse
- 29 Norwalk Courthouse
- 30 Whittier Courthouse

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT


- 31 Inglewood Courthouse
- 32 Inglewood Juvenile Courthouse
- 33 Torrance Courthouse

WEST DISTRICT

- 34 Airport Courthouse*
- 35 Beverly Hills Courthouse
- 36 Santa Monica Courthouse

*Geographically located in the Southwest District

TRANSFORMATIVE INNOVATION

The background of the page is a solid blue color. On the right side, there is a vertical band of diagonal stripes in a slightly darker shade of blue, running from the top to the bottom of the page.

The Court is dedicated to transformative innovation, recognizing it as a crucial element for the Court's success in improving the efficiency, accessibility and fairness of the justice system. As the largest trial court in the United States, it has a unique opportunity to spearhead significant advancements in providing exceptional experiences with the court system, enhancing access to justice and improving public trust and confidence in the courts. To ensure that the Court meets the needs of both internal stakeholders and external users, it fosters a culture of boldness and calculated risk-taking to develop innovative solutions. Court leadership firmly believes that experimentation and iteration are indispensable to creating transformative change.



New Executive Officer/Clerk of Court **David W. Slayton** Hits the Ground Running

In May 2022, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court (CEO) Ms. Sherri R. Carter announced her decision to leave the Court after nearly a decade leading operations and overseeing nearly 5,000 staff members of the largest unified trial court in the nation. In response to Ms. Carter's announcement, judicial leadership appointed a group of judges to serve on the Court's CEO Selection Committee. After a six-month national search, the CEO Selection Committee recommended the appointment of veteran court leader David W. Slayton to succeed Ms. Carter as the Court's new CEO. The entire judicial bench of the Court affirmed the selection shortly thereafter.

Mr. Slayton joined the Court from the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), where he served as the vice president for Court Consulting Services and worked with courts throughout the country to improve their operations and access to justice. Prior to working with the NCSC, Mr. Slayton served in various court administration roles in the Texas state courts and federal courts, including as administrative director of the Texas Office of Court Administration and the executive director of the Texas Judicial Council. He also served as the director of court administration for Lubbock County, Texas, and previously served there as a trial court coordinator and deputy district clerk. In short, Mr. Slayton has spent his entire career working for courts and in the administration of justice.

As the state court administrator and executive director of the Texas Judicial Council from 2012 to 2021, Mr. Slayton worked with over 3,000 judicial officers and thousands of court employees to operate the Texas judiciary, developing, advocating and managing a biennial budget of nearly \$1 billion. During his tenure, he led the Texas judiciary's response to the COVID-19 pandemic; led the judiciary's response to a cyberattack; implemented mandatory statewide electronic filing; and oversaw the procurement of a uniform case management system, as well as many other court technology innovations. He regularly represented the judiciary before the Governor, Legislature and other executive branch agencies.



TRANSFORMATIVE INNOVATION

Mr. Slayton's arrival coincided with Presiding Judge Samantha P. Jessner's and Assistant Presiding Judge Sergio C. Tapia II's ascension into their respective roles as Presiding Judge and Assistant Presiding Judge. From the get-go, they worked as a closely knit team aligned regarding their goals and an abiding dedication to fulfilling the mission of the Court. Their powerful bond and unity of purpose brought about a seismic shift in the Court's leadership perspective, initiating a renewed focus on transformative innovation to enhance and expand access to justice, fostering a people-centric work environment and building stronger relationships with elected officials, members of the media and, most importantly, the communities the Court serves.

Under the leadership of Mr. Slayton along with Presiding Judge Jessner and Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia, the Court successfully implemented the largest single litigation case management system in the world, launched – one year early – an entirely new court process to provide service and support to those suffering from severe mental illness through CARE Court, announced and implemented changes to county bail schedules to improve public safety and address systemic inequality associated with cash bail, and so, so much more.

But what stands out most about the Court's CEO is that he is an undeniable people person. His favorite part of the job so far? Meeting as many of the Court's 4,600+ employees as possible through visits to each of the Court's 36 courthouse locations in his first year.

"If I could do this all day, every day, I would," Mr. Slayton said on a visit in 2023. "Getting to know the hardworking people that make this court a beacon of innovation and work to fulfill our mission of providing timely and equal access to justice for all, for me, is the best part of this job."

Leading with a people-centric approach for both court users and court employees, along with embracing data to inform decisions, encouraging transformative innovation and fostering an environment ripe for collaboration, will continue to define Mr. Slayton's tenure moving forward. Under Mr. Slayton's leadership, the Court has made great strides in reimagining what access to justice can look like and will no doubt continue to stand as a beacon of best practices and ingenuity for courts around the country. The Court is fortunate that Mr. Slayton chose to hang up his cowboy boots and spurs to join the Superior Court of Los Angeles County. There is no doubt that he will continue to make meaningful and lasting change for many years to come and expand traditional notions of equal access to justice to effectively serve the diverse communities the Court serves.



PRE-ARRAIGNMENT RELEASE PROTOCOLS: A NEW APPROACH TO PRE-ARRAIGNMENT RELEASE FOR NON-VIOLENT, NON-SERIOUS OFFENSES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

As part of the Court's commitment to transformative innovation, Presiding Judge Jessner announced in July 2023 Pre-Arraignment Release Protocols (PARPs) that acknowledge the fundamental inequality of money bail and represent a seismic shift in the approach to pre-arraignment release for those arrested for nonviolent, non-serious felonies and misdemeanors. The PARPs, which became effective in Los Angeles County on October 1, 2023, eliminated traditional money bail for most non-violent and non-serious crimes in favor of a risk-based system that conditions release on the arrestee's likelihood of returning to court and their risk to public and victim safety.

Now, rather than determining release solely based on a person's ability to pay an arbitrary amount of money, under the PARPs a judge determines a person's risk to public or victim safety, as well as the person's likelihood of returning to court and sets release conditions, if any, accordingly. This is consistent with the Constitutional purposes of bail, which is to protect public and victim safety and ensure the arrestee's return to court.



The Court's virtual new conference, held in July 2023, to announce the Pre-Arraignment Release Protocols (PARPs).

TRANSFORMATIVE INNOVATION

Judges are available 24/7, 365 days a year to make these determinations. They base these determinations on the person's prior criminal history, prior failures to appear at court, the offense for which the person has been arrested, and other information provided to the judge by law enforcement officers or others. Before PARP, each crime corresponded with a specific dollar amount and release was premised on a person's ability to pay the bail amount, not on their risk if released. Ironically, pursuant to state law, the most violent, highest-risk arrestees are not eligible for PARP, meaning potentially dangerous individuals retain the right to pay their way out of jail. The Court continues to encourage state legislators to eliminate remaining barriers to a system that prioritizes public and victim safety rather than access to money.

Skepticism remained high during the initial PARP rollout. Several local elected officials summarized the fears of many of their constituents: that PARP would eliminate accountability for crime and reduce public safety.

To combat those fears, the Court committed to data transparency on this critical topic by publishing regular reports on the impacts of PARP. The results were eye-opening: In a data report the Court published five months after PARP's implementation, magistrate judges released 84% of those assessed as having a low risk of re-offending. Prior to PARP, many of those individuals would have languished in jail needlessly for lack of money for bail, risking their jobs and families, but not making communities any safer.

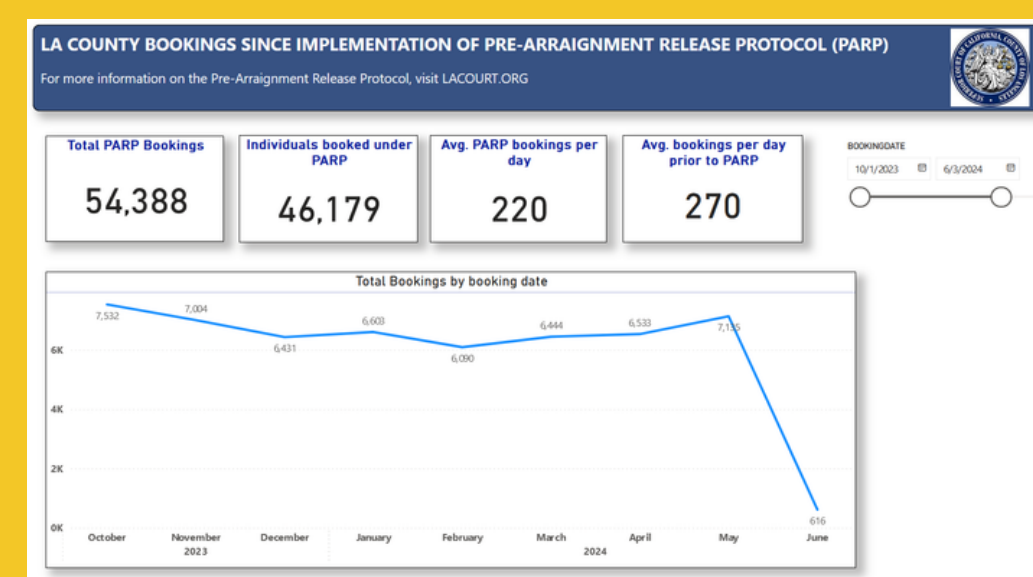
In contrast, among those held after judicial review, 73% were determined to have a medium-to-high risk of committing a new crime if released — and many of those individuals may have “purchased” their release notwithstanding their risk level in the old money bail system. Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna, an initial PARP skeptic, told the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in February 2024, “Low-risk individuals are being cited and booked-and-released. At the same time ... high-risk individuals are being temporarily held in jail.” Sheriff Luna added that law enforcement is now “sharing with our communities that there is a different way of doing business.”

At that same meeting, Executive Officer Slayton summarized the impacts of the PARPs: “Judicial officers are using their discretion to make the best, safest possible decisions for our communities,” Executive Officer Slayton told the Board. “We believe that it is working.”

The Court's real-time PARP Data Dashboard lets the numbers do the talking.

Because so much of the bail reform dialogue is driven by fear, misunderstanding of the money bail system and lack of knowledge of the law, it was important for the Court to provide as much transparency as possible regarding the practical impacts of PARP. To that end, Presiding Judge Jessner announced in February 2024 a comprehensive, real-time PARP Dashboard.

The Dashboard, publicly accessible at www.LACourt.org/Bail, breaks down real-time countywide bookings by the three PARP categories. While maintaining the confidentiality of arrestees, the Dashboard provides risk comparisons of arrestees who were held in detention pre-arraignment versus those who were released. Results can be filtered by date range to examine the impacts of the PARPs over time. Check it out today!



THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Home Online Services Forms, Filings & Fees Self-Help Divisions Jury General Info

> Criminal

OTHER SERVICES/INFORMATION

Bail Schedules

The Criminal Court provides online access to resources and documents related to Misdemeanor and Felony Bail Schedules.

Resource Name	Description
Felony Bail Schedule	This bail schedule is used to determine the circumstances in which a person who is arrested without a warrant may be released from custody prior to appearance in court in a felony case. Read Document
Felony Bail Computation Worksheet	Complete Worksheet
Request To Increase Bail (PC 1269c/1270.1) And/Or Restrict Source of Bail (PC 1275.1)	Complete Worksheet

This bail schedule is used to determine the circumstances in which a person who is

BUILDING LASTING AND COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

The Court recognizes the importance of engaging with its counterparts in the legislative and executive branches at every level of government. As the largest trial court in the nation, serving almost 10 million residents, it is imperative that the Court foster collaborative working relationships with policymakers to educate them regarding the Court's challenges and identify solutions to expand access to justice for the people we collectively serve. To that end, the Court hosted its first-ever Legislative Breakfast and Tour in April 2023 for members of the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation as well as the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. The event was a resounding success, with attendance by more than 70% of the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation represented either by staff or by members themselves. Lawmakers and their staff listened to a presentation on some of the Court's most pressing needs related to providing greater access to justice, including the court reporter shortage crisis, the importance of remote court proceedings, and seismic risks and facilities issues.

The presentation was followed by a guided tour of Stanley Mosk Courthouse and the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center, where judicial officers and court employees walked elected officials through day-to-day court operations and highlighted some of the obstacles faced by their constituents that can only be addressed with legislative solutions. The tour also provided an opportunity to watch court proceedings which showed, among other things, the effectiveness of remote proceedings in providing litigants flexibility in participating in court proceedings.

Since the Legislative Breakfast and Tour, Court leadership has hosted legislative meet and greets, town halls and virtual briefings and taken dozens of meetings with elected officials on a range of pressing issues, from the Court's groundbreaking PARPs to the newly implemented CARE Court for individuals with serious mental disorders.

Locally, Court leadership has prioritized connections and relationships with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, meeting with each Supervisor and their justice deputies to foster trust, collaboration, and information sharing and working actively on issues of mutual concern. Executive Officer Slayton even testified before the Board of Supervisors in September 2023 and February 2024 to discuss the implementation and success of the Court's PARPs and their impact on public safety in Los Angeles County.



Court leadership visits the Capitol in Sacramento in March 2024.

TRANSFORMATIVE INNOVATION

The Court also recognizes the importance of building relationships with elected officials at the municipal level, as exemplified by Court leadership's meeting with Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass in July 2023 to forge a strong partnership and ensure the Court and the Bass Administration are working in lockstep to serve the needs of Los Angeles City residents, especially with regard to the homeless crisis in Los Angeles.

Court leadership has also traveled to Sacramento for visits to the Capitol in March of 2024 and provided testimony in support of legislation in April 2024. The presence of the Court's leadership team in Sacramento sent a powerful message that the Superior Court of Los Angeles County is prepared to meet lawmakers where they are to work together on behalf of the constituents they and the Court collectively serve.

In 2025, the Court will host its second Legislative Breakfast and Tour to welcome the new members of the Los Angeles County Delegation emerging from the 2024 election cycle. In the new legislative session, Court leadership will be front and center on some of the Court's own legislative proposals designed to expand access to justice and modernize court operations.

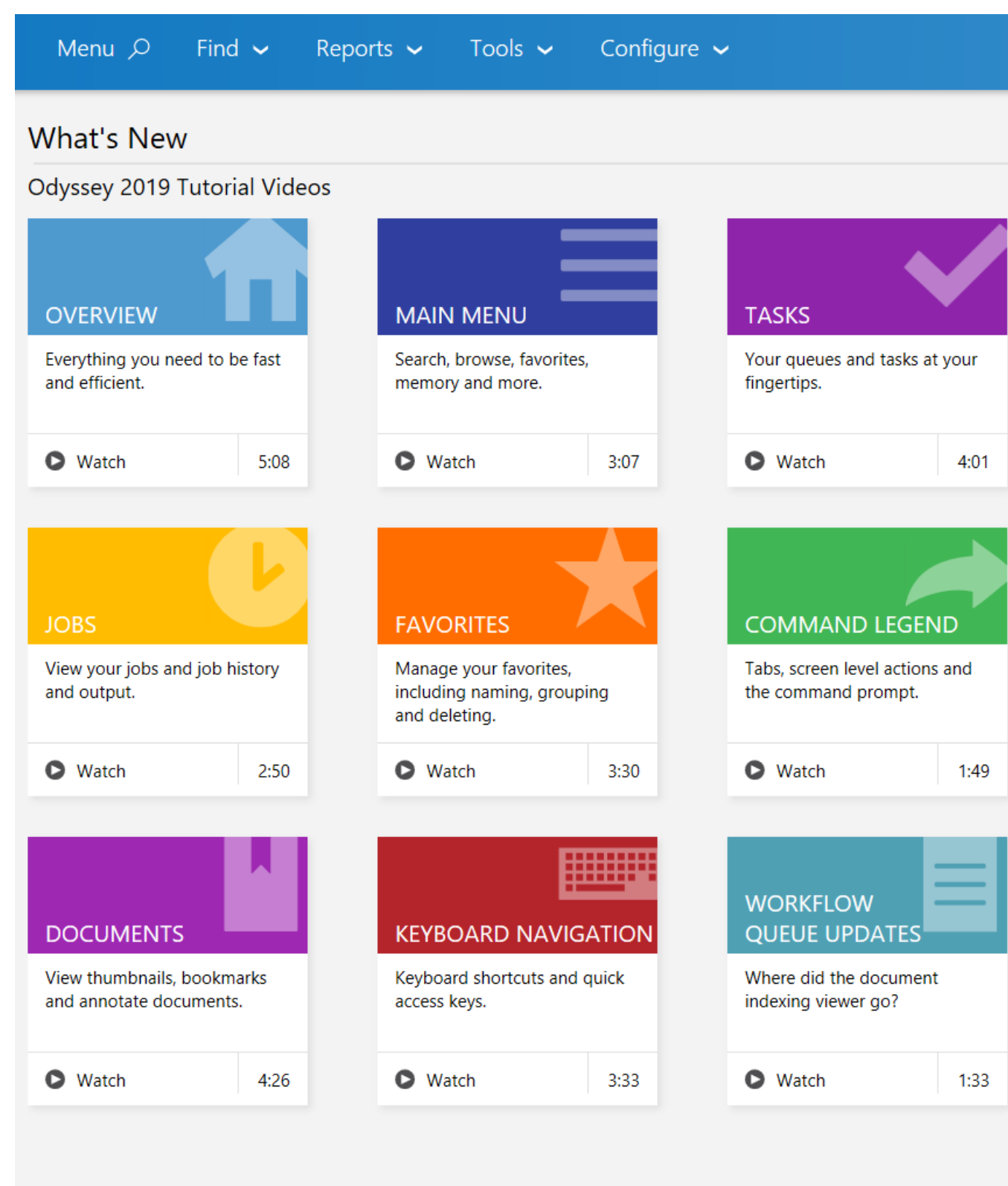


Court leadership hosts a roundtable discussion with legislators and justice partners on addressing the mental health crisis.



In addition to visiting leaders in Sacramento, court leadership met with local elected officials and hosted its first-ever Legislative Breakfast and Tour in April 2023 for members of the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation as well as the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

AN UPGRADE SEVEN YEARS IN THE MAKING – MODERNIZING THE CRIMINAL DIVISION’S CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



A screenshot of the new CMS, a photo of four employees who worked on the launch at the Governor George Deukmejian (Long Beach) Courthouse, 11 employees who worked together at the Bellflower Courthouse and several photos from "Go-Live" weekend.

Sometimes transformative innovation includes modernizing case management systems that were implemented during President Reagan’s administration. After years of persistent hard work and collaboration between court divisions and with various justice partners, the Court implemented a new Criminal Case Management System (CMS) on Veteran’s Day weekend 2023. The new CMS replaced the Court’s original Trial Court Information System (TCIS), originally installed in the 1980s. Given the technological revolution that’s taken place since the launch of TCIS four decades ago, such an upgrade required a momentous effort by court staff and the Court’s justice partners to upgrade to an entirely new system.

The new CMS project began in 2016 when staff from the Court’s Operations, Finance and Court Technology Services teams worked with a third-party to build a new platform that would utilize modern technology while concurrently supporting old systems to minimize any impact to court users, court operations and public agencies, including the District Attorney’s Office, the Public Defender’s Office, the Alternate Public Defender’s Office, city attorneys, the Probation Department, and the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department.

CRIMINAL’S NEW
CASE MANAGEMENT
SYSTEM BY THE
NUMBERS



5,000

initial and subsequent **disposition records** per week, which accounts for one-third of all criminal dispositions reported to the California Department of Justice.



5,000+ Cases

filed per month by 44 prosecuting agencies and more than 88 law enforcement agencies spread across 100+ cities and jurisdictions.



59,000+ Distinct offense codes

(which are codes used in the CMS to represent individual alleged crimes) are **included in these filings**.



Nearly 4M case records & 2.8M

warrants were transferred to the new CMS.



24 Courthouses

use the CMS across 266 courtrooms overseeing 3,000 hearings per day with 1,150 end users.

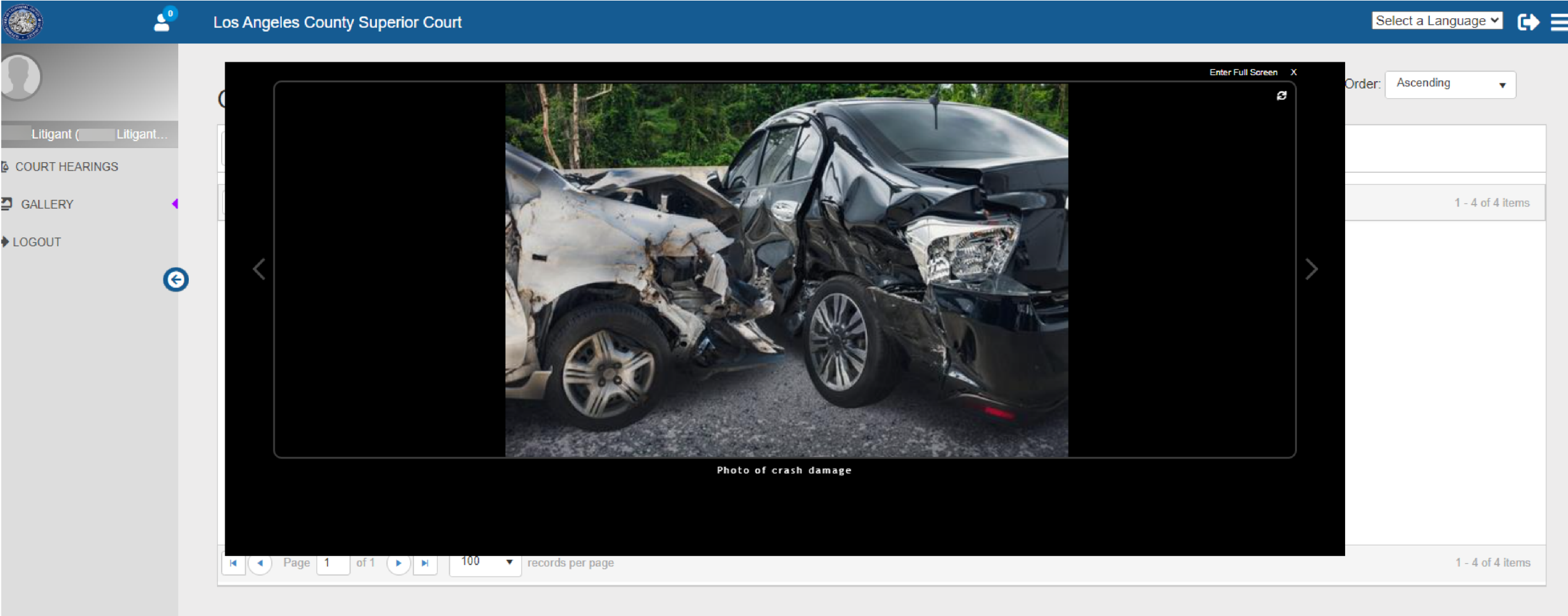
Court staff worked tirelessly to configure thousands of codes to facilitate the upgrade. Given the Court’s specific requirements, the new platform required extensive customizations to meet the needs of court users and court staff. This work required teams to build a bridge to migrate millions of case records from TCIS to the new CMS.

The new CMS now provides several notable benefits, which include but are not limited to:

- Records can now easily be shared electronically with public agencies and the public to the extent permitted by law.
- Automated integrations make it easier for the Court to communicate pertinent information to relevant reporting agencies like the Department of Justice, Department of Motor Vehicles and Judicial Council of California.
- Electronic filing in the Criminal Division will become available in 2025 (which was not possible with the old system).
- Judicial officers and judicial assistants in both the Criminal and Mental Health Divisions can record their orders within the same case record when a case is transferred from one division to the other.
- Court clerks can efficiently generate multiple forms and notices for multiple case records.

It took a team of court specialists seven years, seven months and seven days (equivalent to 2,777 days) from start to finish to successfully update the Criminal CMS, including after-hours work on nights, weekends and holidays.

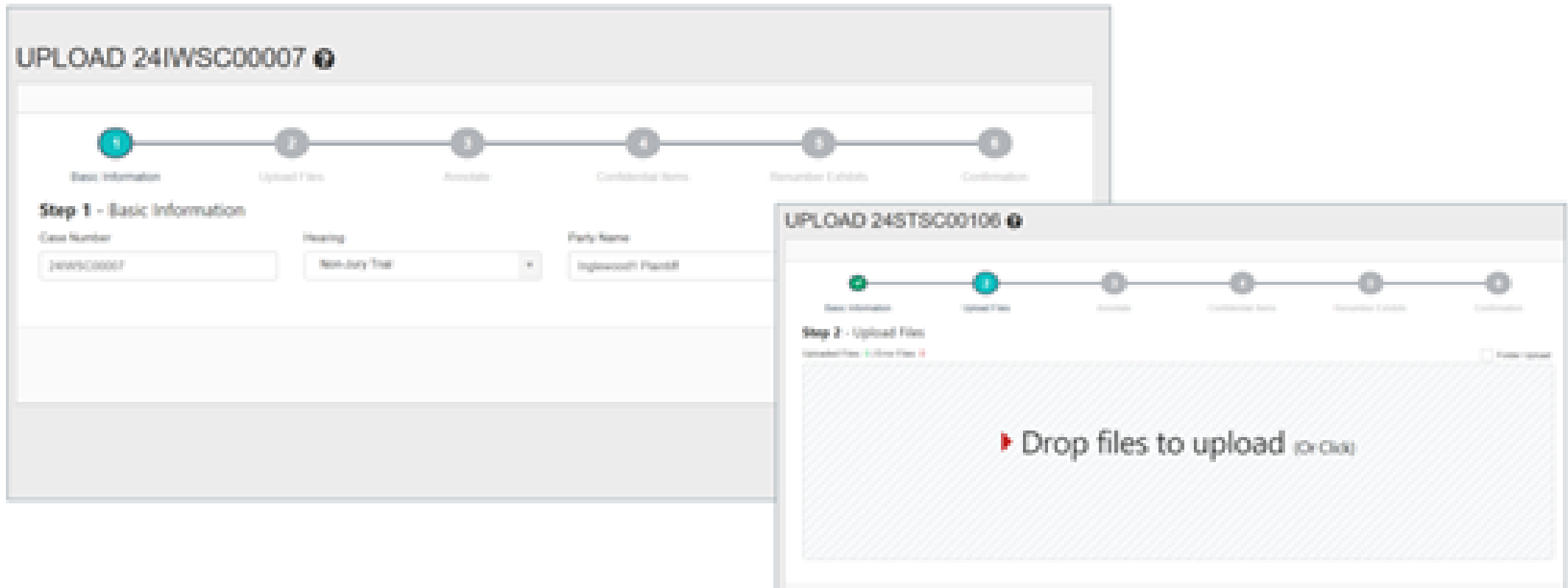
As a result of the dedication and commitment of countless court staff across multiple divisions, the Court’s Criminal Division now utilizes an agile CMS that more effectively meets the needs of the Court, its users and justice partners. This monumental project has the distinction of being the largest implementation of a single litigation case management system in the world.




DIGITAL EVIDENCE SYSTEM

As part of the Court’s efforts to leverage technology to enhance and expand access to justice and its commitment to environmental sustainability, the Court’s Technology Services and Operations teams are working to implement a Digital Evidence System designed to facilitate electronic uploading, storage and management of the millions of pages of evidence submitted to the Court each year. The system enables parties to upload, exchange, search and view digital evidence without the need to provide it in paper form. The system also enables judicial assistants and judicial officers to view digitally uploaded evidence. In September 2024, the Court launched the Digital Evidence System as a pilot project in select Small Claims courtrooms with the goal of expanding it to all case types.

Upload Process



The goal of the eSearch Warrant project is to provide Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) with the capability to upload their search warrant applications and search warrant returns for judicial review and approval, as opposed to the current system which requires law enforcement officers to visit the courthouse and judicial officer in person to request warrants and have them approved. The new system will provide judicial officers with an easy-to-use tool to quickly identify and review pending search warrant requests and search warrant returns and provide notifications to LEAs when search warrants are approved or rejected. The eSearch Warrant system also allows the Court to seamlessly connect the search warrant and search warrant return to filed cases and to permit review of search warrant returns on public kiosks when the returns are not otherwise sealed.

eSearch
Warrant

Active Warrants

Create Warrant

Find Warrants

NON-PRODUCTION SITE

MB Officer 1

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1 / 11

90%

+

🔍

🔄

24BFCF00067

SW No. 23239

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

RETURN TO SEARCH WARRANT


Russell Williams, being sworn, says that he conducted a search pursuant to the below-described search warrant:

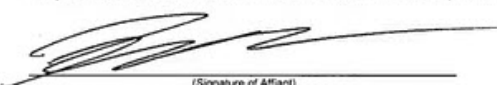
Issuing Magistrate: John C. Weller.
Magistrate's Court: Superior Court, South/East Judicial District
Date of Issuance: 10-11-23
Date of Service: 10-11-23
and searched the following location(s), vehicle(s), and person(s):

For the location of 11441 East Carson Street #222, Lakewood, CA 90248
County of Los Angeles

and seized the items:
__X__ described in the attached and incorporated inventory
__ described below:

I further swear that this is a true and detailed account of all the property taken by me pursuant to the search warrant, and that pursuant to Penal Code Sections 1528 and 1536 this property will be retained in my custody, subject to the order of this court or of any other court in which the offense in respect to which the seized property is triable.




(Signature of Affiant)
Sworn to and subscribed before me this 2nd day of November 2023

✓ Saved

Warrant Return successfully uploaded

Date Entered:

07/15/2024 09:15 AM

Search Warrant Number:

24-1944-000118

LPD Number:

CA204615

Resubmit?:

No

Uploaded Search Warrant:

Search Warrant John Doe.pdf

Uploaded Warrant Return:

Return Warrant Sample-01.pdf

Secondary Access:

N/A

Judicial Decision Date:

07/15/2024 09:16 AM

Judicial Officer Decision:

Approved
Hobbs sealing approved: Yes
Night search approved: No

Warrant Return Hobbs Sealing Requested:

☒ Yes

☐ No

< Back

Upload Warrant Return

A GROUNDBREAKING NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH STANFORD LAW SCHOOL

At the start of 2024, the Court embarked on a groundbreaking new partnership with Stanford Law School to research, design and implement innovative, evidence-based approaches that improve access to justice for all court users. The partnership will study and recommend ways to reduce barriers to participation in the judicial process, design and implement people-centered policies and tools that will empower court users to navigate legal proceedings with greater ease, especially for the significant number of litigants who cannot afford to retain the services of an attorney and cannot access free legal services.

To achieve this, the Court is working closely with researchers from Stanford Law School's Deborah L. Rhode Center on the Legal Profession and Legal Design Lab to identify with specificity the barriers to full participation throughout the justice system, with a particular focus on case types with a high percentage of self-represented litigants, including unlawful detainer (eviction), child support and debt collection actions.

Working with court administrators and judicial officers, Stanford researchers have employed a mix of quantitative and qualitative research methods to identify barriers to court user engagement and the fair and accurate adjudication of legal rights. After spending a significant amount of time in courthouses interviewing and observing various stakeholders which have enabled researchers to identify key barriers, Stanford researchers have begun the design, piloting and evaluation of new approaches that combine user-centered design, digital self-help, human assistance and appropriate subject matter expertise to expand court access for all Angelenos.

This partnership was launched amidst a rising tide of high stakes but small-scale legal cases that often produce life-altering outcomes for litigants. Many of the litigants in these case types are self-represented and experience systemic gaps in access to legal services based on income, education, race, gender and ethnicity. Mounting evidence also demonstrates that courts can play a key role in addressing disparities with people-centered approaches that empower litigants with comprehensible self-help tools to navigate the legal system. Understanding these challenges, the Court seized upon an amazing opportunity to reevaluate its processes and procedures with the assistance of industry-leading scholars.

With this partnership, the Court and Stanford researchers will have access to data to inform transformative innovation to eliminate barriers to access with new approaches designed to make the judicial system work more effectively for all litigants through better engagement, participation and access. Data and insight from this ongoing study will likely be used to influence court systems across the country and world to embrace improved people-centered approaches.

Once complete, the partnership will deepen meaningful participation in cases, increase research opportunities for court innovation and improve the overall administration of the Court, benefiting all residents of Los Angeles County.

StanfordLawSchool
Deborah L. Rhode
Center on the Legal Profession

Legal Design Lab

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW IMAGES](#)

The Court recently concluded its inaugural Judicial Leadership Academy. The Academy, ably led by Judge Lawrence P. Riff, who took on the role as the Dean of the Academy, was based on some foundational principles, including, (1) the belief that leadership consists of traits and skills that can be acquired; that is, leaders are made, not born; (2) leadership is not about hierarchy and titles—judicial officers with no official title can be effective “everyday leaders” by demonstrating affirmative conduct consistent with the Canons and the mission of our Court—although being an everyday leader does require a healthy dose of courage; and (3) leadership is not about being “a boss”—bosses command, leaders inspire; bosses delegate tasks; leaders delegate authority.

For four-and-a-half intensive days, spread over three months, 29 judicial officers, the Presiding Judge, the Assistant Presiding Judge, Dean Riff, the Executive Officer/Clerk of Court and the entire Senior Executive Team (SET) explored the nature of leadership generally and as applied to the culture of the Court. It was hard work, with Academy members assigned reading material from the Harvard Business Review and substantial individual preparation exercises.

The Academy also included skilled speakers and facilitators. One worked with the Academy to elucidate the various styles and methods of oral communication and explain how such styles promote or impair true communication in coaching, conflict management and culture change. A speaker examined the critical distinction between leading and cheerleading, and the leader’s obligation to employ “tough empathy” in confronting uncomfortable but unavoidable realities. Another speaker, a former long-time leader of the Miami-Dade County courts, shared her experience in court leadership during which the Academy members heard about similar experiences and dynamics among judges and lessons that they might benefit from in Los Angeles. The takeaway: judicial officers are not the first to fill these roles and we can and should learn from others. Speakers from the Stanford Law School faculty spoke to the Academy about utilizing the discipline of academic data science to reveal otherwise hard-to-see and identify shortcomings in the Court’s ability to meet its mission. Former Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, Tani Cantil-Sakauye, also spoke openly and boldly about her challenges and successes in her decades of court leadership.

The Academy focused on the members of the SET and their functions on the Court. While court leaders long have spoken about judicial officers “staying in their lane” relative to court administration, very few judicial officers have familiarity with the SET’s “lane” and the expertise they bring. Budget, Court Counsel, Media Relations, Human Resources, Technology, Operations: not just words on an organizational chart but living, breathing professionals, leading a 5,000-person workplace, who have different and deep reservoirs of expertise and experience as compared to judicial officers. The Academy studied the seeming paradox of the importance of judicial officers and senior staff staying in their respective lanes but, also, how those lanes necessarily merge when the Court undergoes transformative change. Judicial academy members uniformly reported that the exploration of the work of the SET was nothing short of revelatory and the most valuable aspect of the Academy.

“The Academy was a safe space,” said Academy Dean, Judge Lawrence Riff. “There were tears, and there was laughter, but mostly there was awe—awe at the recognition of what focused leadership can accomplish.”

A NEW JUDICIAL COACHING PROGRAM SUPPORTS CAREER SUCCESS



In November 2024, the Court announced a partnership with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to launch a Judicial Coaching Program with the goal of enhancing judicial career success and satisfaction through peer collaboration. The program supports judicial officers in managing the unique challenges of their profession, ultimately enhancing the Court's effectiveness in serving the community.

Recognizing that while serving as a judicial officer is deeply rewarding, judges face distinct challenges, such as professional isolation and the pressures of high-stress environments. This coaching initiative provides a structured, peer-based support system designed to foster professional growth through collaboration among judicial colleagues. It is built on the premise that peer coaching, facilitated by trained judges within a formalized framework, effectively supports professional development throughout a judge's career.

Each participant is matched with a trained judicial peer coach. Together, they establish the parameters of their coaching relationship, including defining goals, scheduling and logistics. Peer coaches, trained by experts, develop essential coaching skills, including active listening, effective communication, emotional intelligence and self-awareness. In their sessions, coaches and participants work together to identify and prioritize development goals tailored to participants' aspirations and needs.

DATA-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

The Court is committed to upholding integrity, impartiality and fairness in the justice system. This commitment extends to the decision-making process. Court leaders recognize that data can be a powerful tool in assisting them to make the best decisions possible. Therefore, it is essential that the Court's leaders collect and use accurate and reliable data to inform their decisions, ensuring that they are based on evidence and facts. The Court is transparent in our use of data, sharing its methods and findings openly (where appropriate and possible) with all stakeholders, including judicial officers, lawyers, employees and the public.



UNDERSTANDING AND MEASURING JUDICIAL RESOURCE NEEDS THROUGH DATA

The Court is committed to leveraging data to make informed decisions regarding its scarce resources. To that end, the Court implemented a Judicial Needs Assessment (JNA) in the Spring of 2024 to ensure the Court's limited judicial resources are allocated appropriately and effectively.

Similar to assessments done by the Judicial Council of California, the JNA used a system called "case weights" to compare the work it takes to process different types of cases. Using this metric, Court leadership is able to account for the fact that a criminal case, for example, takes more or less judicial officer time than a family law case, for example.

Multiplying a case weight by the number of cases filed in a given time period in that case type yields an estimate of the amount of judicial officer time required to manage the caseload. This approach accounts for the variety of case types and cases within case types and is widely accepted as the most effective way to approximate an apples-to-apples comparison among case types. This is the only systematic way to compare the workload across various litigation types.

The last time case weights were measured was over six years ago. Much has changed since then, from new laws to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in increased workload in certain areas. To account for these changes, the Court worked with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to obtain updated data through the JNA.

Here’s how it worked:

- Judges tracked their daily work in April 2024.
- They recorded how much time they spent on each type of case.
- They included all aspects of their work, from filing to disposition, including work on the bench and work in chambers.

More than 90% of the Court’s judges participated in this study.

This new information will help Court leadership better understand how recent changes in the law affect judges’ workloads, make better decisions about where to assign judges and maximize the amount of time a judge can pay attention to each type of case. The Court expects to incorporate the updated case weights in its judicial assignment decisions beginning in late 2024.

Survey Datapoints

From April 2 through April 26



561 JUDICIAL OFFICERS

were on the bench during at least part of the survey period (the number of vacancies is fluid and depends on the number and timing of retirements and appointments).

9,000+ DAILY SURVEYS

NCSC **received** more than 9,000 daily surveys.



250,000+ MATTERS

Judicial officers **heard** more than 250,000 matters.



NCSC
National Center for State Courts

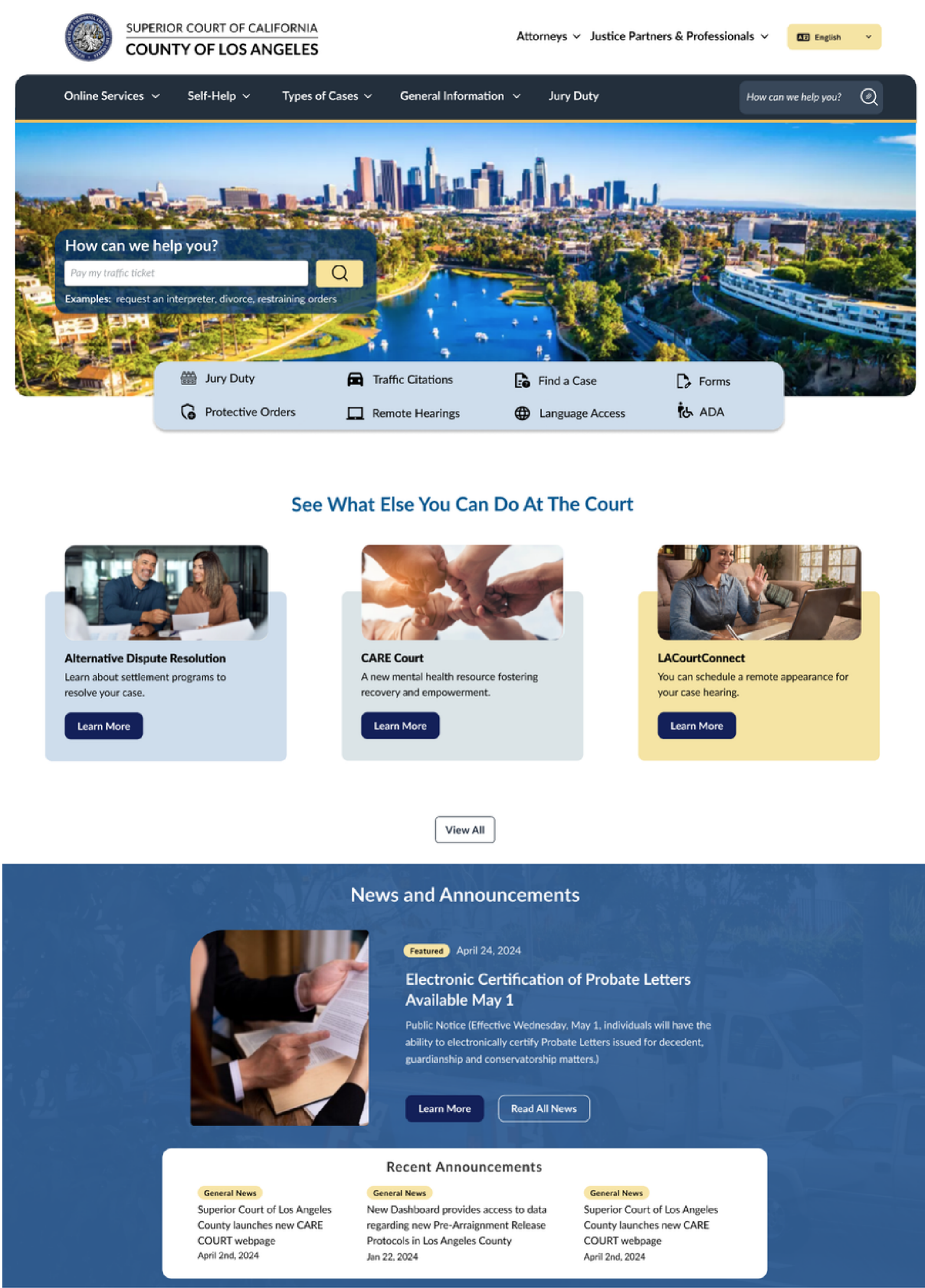
LEVERAGING DATA TO DESIGN AND LAUNCH A NEW WEBSITE

The Court is undertaking a major website redesign of www.LACourt.org to enhance user experience, expand access to court services and information, highlight available online services, improve engagement and strengthen the Court’s image. The Court formed a Website Redesign Committee focused on reimagining the website as a service-centric platform that prioritizes user needs while also ensuring compliance with relevant regulations and standards. Additionally, this effort to leverage technology further supports the Court’s mission to provide equitable and efficient access to justice.

KEY GOALS

The website redesign aims to prioritize user experience by streamlining navigation, reducing friction points and optimizing the customer journey. Put differently, the Court will design a website that is easy to use and that provides information in a simple and understandable way. The project is focused on enhancing user engagement through interactive features, multimedia content, and community-building elements. The new design will align with the Court’s mission of providing fair and efficient access to justice to all who seek it, projecting a professional and modern image to the public. With many current users accessing the webpage on mobile devices, the new website will ensure optimal viewing on all devices. On the backend of the website, work is underway to empower content owners and creators with tools they need to more easily publish new content.

The Court is on track to deliver an updated website in 2025 that more effectively serves the needs of Los Angeles County residents.



A screenshot of the new and improved LACourt.org landing page, coming in 2025.

THE POSITIVE IMPACTS OF HOLDING INFORMAL DISCOVERY CONFERENCES

Guest Contribution by Eric Helland, Ph.D.

Helland is the William F. Podlich Professor of Economics in the Robert Day School of Economics and Finance at Claremont McKenna College and Claremont Graduate University. He is also a George R. Roberts Fellow at Claremont McKenna College and a Senior Economist at the Institute for Civil Justice at the RAND Corporation. This research was performed under a research partnership between the Court and the RAND Institute for Civil Justice.

This article is the result of the Court's increased reliance on partnerships with outside researchers with the goal of better informing the Court's practices.



Eric Helland, Ph.D.

One fundamental aspect of legal proceedings is the discovery process, which is an information exchange that allows parties to reveal potential evidence to the opposing side before counterarguments. This process can be fraught with challenges, leading researchers from RAND Corporation to partner with the Court to study the impact on access to justice of one tool in judicial officers' toolkit: the Information Discovery Conference (IDC).

During discovery, both sides have incentives to withhold valuable information and request irrelevant data. One party's failure to respond may result in court-imposed sanctions. The challenge arises with a paper-intensive motion practice, whereby parties seek court intervention through formal briefings instead of informal resolutions. Judicial officers report that such motions burden both the Court and the litigants, slowing down case resolution.

IDCs are consultations between judicial officers and counsel that occur before formal discovery motions are filed. In preparing for the IDC, a judicial officer asks counsel to provide a statement summarizing the general nature of the discovery dispute. The judicial officer then arranges a conference and provides a non-binding perspective on resolving the dispute.

While some judicial officers embrace IDCs, others hesitate over informality concerns or calendar disruptions. Although IDCs are widely used in the Civil Division, questions persist regarding their effectiveness.

DATA-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

Continued from the previous page...

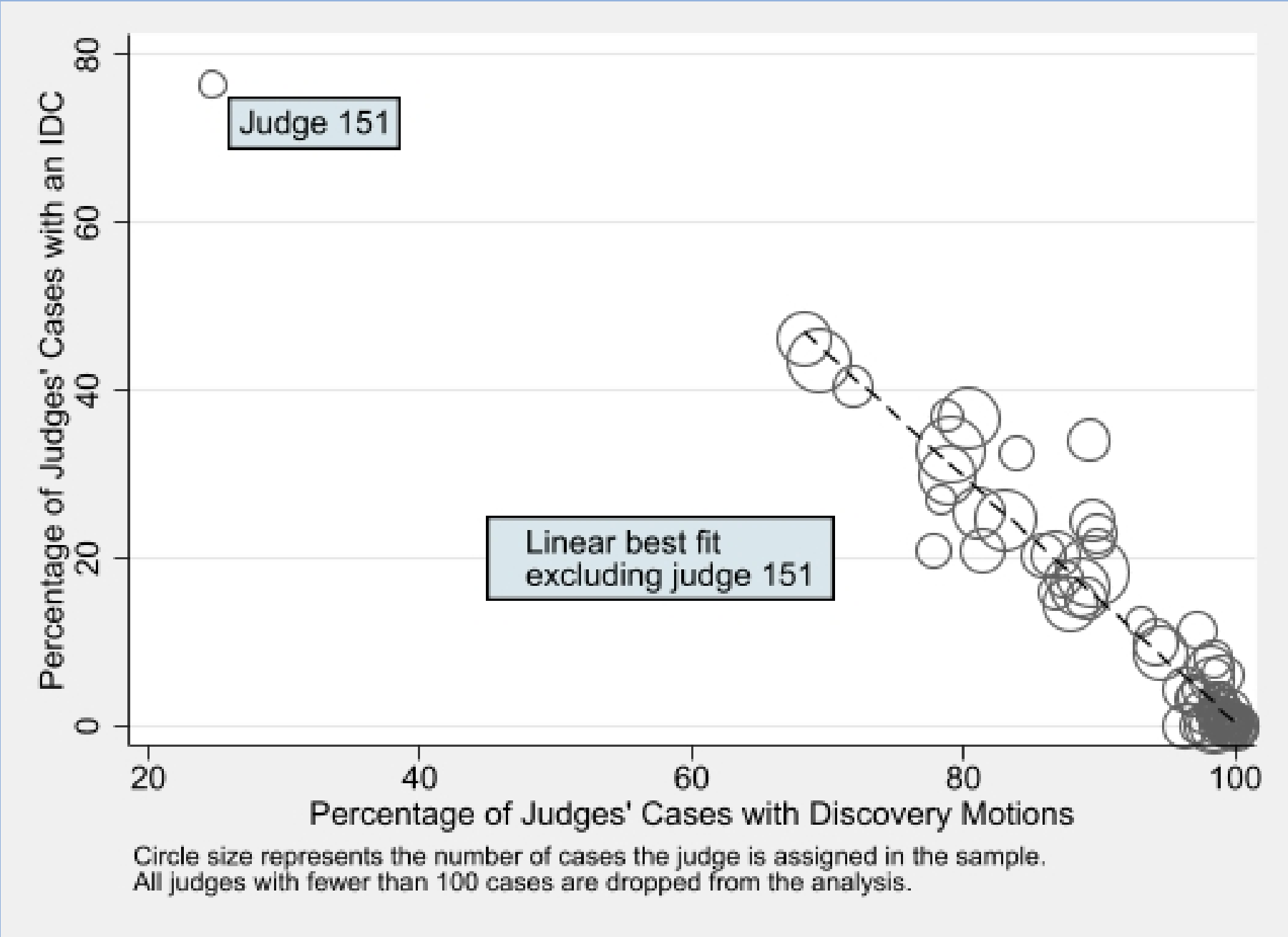
In a study published in May 2024, RAND researchers attempted to isolate the impact of IDCs from other case management techniques used by judicial officers who also use IDCs. Since the Court randomly assigns judicial officers to a case, the researchers could isolate the impact of IDCs on discovery motions from the case management styles of judicial officers most likely to use them.

The study shows a correlation between the percentage of judicial officers' cases that use an IDC and the percentage of their cases with discovery motions. The figure shows a negative correlation between IDC use and the proportion of judicial officers' cases that have discovery motions. There is also wide variation in IDC use. For example, judicial officer 151 uses IDCs in nearly 80% of cases, while almost a third of the sample never use IDCs.

The researchers also show the linear best-fit line, excluding outlier judicial officer 151, suggesting that increased IDC use is associated with fewer discovery motions. What remains unclear is whether IDCs cause the number of discovery motions to decrease or whether judicial officers using them are systematically different from judicial officers who do not.

The results indicate that IDCs reduce the likelihood of any discovery motions by about 61% to 72%. Those impacts can be significant. Roughly 85% of the cases in the sample used in the analysis have at least one discovery motion. The use of an IDC would reduce the likelihood of any discovery motion by 13% to 24%.

Among scholars, the escalating costs associated with discovery have spurred considerable debate. This study suggests IDCs are part of a solution. The findings reveal a substantial reduction in the likelihood of discovery motions when IDCs are employed, suggesting their potential to lessen litigation costs. For more details, [read the research brief from RAND](#).



DISMANTLING THE PERSONAL INJURY HUB AND RETURNING THESE CASES TO THE DISTRICTS

In 2013, in response to unprecedented budget cuts associated with the Great Recession, the Court closed many courtrooms and was forced to lay off employees. As a result, the Court turned to a new way of managing Personal Injury (PI) cases with limited judicial and staff resources.

In PI cases, an injured person, the plaintiff, sues a person and/or business, the defendant, because the defendant accidentally or intentionally hurt the plaintiff, causing them some form of injury (e.g., car crashes, slip-and-falls or workplace injuries).

The PI Hub model centralized the assignment of PI cases that did not require extensive case management to courtrooms in downtown Los Angeles.

Over time, with more funding and data revealing a steadily increasing volume of PI filings, the Court prioritized a return to a community-based system by reallocating PI judicial and staff resources to the districts.

Over the past several years, the Court began transitioning PI cases out of the PI Hub at the Spring Street Courthouse back to local, community-based Independent Calendar (IC) courts throughout Los Angeles County. This significant change, first initiated in September 2022, has allowed judges to manage cases more proactively, provided litigants greater predictability in case disposition, brought about quicker dispute resolution and increased access to justice for litigants, attorneys and witnesses.

The change from a centralized model to a community-based model reflects the Court’s commitment to meet court users where they are. By returning these cases to local courthouses, the Court has allowed litigants and their attorneys to litigate their cases closer to their communities. Additionally, the change provides additional judicial and staff resources to more effectively manage the volume of PI cases in the Court’s Civil Division.

The transition away from the PI Hub model is being carried out in phases. Phase I began in 2022, followed by Phase II, completed in January 2024.

Additional IC courts have opened in the following locations:



East District	Pomona Courthouse South and West Central Courthouse
Northwest District	Alhambra Courthouse and Pasadena Courthouse
Southwest District	Van Nuys East Courthouse and Van Nuys West Courthouse
North Valley District	Chatsworth Courthouse
South District	Glendale George Washington Long Beach Courthouse
South Central District	Compton Courthouse
Southwest District	Longwood Courthouse and Torrance Courthouse
West District	Beverly Hills Courthouse

[Click To View
Image](#)

The January completion of Phase II resulted in the assignment of the Court’s Central District PI cases filed on or after January 8, 2024 to be assigned to Independent Calendar courts in the Central District. The remaining PI Hub cases are being transitioned to IC courts throughout the County as the existing volume of PI cases decreases. The expected date of completion is 2025.

This shift away from the centralized PI Hub model is another example of Court leadership leveraging data to ensure the even distribution of resources throughout Los Angeles County. The transition re-establishes a system that prioritizes adjudication and allows judicial officers to more proactively manage a large inventory of cases to ensure the Court continues to meet its mission of providing timely and efficient access to justice for all.

THE “PATHWAY” APPROACH TO HANDLING CASES – A TOOLKIT FOR JUDICIAL OFFICERS FOR EVALUATING THE NEEDS OF CASES

Hundreds of courtrooms open to the public every weekday in Los Angeles County, and the judicial officers presiding endeavor to make decisions that are consistent with the law and facts that bring resolution and certainty to the lives of the people they serve. Some days in some courtrooms, the calendar may be a single criminal case in the midst of a trial; other days, in other courtrooms, the calendar may have nearly 100 traffic matters.

Whatever the day’s calendar brings, the challenge for every judicial officer – and the staff who support them – is to provide access to justice while ensuring that the case is moving toward a fair, effective and expeditious resolution. The idea of active case management evidences the skills, techniques and methods that judicial officers use to expedite case resolution, reduce the costs to litigants, promote effective decision making by all parties, and ensure an even playing field so that outcomes reflect the merits of the case and provide a process that is perceived as fair.



A core idea of case management approaches is that one size does not fit all. Some civil cases are relatively simple and will require little intervention or management by the judicial officer, while others may involve dozens of hearings, hundreds of motions, hundreds of rulings and years to resolve. Among the 72,318 unlimited civil cases resolved during 2023, the average number of calendared hearings was 9.4 per case, while more than 9,000 cases had only one calendared hearing. Notably, 290 cases had more than 100 calendared hearings. Treating simple cases as if they are complicated wastes resources; doing the opposite risks not doing justice to what is likely a challenging dispute.

In the Civil Division, there are no resources to waste. Civil case filings have surged in recent years:



5,700 CONSISTENT MONTHLY FILINGS
January 2019 - June 2022

**6,800 AVERAGE MONTHLY FILINGS
(AN INCREASE OF 20%)**
June 2022 - April 2024

DATA-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

The idea of a pathway for cases – whether in family law, civil or any litigation – is to tailor the tools in the judicial officer’s toolbox to the needs of the case and the litigants. The goal is to recognize, at the earliest stages of litigation, cases that will benefit from intensive judicial intervention, and cases in which the litigants are well served with a light judicial touch.

Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero spoke about the importance of caseflow management in providing timely access to justice during her annual State of the Judiciary address to the California Legislature in March 2024. “From the clerk’s window to final depositions – and everywhere in between – caseflow management is critical for the public we serve,” she said.

In November, the Court launched a Pathway Pilot to process unlimited civil personal injury (motor vehicle) cases to ease a backlog of unlimited civil filings and reduce costs and delays for court users. The pilot launched in the Pomona Courthouse, the West Covina Courthouse, the Van Nuys Courthouse East and the Van Nuys Courthouse West.

The pathway approach provides the following benefits:

- A predictable and transparent litigation schedule.
- Key milestones and reasonable deadlines for achieving them.
- Expectations regarding the exchange of facts relevant to the case (discovery).
- Forms for motions and pleadings that encourage consistent and easily understood communication.
- A road map for the level and type of judicial intervention expected (for instance, case management conferences and other interventions).

Behind the scenes, the pathway approach allows court administration to employ automation more effectively. Standard hearings that can be set automatically reduce the coordination costs for the judge, the attorneys and the litigants.

All cases subject to the Pathway Pilot will be referred to the Court’s Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Office. Attorneys or parties will be provided with a range of low-cost or no-cost ADR resources, including access to the Court’s Mediation Volunteer Panel, comprising expert mediators who volunteer three hours of their time to conduct a free mediation.

Following the launch of the pilot, the Court will analyze data on the success of moving cases through the pathway program toward resolution to determine how well the program is working.

The Court is committed to *individual justice in individual cases*. Greater transparency about the likely course of a case eases judicial officers’ case management tasks. More importantly, it helps attorneys and their clients prepare for litigation. Providing a greater sense of predictability and transparency for litigants can enhance individualized justice while providing every case its *due process*.

COLLABORATION

Court leaders believe that collaboration is an inclusive and effective way of achieving the Court's mission of providing fair and just resolutions to legal disputes. This commitment to collaboration means that Court leaders actively seek out and consider diverse perspectives and ideas from all stakeholders, including judicial officers, employees, attorneys, litigants and community members. Court leaders foster an environment where all voices are heard and encourage constructive feedback and constructive debate. Court employees believe that when the Court works together, the Court can generate more innovative solutions to complex legal challenges and create outcomes that better serve the needs of all involved. Ultimately, the Court's commitment to collaboration is rooted in the belief that the best outcomes are achieved through shared responsibility and collective action.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY BONDS THROUGH OUTREACH

Community outreach is critical to the Court's mission of providing fair and timely justice. The Court is guided by Standard 10.5(a) of the California Standards of Judicial Administration, which notes that "[j]udicial participation in community outreach activities should be considered an official judicial function to promote public understanding of and confidence in the administration of justice."

Through the programs implemented by the Court's Community Outreach Committee (COC), the Court seeks to increase access to justice for all; promote dialogues with young people on the law, civics, and tolerance; encourage youth to pursue a career in the legal profession; and serve as leaders in our community. Our goal is also to expand by building a pipeline so that children of judicial officers and court professionals who resemble them can be inspired to see themselves in similar careers and explore new possibilities. The COC also focuses on adult programs, which include civics presentations to senior citizen centers, bar organizations, law schools and other organizations.

The Court's Community Relations Office, established in 2000, plays a pivotal role in supporting the efforts of the Community Outreach Committee. This five-member team works collaboratively with the COC, subcommittees, justice partners and non-profit organizations to ensure efficient coordination and a sense of shared responsibility.

Judicial officers volunteer countless hours engaging in both virtual and in-person programs with elementary and high school students and adults. In-person interactions include visits to schools, senior facilities, libraries and courthouses, providing participants with firsthand insights into a judicial officer's daily work, legal proceedings and the justice system.

Designed for adults, the Judges in the Community program provides free civics and law-related presentations hosted by judicial officers in remote or in-person settings across Los Angeles County. Judicial officers often speak to groups at senior citizen centers, service clubs, bar associations, law schools, libraries, faith groups and colleges and universities. Topics explore jury service and the anatomy of a criminal case, among others.

In 2023-2024, the Court's outreach programs:



Connected judicial officers with over 7,500 community members in Los Angeles County.



Hosted more than 75 foreign delegates.

COLLABORATION

Another example of the Court's community outreach efforts is the Young Men's Leadership Conference (YMLC), held every other year, with the next event scheduled for February 2025. The program focuses on addressing the unique challenges faced by young men, particularly young men of color. Students are introduced to the justice system's professionals and various career avenues, with the goal of inspiring the men to become future community leaders. During the program, judicial officers share their personal experiences and their career path. One activity guides the young men on how to tie a necktie. The Court also hosts a similar Young Women's Leadership Conference every other year.

To enhance public understanding of the Court and its services, the Court is initiating a novel mobile civic engagement center, specifically targeting those who haven't participated in outreach programs before. This innovative center will provide the community with a unique and immersive experience, inviting participants to understand their civic responsibilities, and learn about employment opportunities, legal histories, personal narratives and beyond. This project is another testament to the Court's commitment to community engagement.

To learn more about these programs, please visit the [Court's website](#).



High school students visit the Court to hear from judicial officers and others about the Court, its history and the students' civic responsibilities. Judicial officers also visit senior citizen centers and bar organizations.



"Participating in outreach programs and events like the Young Women's Leadership Conference is meaningful to me because I strongly believe that 'if you can see it, you can be it.' More specifically, providing teens and others with an opportunity to meet judges from diverse backgrounds instills in them a vision of what they are capable of achieving in the future. Hopefully, spending time in the communities we serve and meeting people who will some day come into contact with the Court will go a long way toward creating transparency, accountability, and legitimacy for the judicial branch."

— Presiding Judge Samantha Jessner

"Bench officers participate in the program because interacting with and educating the public on topics including jury duty, how people get to become judges, and how the judicial branch operates, is a vital court function. Seeing the expressions of understanding in audience members and hearing their heartfelt words of gratitude for reaching out to them is highly rewarding and attracts judicial officers to participate in these outreach activities."

— Judge Alex Ricciardulli and Judge Kevin Rosenberg, Judges in the Community Co-Chairs



MENTORING THE NEXT GENERATION OF JUDICIAL OFFICERS: DEEPENING AND WIDENING THE PIPELINE TO THE BENCH

With 582 authorized judicial officer positions, the Court accounts for nearly a third of all Superior Court judgeships in the state of California. Given the vast geographic scope and diversity of the communities the Court serves and the rate of judicial retirements and elevations, it is critical that all judicial positions remain filled to achieve the Court's mission of providing equal access to justice. Yet, at any given time throughout 2023 and 2024, the Court has operated with a judicial vacancy rate ranging from 15 to 30 vacancies.

To inspire and develop the pipeline of the next generation of judicial officers, the Court created the Judicial Mentor Program (JMP) in 2020 to provide a pathway for individuals interested in pursuing a career on the bench to learn more about the judicial appointment process. The JMP provides mentorship opportunities and engages with the legal community to create awareness among organizations to recruit candidates for consideration by the Governor for the bench.

To support effective outreach and recruitment, the Outreach Committee collaborates with the Los Angeles County legal community, including bar associations, justice partners, law firms, sole practitioners and other legal entities to amplify the work of the JMP. This collaborative working relationship is especially important as the Court works to engage practitioners from various communities, geographic locations and legal backgrounds through targeted outreach workshops that are geared toward increasing the diversity of the judicial applicant pool.

To date, the JMP has hosted several workshops dedicated to demystifying the judicial application process. Additional attention has been given to recruiting candidates from various litigation types that may not be seen as traditional conduits to the bench, such as Family Law, Juvenile Law and Disability Rights Law. These seminars have been held in collaboration with several legal groups, including the Los Angeles County Bar Association, the Black Women Lawyers of Los Angeles and the Japanese American Bar Association along with many others, attracting over 3,500 attendees.

The JMP's efforts have been instrumental in identifying interest for the mentorship aspect of the program. The JMP has been able to provide guidance to six cohorts of individuals interested in applying to the bench thus far, with the seventh cohort now underway. JMP's deliberate outreach and mentorship opportunities work in tandem to ensure widespread access to information about securing a judgeship. These ongoing and multifaceted collaboration efforts reaffirm the Court's commitment to addressing the judicial vacancy rate in a manner that will continue to ensure that the composition of the bench is reflective of the communities the Court serves.

Read Quotes From Participating Judges

FORGING MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE BAR

In 2023 and 2024, the Court augmented its existing relationships and partnerships with bar organizations and their members, including the Los Angeles County Bar Association (LACBA) and its affiliate bar associations. Bar organizations large and small instill a culture of civility and professionalism in the legal field in their members and exemplify a dedication to ensuring excellence in the practice of law in Los Angeles County. The Court greatly values its relationship with legal professionals and is proud to have the opportunity to work collaboratively on issues of mutual concern – most importantly, meeting the Court’s mission of providing timely, efficient and meaningful access to justice to all.

LACBA Bench Meets Bar Luncheon and Reception

Presiding Judge Jessner was honored to provide remarks at the annual LACBA Bench Meets Bar Luncheon in 2023 and 2024, at which members of the Court were warmly welcomed by the LACBA Litigation Section Chairs and Executive Director Stan Bissey.

Presiding Judge Jessner also made a splash with a Taylor Swift-inspired speech at the 2024 Bench Meets Bar Reception hosted by LACBA’s Barristers/Young Attorneys Section. Described by Los Angeles Daily Journal Reporter Skyler Romero as “cheeky,” Presiding Judge Jessner provided some sage advice to young attorneys using a framework of Taylor Swift references. The takeaway? “Once you define your goals and find your people, you will recognize the importance of the symbol of being professional, the importance of looking respectful and deserving of respect, and believing not only in yourself, but knowing all too well the importance of community and connection. And again, if all else fails, conjure your inner Swiftie and ‘shake it off.’”

Quarterly Updates in the LACBA Newsletter

In 2024, Presiding Judge Jessner began providing quarterly updates for LACBA members in its monthly newsletter. The updates provide LACBA members with the current state of affairs at the Court, including updates on important topics such as the Court's budget, the court reporter shortage and its impact on access to justice, opportunities to leverage the talents of legal professionals to assist the Court in its prioritization of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), and much more.

Partnering with the Bar to Resolve Civil Disputes

Most civil cases – over 98% – settle prior to trial. Considering that sometimes the most efficient way to access justice is through mediation, the Court leverages the pedigree and influence of bar members to assist in ensuring the timely resolution of all cases through innovative ADR programs like Resolve Law LA, a partnership among the Court, the Beverly Hills Bar Foundation, Association of Southern California Defense Counsel, Los Angeles Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates and the Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles.

Building on the success of Resolve Law LA, the Court launched a partnership with the Mediation Center of Los Angeles, a nonprofit organization that offers low-cost and no-cost mediation for civil cases. The Court also offers an Unlawful Detainer (eviction) Mandatory Settlement Conference Program that leverages temporary judges to serve as settlement officers for eviction cases.

Finally, the Court unveiled the Mediation Volunteer Panel (MVP) in October 2024, which provides virtual mediation for civil cases referred by judicial officers in Independent Calendar courts countywide. The Court's ADR Office assigns cases to the volunteer mediators, who then dedicate preparation time and the hold the first three hours of the mediation session pro bono. The Court recognizes that the success of an ADR program like the ones noted above rises and falls on the dedication and expertise of lawyers who are willing to volunteer to help parties settle cases. The Court is grateful to those who give their time to provide this critical service to the residents of Los Angeles County. Read more about the Court's ADR efforts on the next page of this report.



A VOLUNTEER EFFORT EXPANDS TO RESOLVE CASES EARLY

To provide court users quick and cost-effective alternatives to going to trial, the Court is collaborating with various partners to power and revitalize its Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Office with dedicated volunteers and providers to build a new service model designed to deliver more mediation opportunities to resolve cases earlier in the process.

Working closely with volunteers from the legal community and organizations that interact with the Court, the ADR Office has utilized collaboration to introduce the following innovative programs and partnerships in the last two years:

- The Court reintroduced the Mediation Volunteer Panel in October 2024, which provides free mediation opportunities to litigants and encourages early resolution with trained attorney volunteers to help parties reach a mutually acceptable resolution. The panel previously operated under a different service model for years prior to 2013 but has been unavailable since that time.
- A partnership with the Mediation Center of Los Angeles (MCLA) began in October 2023. This nonprofit organization manages a panel of mediators to offer a low-cost fee schedule that allows judicial officers to refer Civil cases suitable for mediation to MCLA.
- A partnership with [Resolve Law LA \(RLLA\)](#) allows the Court's judicial officers to order parties in select personal injury or employment law cases to a Mandatory Settlement Conference (MSC). Volunteer attorneys work remotely as pro bono settlement officers.

Finally, to centralize information for court users, the ADR Office launched a new webpage in March 2024 to promote the benefits of ADR and court resources at www.lacourt.org/ADR.



The ADR Office hosted a ceremony on March 21, 2024, at Stanley Mosk Courthouse to recognize the efforts of its dedicated volunteer mediators and settlement officers serving in the Civil, Family Law and Probate divisions.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKING TOGETHER

The safety of all court users, court staff and judicial officers remains of paramount importance to the Court, and as such, the maintenance of safety requires ongoing collaboration, investment and attention from court staff and the Court's justice partners.

To support this critical priority, the Office of Public Safety (OPS) oversees and coordinates security operations, threat intelligence and emergency management throughout the Court's vast network of 36 courthouses across Los Angeles County which, combined, serve over a million Los Angeles County residents each year.

The Court has made significant investments to bolster its capacity to respond to emergencies with new infrastructure, policies and programs designed to respond to a variety of emergencies and crises. Since January 2023, the OPS:

- Engaged with local law enforcement throughout Los Angeles County to strengthen partnerships around court locations.
- Expanded surveillance capabilities at several courthouses.
- Established a downtown Los Angeles security presence around court locations during non-court hours.
- Conducted a courtwide security access survey to shore up access by non-court personnel to secured court spaces.

OPS has strengthened and reinforced the Court's relationship with local law enforcement and intelligence agencies. This has enabled the Court to address public safety and emergency management with a collaborative focus. The Court has benefitted from open lines of communication among many state and local agencies and used intelligence to respond proactively to any safety concerns.

This collaborative approach has also been applied to the Court internally with training exercises including the Great Shakeout earthquake drill held in October 2023 and October 2024, an Emergency Preparedness Workshop for court leadership held in February 2024, and additional coordination exercises held at courthouses throughout the county. OPS will continue to organize, coordinate and facilitate emergency response exercises to ensure all court staff are acquainted with the Court's tools, resources and procedures to effectively respond to emergency incidents.

On the whole, these investments in training and infrastructure signify a renewed focus on effective emergency management by the Court, fortifying the Court's ability to respond quickly and deliberately to emergencies to protect court users and court staff, especially as threats in the world continue to change, increase, and become more sophisticated.



A COLLABORATIVE GOAL IN ADDRESSING BIAS

To protect the fair administration of justice for all court users, the Court created an Anti-Bias Committee (Committee) in late 2023 to eliminate all forms of bias, both substantive and in appearance, with the help of a diverse judicial committee from a broad range of practices areas, litigation types and geographic assignments.

Pursuant to this goal, the Court also formed a new Local/Regional Anti-Bias Subcommittee (Subcommittee) that will endeavor to identify and represent the diverse needs of court users. The Committee has created a robust work plan that establishes pathways for court users and the legal community to identify and report concerns about bias to the appropriate channels.

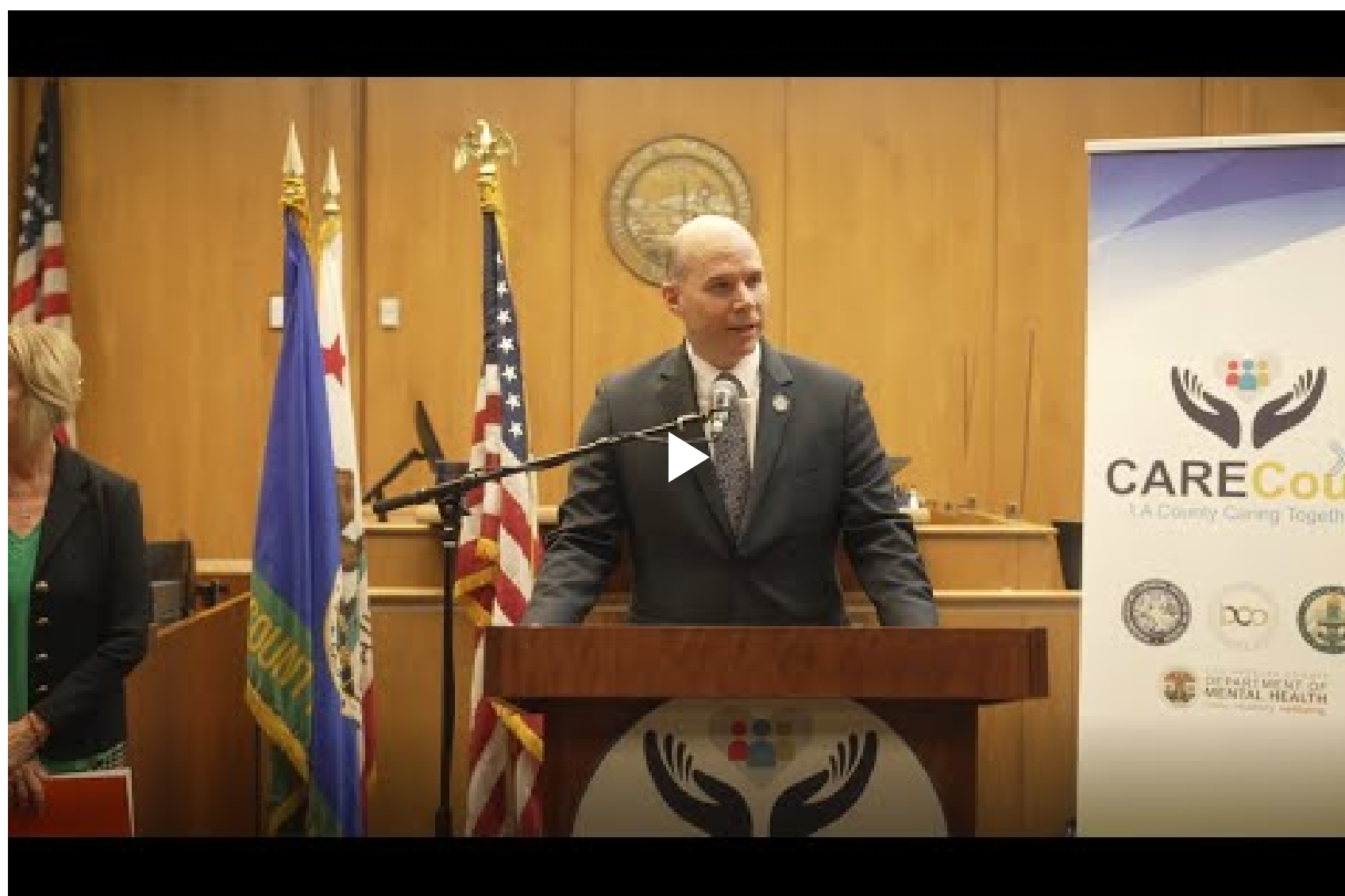
The Committee has already begun to engage with justice partners, bar associations and various legal communities in Los Angeles County to establish a productive and ongoing dialogue about the importance of eliminating bias in the judicial system. These connections not only allow the Court to embrace its role in addressing implicit and explicit forms of bias, but also to be proactive in navigating potential forms of bias associated with legal stakeholders who regularly engage with the Court.

Equally important to the Court are the needs of court users and their overall perception of the judicial system. The Committee has begun engagement with local communities to learn more about issues of importance to court users and how best to effectively address them.

Thus far, these interactions have enabled the Committee to understand the unique and varied needs of court users, allowing the Court to begin work on holistic initiatives that not only eliminate unconscious and explicit biases within the Court, but to also develop programs that are responsive to the ongoing needs of the community through education and outreach. It is this ongoing engagement and collaboration that will empower the Court to eliminate all forms of bias and to protect the fair administration of justice to all.



LAUNCH OF CARE COURT



Los Angeles County elected officials and other dignitaries join Court leadership in announcing the launch of CARE Court in December 2023.

On Dec. 1, 2023, the Court launched the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court in two courtrooms in the Norwalk courthouse. CARE Court is a new civil legal process for qualifying individuals that enables those suffering from qualifying severe mental health conditions to petition the Court to connect them to mental health and housing services.

The Court, collaborating with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LADMH), Public Defender's Office and Independent Defense Counsel's Office (IDCO), implemented the program one year ahead of schedule.

The implementation of this new program necessitated robust collaboration among the Court and County partners. Leading up to the launch, the Court and its County partners met regularly to develop new policies, procedures, training and forms. To help with that process, the Court and County partners leveraged role-playing as a tool to explore the many scenarios for parties to create workflows and identify solutions to gaps in policy or process.

One area of focus was thinking through potential barriers to access. Acknowledging that not all CARE Court participants would have the means or ability to access the courthouse in Norwalk, the Court built and launched 12 dedicated private spaces at various Court locations throughout the County. These dedicated private spaces are intended to increase access for CARE Court participants to attend proceedings remotely from different parts of the County, provide a space for CARE respondents to connect with mental health providers and afford CARE respondents privacy.



COLLABORATION

CARE Court – Tailored to Each Participant

CARE Court provides a new voluntary legal process to help individuals diagnosed within the class of schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders receive treatment and services for their health and well-being via a voluntary CARE Agreement or CARE Plan established and overseen by a judicial officer. The Court is responsible for evaluating the respondent’s eligibility and to consider the recommendations of the LADMH and the respondent’s attorney. Participants can receive many kinds of support, including counseling, medication, housing, social services and others. CARE Court provides an individualized, voluntary CARE agreement or a court-ordered treatment plan that meets the specific needs of each participant. Additionally, the Court helps oversee the progress of the respondent, or the person who is subject to the petition for the CARE Court Process, through regular check-in hearings to ensure they are receiving the services they need throughout the process.

CARE Court is voluntary and offers respondents the support they need in the least restrictive way possible. Participants are empowered to make their own decisions and are provided free legal representation through the Los Angeles County’s Public Defender’s Office and IDCO, unless they choose to hire a private attorney to represent them. Respondents may also opt to have an assigned supporter who can help them advocate throughout the process. Judicial officers play a critical role in helping participants and those involved understand their rights and the benefits of receiving services and support offered through CARE Court. All parties work together towards understanding the needs expressed by the respondent with the common goal of creating an effective treatment plan and appropriate housing that works for each particular respondent.

CARE Court by the Numbers | As of Sept. 30, 2024

278 PETITIONS
FILED

As of Sept. 30, 2024, 278 petitions have been filed in CARE Court since the program’s launch on Dec. 1, 2023.

22 CARE
AGREEMENTS

22 petitions resulted in CARE Agreements and five resulted in CARE plans being implemented.

68 PETITIONS
DISMISSED

68 petitions have been dismissed.

183 PETITIONS
PROGRESSING

183 remaining petitions are progressing through the early stages of a CARE Court case.

Improving the Process

A respondent’s right to privacy is paramount in matters that involve confidential information regarding their health, including their mental health. The Court and LADMH are not authorized to share information related to the case, about services received or about the treatment plan without the respondent’s explicit consent.

A few months into the program, recognizing a need by petitioners or parties to a case to lookup early case updates regarding a respondent’s eligibility, the Court also established a new system to add electronic access to case information from public terminals. With a respondent’s consent, a supporter may also be granted permission by the Court on an ongoing basis to access the case. The requesting party must have their identity verified and be authorized to access the information.

Both the **Court** and **County** have webpages with more information about CARE Court and how petitioners can begin the process to file a petition for someone in need.

PEOPLE-CENTRIC

Externally, the Court is dedicated to ensuring that justice is accessible to everyone who seeks it. To fulfill this mission, the Court is committed to providing services and programs that are user friendly and responsive to the needs of court users. Externally, this requires the Court to adopt a people-centric approach in which its services and programs are viewed through the lens of the user. Internally, the Court is committed to fostering a work culture that empowers its judicial officers and employees to perform their jobs every day to the best of their abilities. This involves understanding their needs and providing them with the necessary training and support to succeed.

HOMELESS COURTS

The Court's commitment to meet court users where they are is exemplified by the 2024 addition of two specialty courts, one in Santa Monica and one on Skid Row, to help individuals experiencing homelessness navigate their cases in informal settings without having to come to a traditional courthouse location. In Redondo Beach and Long Beach, homeless courts have been successful in helping people clear arrest warrants for minor offenses which frequently act as a bar to accessing mental health and substance abuse treatment, other services, housing, and jobs. Unhoused individuals charged with non-violent offenses are eligible to participate. Once the defendant successfully completes the program, their misdemeanor or infraction may be dismissed which will maximize their chances of finding stability in their lives.



The Court's justice and community partners share the benefits of the Community Outreach Court, serving unhoused residents in Skid Row.

Shelter, Treatment and Empowerment Program

To improve access to court services for unhoused individuals, the Court collaborated with justice partners and community agencies to launch the Shelter, Treatment and Empowerment Program (STEP) in January 2024. Based in the city of Santa Monica, the purpose of STEP is to resolve homeless residents' low-level misdemeanor or municipal code violations that can delay access to critical services and housing opportunities. STEP Court operates every second Wednesday of the month with a judicial officer overseeing participants' progress. Individuals who receive services recommended to them, including treatment for substance abuse and mental health, can potentially obtain long-term permanent housing and their cases may ultimately be dismissed.

Community Outreach Court

The Community Outreach Court (COC) opened in September 2023 at the ReFresh Spot in Skid Row. The ReFresh Spot provides the Skid Row community a place to rest with access to food, showers, restrooms and laundry services. The need for establishing the COC was based on the number of unhoused individuals in the community with unresolved legal issues. The objective is to resolve legal issues that impede with an individual’s ability to obtain social services, gain employment and secure housing. The Court partnered with the offices of the Los Angeles City Attorney, the Los Angeles County Public Defender, the Los Angeles County Alternate Public Defender, and Mayor Karen Bass’ Office of Community Safety to launch the program. Cases are heard remotely every third Thursday of the month from the Central Arraignment Courthouse.



Photos show community partners and unhoused residents participating in Community Outreach Court.



THE COURT ADDRESSES A COURT REPORTER SHORTAGE AND ISSUES AN **ELECTRONIC RECORDING GENERAL ORDER TO ENSURE LITIGANTS' RIGHT TO APPEAL**



Presiding Judge Jessner, Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia and Executive Officer Slayton announce the electronic recording General Order during a news conference on Sept. 5, 2024

On Sept. 5, 2024, Presiding Judge Jessner **issued a General Order** authorizing judicial officers to enable electronic recording to create a verbatim recording in family law, probate and unlimited civil proceedings when a court-employed court reporter is unavailable and when issues of liberty are at stake.

In 2018, the California Supreme Court found that the lack of a verbatim record will “frequently be fatal” to a litigant’s ability to have an appeal decided on the merits. This burden falls heaviest on litigants in family law, probate and unlimited civil cases, in which the Court is unable to provide court-employed court reporters due to a chronic court reporter shortage and in which the Government Code prohibits using electronic recording to capture a verbatim record in the absence of a court reporter.

Due to the shortage of court-employed court reporters, in November 2022 the Court realigned the court reporter workforce in the areas of family law and probate to prioritize hearings where the Court is legally required to provide a court-employed court reporter, such as criminal felony and juvenile justice proceedings.

The Court has spent nearly \$10 million annually to recruit new court reporters and retain its existing court reporters. The Court intensified efforts to recruit new court reporters by instituting a free, internal court reporter certification program, with tuition and equipment paid for by the Court and courses occurring during the employee's regular work hours. More recently, the Court launched a paid internship program to help attract more interest in the profession. Despite these best efforts, the Court continued to face a growing shortage of court reporters.

In the 2023-2024 legislative session, Court leadership urged the California State Legislature to pursue a legislative solution, including a measure--SB 662 (Rubio)--which would have allowed for electronic recording in other proceedings, but that measure failed to advance in the Legislature.

As a result of inaction on this critical issue, over 525,000 proceedings went without a verbatim record from January 2023 to June 2024, including child custody, guardianship and other cases, effectively extinguishing litigants' ability to appeal the case.

"We will continue our extensive efforts to expand our court reporter workforce to cover this need, but today's action ensures there is a constitutional safety net when a court reporter is not available," Executive Officer Slayton said in a news release on the issuance of the General Order.

While judicial officers are under no obligation to employ electronic recording in cases covered under the General Order, it is nevertheless a critical step in protecting litigants' right to appeal.

"For too long," said Presiding Judge Jessner at the announcement of General Order 2024-GEN-011-00, "[litigants] have been denied equal access to justice in violation of their constitutional rights."

As a result of the General Order, litigants can now avail themselves to this option to request and acquire a verbatim record, which previously would not have been available to them.

THE FUTURE OF THE DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES COURTHOUSES, THE TWO LARGEST COURTHOUSES IN THE COUNTRY

Exploring how to replace two aging and failing facilities that have served as stalwarts of our justice system

In 2023, Court leadership began earnest and urgent discussions about the future of two of the Court's flagship courthouses: the Stanley Mosk Courthouse and the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center (CJC), both located in the Civic Center in downtown Los Angeles. With over 6,900 visitors per day and over 150 courtrooms between the two buildings, both courthouses are among the busiest and largest courthouses in the nation.

Each are now more than 50 years old, which by building standards is considered the end of their useful lifespan. Both buildings regularly experience issues relating to faulty pipes leading to significant flooding events, asbestos containment and elevators and escalators needing frequent repairs – all of which severely impact the delivery of justice in the largest county by population in the nation. Furthermore, both buildings are known to be seismically vulnerable. A study completed in 2017 by the Judicial Council of California placed the Stanley Mosk Courthouse – technically two separate buildings strapped together by metal stripping – as the fourth and fifth most seismically vulnerable courthouses in California, and listed CJC at number 20.

These issues have not gone unnoticed. A 2024 study completed by the Judicial Council of California provided a series of recommended options to replace both structures, and Court leadership is currently engaged with relevant stakeholders to ensure buy-in and alignment on key goals.

Facilities Facts



Stanley Mosk Courthouse

- Dedicated in 1958.
- 100 courtrooms and more than 730,000 square feet of working space.
- Houses 600 court staff and 100 judicial officers.
- More than 3,900 daily visitors.



Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center

- Opened in 1972.
- 60 criminal courtrooms and more than 1 million square feet of working space.
- Houses 320 court staff and more than 60 judicial officers.
- More than 2,500 daily visitors.

Together, judicial officers and staff in the Stanley Mosk and CJC manage the bulk of the Court's criminal, civil, family law and probate cases.

Engaging Stakeholders

Given the critical need to replace both buildings as swiftly as possible, the Court engaged its partners at the Judicial Council, as well as legislative leaders, members of the legal community and representatives from the California Department of Finance, who will ultimately make decisions about when and how to fund the projects.

In the fall of 2023, the Court was pleased to welcome key members of the Judicial Council and the Department of Finance to Los Angeles for a presentation and daylong, comprehensive tour of both courthouses.

Also in 2023, Presiding Judge Jessner hosted a virtual facilities seminar for representatives of County and City government, as well as bar associations, legal service providers, and others, to engage them on the Court's needs and look to the future. And in May of 2024, the Court hosted the Court Facilities Advisory Committee of the Judicial Council to showcase the need to replace both facilities.

Feedback from the visits and presentations was overwhelmingly positive, and the Court hopes to move forward with concrete plans soon. While Court leadership acknowledges that replacing two of the largest courthouses in the country is a monumental undertaking, the residents of Los Angeles County deserve modern, safe, and accessible court buildings. The Court remains dedicated to making plans today to ensure continued access to justice and safety in our buildings in the future.



EXPANDING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION BY LEVERAGING DATA

As part of the Court's efforts to ensure court services and programs are accessible and responsive to the needs of court users, it is critical that the Court creates and maintains a work environment that empowers court employees with the necessary support to do their best work. As part of this effort, the Court has over the past two years made strategic investments designed to make court employees feel valued, respected and supported.

The Court has collected extensive and consistent feedback and data from court employees to make better decisions and to help keep the Court accountable.

To advance diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), the Court relies on data informed decision-making to assist in implementing, evaluating and changing effective DEI strategies based on insight and evidence. The Human Resources Division has introduced tools to track and measure demographics, retention and attrition courtwide. Data provides valuable insights into hiring, attrition and how to create a workplace where DEI is valued and prioritized.

The Court also uses benchmarking and analytics to better understand employee concerns, inform talent strategies and help reduce workforce churn, otherwise known as attrition, with real-time and historical data.

Another significant way that data is gathered is through surveys. Survey analysis, along with metrics, have helped the Court better understand:

- How inclusive is the Court culture and climate in terms of employee engagement, satisfaction, belonging and trust?
- What is the diversity of the Court and the talent pipeline in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, age, disability and sexual orientation?
- How inclusive and equitable are the policies and practices that affect the employee experience and outcomes in terms of hiring, promotion, performance and retention?

The DEI team uses data analysis to measure the Court's DEI training, the Court's Employee Resource Groups and employee engagement activities with data focused on participation, retention, advancement, satisfaction, and accessibility.

The Court recognizes that data analysis alone cannot solve all DEI challenges. To ensure a holistic approach, the Court also relies on data-informed decision-making to drive improvements to create long lasting institutional change and a culture of accountability.



The Court's DEI Committee assists in effective strategies based on insight and data.

CELEBRATING EMPLOYEES WITH 50+ YEARS OF SERVICE

In the last 50 years, the world and the way in which we operate within it has changed dramatically. As the methods of conducting business have progressed from using typewriters to computers and from long wait lines to online self-service processes, the Court has gone to great lengths to stay current with innovative technology to provide exceptional customer service. Within this commitment to progress, the Court has cultivated an exemplary history of hiring dedicated, civic-minded individuals, some of whom have even worked at the Court throughout those same 50 years.

While many of these employees may have been initially drawn to the Court by competitive salaries and comprehensive benefits, they have stayed due to the Court's commitment to strong community relationships and employee development. As these employees grew both personally and professionally with the Court, many of the Court's longest tenured employees have enjoyed learning the nuances of multiple litigation types, and their institutional knowledge has had a tremendous impact in the Court's progression.

When asked why employees with more than 50 years of service had been motivated to stay with the Court, two consistent themes emerged: a strong commitment to serving the community and the friendships that have been forged along the way.

"It's always been the people and the friends I have made," said Courtroom Assistant Carol Ellis. "I have friends that I have known for several years, and although many have left, I have met a lot of new ones."

The Court thanks these dedicated employees for their continued service to the Court and to the community.

According to a 2022 report from the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics



6.8 YEARS

The median number of years a public sector worker stayed with their current employer.



15 YEARS

The median number of years employees have stayed at the Court. More than twice that of its public sector peers.



20+ YEARS

53% of the Court's current workforce have 20 or more years of service.



- Courtroom Assistant Gerald Mack reached 51 years of service in 2024.
- Courtroom Assistant Carol Ellis retired in May 2024, having reached 60 years of service.
- Procurement Technician Merel Hayes reached 51 years of service in 2024. (not pictured)

HUMAN RESOURCES MEETS THE CHALLENGES OF THE POST- PANDEMIC JOB MARKET

The COVID-19 pandemic created several new challenges in the job market that the Court's Human Resources Division successfully navigated to maintain staffing numbers and an employee population that continues to reflect the rich diversity of Los Angeles County. With new challenges like labor shortages and changing employee preferences, there is now fierce competition to attract and retain the best talent. Today, many individuals who were previously hesitant to change jobs have reassessed and changed priorities and are now seeking new opportunities that better fit a post-pandemic ethos that prioritizes a work-life balance. As a result, many companies began offering remote work and expanded their search for top talent beyond local boundaries, thereby changing the dynamics of recruitment, and creating new hiring challenges for the Court.



Members of the Court's Human Resources Division.

Fortunately, as the Court's staffing metrics indicate, the Court has successfully adapted and positioned itself in this new job market through an increased presence online via LinkedIn, Instagram, and at recruitment events, all of which effectively promote job openings and the overall values and benefits of Court employment. The Court received over 43,000 applications for over 145 positions from January 2023 to September 2024. In 2023, the Court recruited and advanced over 1,200 individuals, showcasing its ability to attract fresh talent and recognize internal expertise. In 2024, the Court maintains robust staffing, with over 561 positions filled through September.

PEOPLE-CENTRIC

Most impressively, through this challenging job market, the Court has been able to maintain its commitment to nurturing a diverse and inclusive workforce. The Court’s employee population represents a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences. *(See the accompanying charts showing the number of employees by ethnicity and the number of employees by gender.)* The Court workforce truly reflects the County it serves and continues to reap the benefits of its diversity.

The Court is also committed to building the pipeline of its future workforce. In April 2024, the Court launched Court Interpreter (Spanish) and Court Reporter (Voice Writing) training programs to build a pipeline of future professionals to aid in the Court’s mission of delivering equal access to justice while simultaneously providing current court employees with one year or more of service career development opportunities. Drawing upon the Court’s extensive pool of talent comprising of nearly 5,000 full-time employees, the two training programs offer trainees a full scholarship covering all tuition, fees and equipment costs. Training for both programs takes place virtually and lasts approximately one year. Designed as learn-on-the-job programs, trainees will be provided approximately three to six hours of dedicated training time per week during their regular workday. Trainees who successfully complete the training program and obtain their valid California certifications will be provided guaranteed employment with the Court. Trainees who accept jobs as Court Reporters or Court Interpreters will be expected to stay with the Court for at least three years.



Members of the Court’s Human Resources Division.

Two charts display the Court’s employees by ethnicity and gender.

In summary, the pandemic has forever changed the hiring landscape, requiring businesses to be agile, creative, and adaptable in their recruitment efforts. Through modern online recruitment efforts from the Recruitment and Staffing unit and pipeline building efforts like the Court’s internal Court Reporter and Interpreter training programs, the Court has succeeded in maintaining its staffing numbers and cementing its sterling reputation as an employer of choice by continuously working towards providing an environment where all employees feel recognized, empowered, and enabled to grow in their court career.

EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER ‘ON THE RECORD’ CELEBRATES STAFF AND CORE VALUES

The Court is committed to keeping its employees engaged and informed. To that end, following Executive Officer Slayton’s arrival, the Court launched a revamped version of its employee newsletter, *On the Record*, in September 2023. The first issue was bound by a people-centric theme, featuring stories that showcase court services that are accessible and responsive to court users as well stories that highlight the Court’s people-centric workplace.

The second issue of *On the Record* published in February 2024 under the theme of collaboration. Stories in this issue highlighted examples of how when all stakeholders work together, the Court can generate innovative solutions to complex challenges, benefitting all involved.

In July 2024, the newsletter’s theme was data-informed decision-making. That issue of *On the Record* detailed how the Court is using data to identify solutions for staff, judicial officers, and most importantly, the Los Angeles County residents the Court serves.

The July issue also celebrated the exceptional work of two employees who were named Judicial Assistant of the Year and Court Employee of the Year for 2023.

Roxana Duron was named Judicial Assistant of the Year following her nomination for the award by 15 judges and two commissioners. Ms. Duron was recognized for her work at Van Nuys Courthouse East where “her efforts to provide backlog relief, including assisting with data entry, summary dissolutions, fee waivers and processing an outstanding 2,336 judgments in 2023, underscore her commitment to contributing to the efficient operations of the Court,” the newsletter reported.

Claudine Thibodeaux was named Court Employee of the Year in her role as Judicial and Administrative Support II. “Ms. Thibodeaux’s willingness to go above and beyond the normal duties of JAS II, assume additional responsibilities, and proactive anticipation of her team’s needs set the standard for excellence at the El Monte Courthouse and made her a standout choice for this honor,” the newsletter shared.



ON THE RECORD

ISSUE 1, 2023



The employee newsletter
of the Superior Court of
Los Angeles County



The stories in this inaugural issue of On the Record since David W. Slayton's arrival as Executive Officer/Clerk of Court are bound by a "people-centric" theme.

Being people-centric is one of Mr. Slayton's core values that will shape the Court's strategic planning and goal setting under his leadership.





Looking Ahead with Assistant Presiding Judge Sergio C. Tapia II

In January 2025, Presiding Judge Jessner will pass the gavel to Assistant Presiding Judge Sergio C. Tapia II. At that time, Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia will become the first Presiding Judge of Latino heritage elected by the majority of the judges of the consolidated Superior Court since trial court unification in 2000.

Judge Ricardo Ocampo, the Court's Supervising Judge of the Criminal Division, will serve as Assistant Presiding Judge for the 2025-26 term. Judge Ocampo will become the first Asian American in the Court's history to serve as Assistant Presiding Judge.

It is clear in conversations with Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia that his commitment to the Court's four core values – People-Centric, Transformative Innovation, Collaboration and Data-Informed Decision-Making – remains steadfast. What also remains clear is Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia's faithfulness to the Court's overarching service mantra to meet people where they are.

This throughline between administrations is in part the result of Presiding Judge Jessner's inclusive and collaborative leadership style, enabling Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia, along with Executive Officer Slayton, to play a significant role in shaping the Court's direction over the past two years. This collaborative spirit will ultimately benefit the Court and the millions of Los Angeles County residents it serves, providing continuity between administrations and building on the Court's successes that focus on increasing transparency, collaboration, and accountability – with the Court's judicial officers and staff, with the Court's justice and bar partners, as well as with the community, the media and elected officials.

Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia's leadership style is informed by his perspective as a former public defender, adjunct criminal law professor, legal services attorney and criminal law judge. In those roles, Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia astutely recognized the Court has a unique opportunity to address many of society's deep-seated challenges. Whether it's income inequality and California's growing housing crisis, public safety concerns, the growing mental health crisis, or a ballooning distrust of government institutions, the Court, as the neutral arbiter of disputes involving these issues, and many more, is placed in a unique position to help offer solutions.

LOOKING AHEAD

Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia sees the Court as a problem solver – particularly solving smaller problems now, so they don’t get bigger in the future. For example, the Court can address systemic trauma in children now in dependency court before they end up in the juvenile justice system; the Court can fairly resolve disputes now between individuals in family court before either side requests a restraining order; the Court can divert justice-involved individuals to mental health services before their mental health issues contribute to a more serious crime. By acknowledging this unique role while adopting the mantra of meeting people where they are, Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia hopes to continue to showcase the positive impact the Court can have on the lives of the residents it serves.

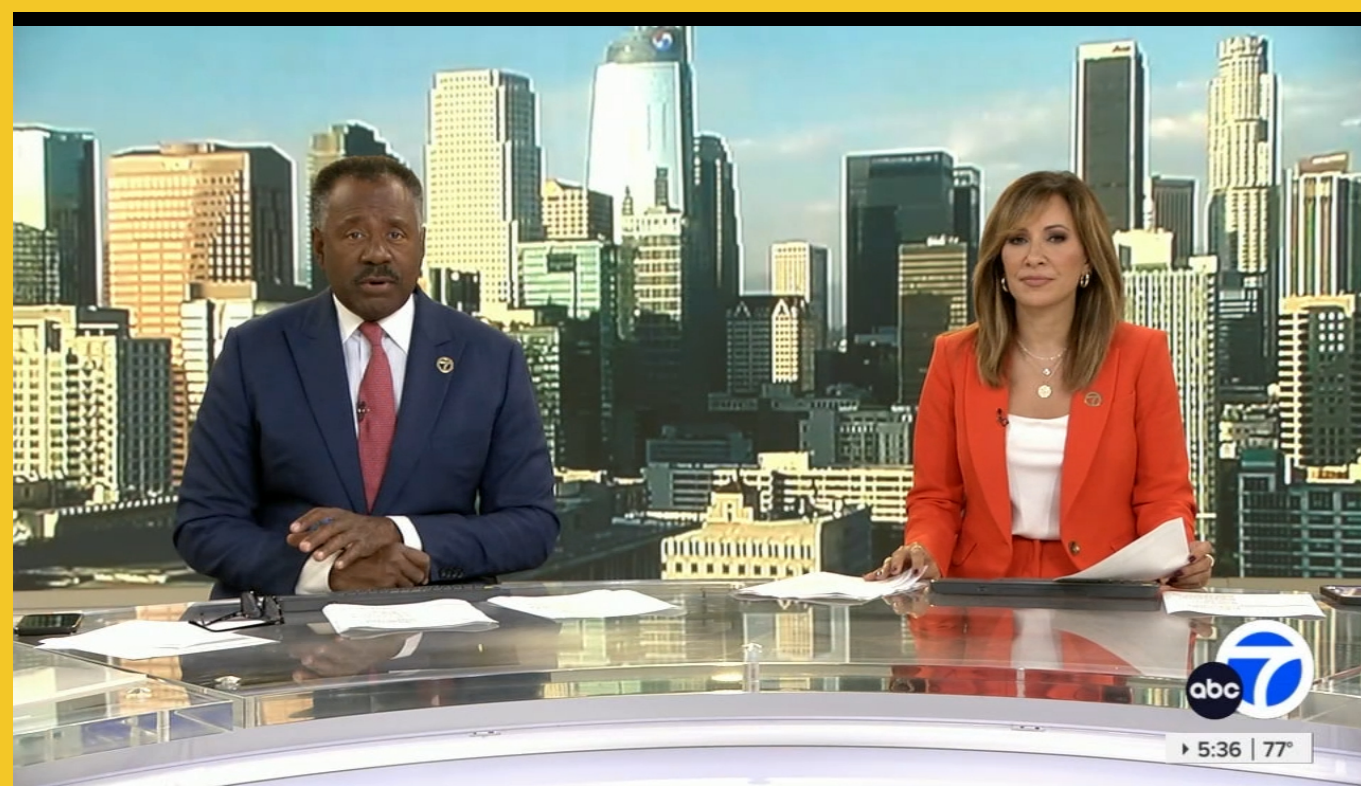
What does it mean to Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia to “meet people where they are?”

It means collaborating with justice partners and stakeholders to support more innovative ways of accessing justice – such as the Community Outreach Court (COC) on Skid Row or the Shelter, Treatment, and Empowerment Program (STEP) Court in Santa Monica. The two specialty courts enable unhoused individuals to access justice without having to come to court and go through weapons screening with all their belongings. It means ensuring the Court addresses the digital divide by providing remote access options at sister institutions such as public libraries or in our Self-Help Centers using dedicated remote private spaces. It means continuing to lead without ego – fostering a two-way exchange of ideas – both internally within our own leadership structures and externally with various stakeholders – and arriving at solutions based on consensus.

Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia believes the Court must collaborate to build on this notion of meeting people where they are. The Court must continue to leverage relationships with bar partners such as Los Angeles County Bar Association to think creatively about leveraging their membership’s expertise and commitment to the law to improve access to justice for all and advocate for policies that best serve court users. It must continue to build relationships with partners in the California State Legislature and local government officials to ensure they see the Court as a partner in solving issues together.

Ultimately, recognizing that almost everyone coming to court is likely dealing with a significant, life-altering event – the Court must make it as easy as possible for people to access justice.

It is with the utmost gratitude and commitment to justice that Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia will take the gavel from Presiding Judge Jessner in January 2025. If the past two years under Presiding Judge Jessner and Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia’s leadership are any indication of what 2025 will bring, there are many, many more good things to come.



In October 2024, television station ABC7 interviewed Presiding Judge-Elect Tapia and Assistant Presiding Judge-Elect Ocampo to discuss their new leadership roles. “It is probably the honor of my life to be elected by my colleagues,” Presiding Judge-Elect Tapia told the reporter about being elected the Court’s Presiding Judge for the 2025-2026 term.

APPELLATE DIVISION

Based in the Stanley Mosk Courthouse, the Appellate Division reviews trial court decisions for limited jurisdiction appeals. The types of cases reviewed include infraction, misdemeanor, limited civil, small claims post judgment enforcement orders and writs relating to these types of appeals.

The Division is continually examining how it can meet court users where they are. Remote hearings have allowed litigants to make oral arguments from home or in places better suited to their schedule, such as in a private and convenient space in their workplace.

Services for self-represented litigants have increased over the last two years, resulting in more informed decisions by litigants about whether to appeal a case or not. Internally, a new case management system has made accessing and analyzing Division data easier.

“We’re here to serve the public. We have an affirmative obligation to make life easier rather than more difficult for people that come to court. It is my understanding that coming to court can be a traumatic experience. And then it’s compounded when people leave the courthouse feeling they were treated unfairly. We can’t always give people the relief they are seeking. But what we can do is listen to what they have to say and to treat them fairly and respectfully.”

– Judge Patti Jo McKay, Presiding Judge of the Appellate Division

Looking ahead, the Division will implement electronic filing, which is currently projected to launch in December 2024.

The progress the Division has made is apparent in its ongoing commitment to improving court systems to make it easier for Los Angeles County residents to access justice.

“We all have our comfort zones, and we all tend to think that we work better if things go the way we expect them to go, and the way they’ve always gone. I have learned over the years that just because we’ve always done it this way doesn’t mean it’s the right way to do it. And it also doesn’t mean that we shouldn’t see if we can do it better.”

– Judge Patti Jo McKay, Presiding Judge of the Appellate Division



CIVIL DIVISION

The Court's Civil Division plays a crucial role in providing a system to resolve disputes between private parties. Serving one of the nation's most populous and diverse counties, the Civil Division handles hundreds of thousands of civil cases every year – from Small Claims cases where \$12,500 or less is at stake, to Limited Civil disputes, including Unlawful Detainers (eviction) case where between \$12,500 and \$35,000 is in controversy, to Unlimited Civil disputes involving large amounts of money and complex cases involving hundreds and sometimes thousands of parties.

In recent years, civil filings – particularly Unlimited Civil filings – have significantly increased, prompting the Division to think more creatively on how to leverage innovative solutions and data-informed decision-making to improve case management. These efforts work toward ensuring greater access to justice, reducing backlogs and enhancing the overall experience for litigants and attorneys.

In response to the growing volume and complexity of civil matters, the Civil Division has prioritized increasing the availability of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) options, recognizing that nearly 98% of civil cases settle prior to trial. The Division's prioritization of ADR is embodied by initiatives such as mediation facilitated by members of the Court's Mediation Volunteer Panel, the Court's partnership with [Resolve Law Los Angeles](#) to provide mediation for personal injury and non-complex employment cases, and the Unlawful Detainer Mandatory Settlement Conference program, which leverages Temporary Judges to serve as Settlement Officers for UD disputes.



“We have been really proud to be part of the leadership team of the Court because of the support from our Presiding Judge, Assistant Presiding Judge, and Court Executive Officer and the spirit of collaboration between all of the leaders of all the divisions in our quest to find innovative ways to meet the demands on our civil courts posed by increased civil filings – including expansion of ADR options and pathway approaches to case management – all with an aim of promoting efficient litigation, just outcomes, and access to justice.”

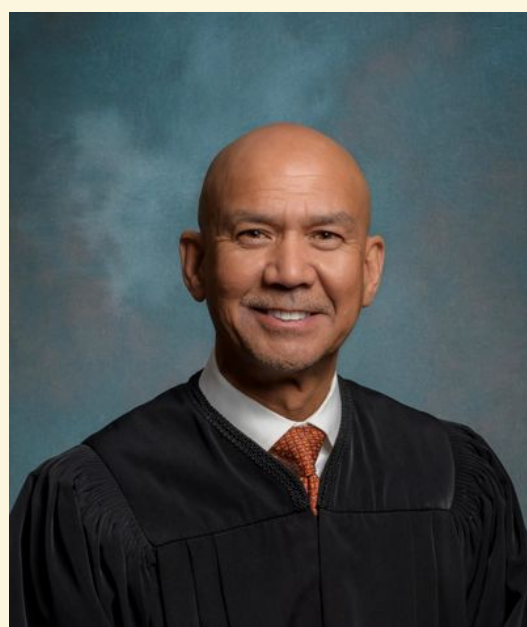
– Judges Curtis Kin and Elaine Lu, Acting Supervising Judges of the Civil Division

The Court has also implemented a variety of innovations to expedite case resolution. This includes the expansion of the Independent Calendar (IC) courts, which decentralizes case management and enables civil cases to be heard in communities where they are filed. It also includes the Pathway Pilot, which sets predictable and firm deadlines for personal injury cases filed in the Court's East and Northwest Districts based on existing Rules of Court, enabling attorneys and litigants to move cases expeditiously toward resolution with fewer court appearances.

With a focus on streamlining case management and leveraging diverse resources, the Civil Division continues to adapt and evolve to meet the demands of increasing caseloads, ensuring all parties have access to a fair and efficient judicial process.

CRIMINAL DIVISION

The mission of the Criminal Division is to ensure fair and swift resolution of criminal cases with an emphasis on balancing public safety and the rights of the defendants and victims. Over the last two years, the Division has found new ways to meet court users where they are, implement new legislation requiring the Court to retroactively review previously adjudicated cases and adopt new technological innovations.



"We in the Criminal Division pride ourselves on the fact that we have a constant conversation with our justice partners to ensure seamless implementation of new legislation impacting the Division. Every year, we work collaboratively to develop policies together with our justice partners to ensure we are serving our communities to the best of our abilities."

– Judge Ricardo Ocampo, Supervising Judge of the Criminal Division

In 2023, the Court unveiled the Pre-Arrestment Release Protocols (PARP), which moved away from the inequities of money bail as a condition for release to one driven by decisions informed by an individual arrestee's risk to public safety and of not returning to court. Under PARP, higher-risk arrestees are temporarily held in jail prior to arraignment while low-risk offenders are largely released under non-financial conditions.

In March 2024, the launch of the Community Outreach Court in Skid Row marked another highlight for the Criminal Division. The program's objective is to resolve the legal issues of the community's homeless residents that can interfere with their ability to receive social services, gain employment and secure housing. Cases are heard remotely once a month.

The Division has also become more efficient with technological innovations, implementing a new, modern criminal case management system launched in November 2023 and a transition to electronic case files in October 2024.

In September 2024, the court piloted a new electronic search warrant (eSearch Warrant) program. The Division and law enforcement officers will benefit from the new eSearch Warrant system that will allow judicial officers to quickly identify and review search warrant applications and returns and notify Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) when warrants are approved or rejected. Because the entire process is electronic, law enforcement officers can submit search warrant requests from the field without having to go to a courthouse. Judicial officers can access, review and rule on a search warrant application or return from any location within the state of California, creating significant efficiencies in the process.

FAMILY LAW DIVISION

The Family Law Division serves residents of Los Angeles County on matters including child custody, child support, divorce and separation and restraining orders for civil harassment, elder abuse, domestic violence, school violence and workplace violence. These orders are essential for the safety and well-being of the community and protecting families and individuals.

“The community greatly needs our services. Our role is to work with members of the public in the throes of trauma. Our goal is to provide a remedy to help individuals and families through difficult disputes.”

– Judge Shelley Kaufman, Supervising Judge of Family Law Division



Recognizing the need to better support families, the Division has launched several initiatives to help parents with co-parenting and planning for care of children, including online education programs “Between Two Parents,” which provides strategies for reducing conflict, and “Young Parents, Bright Futures” to educate and support young parents aged 24 and younger.

Additionally, the Division has streamlined Parenting Plan Assessments, a tool available to Family Law Courts in complex cases requiring the input from a mental health professional. The new process enables the Court to receive information in a timely manner and improve the wait time for the service, resulting in more timely decisions on child custody cases. The Division has also enhanced child waiting rooms – which offer families the ability to drop off children in a safe and free space while they attend hearings – to accommodate children up to the age of 13, including toddlers. These efforts are important in providing parents and families with equal access to justice as well as tools to navigate challenging disputes.

“The goal of the division is to try to help parties resolve their matter efficiently, expeditiously and fairly. This is especially important for domestic violence restraining orders where there is urgency.”

– Judge Shelley Kaufman, Supervising Judge of Family Law Division



A January 2024 news conference features court leadership and the Court's justice partners announcing grant funding dedicated to supporting law enforcement agencies in seizing firearms from individuals in domestic violence cases.

Over the last two years, the Division has streamlined and leveraged technology to improve how litigants access justice and to provide timely judgment on cases. The Court offers a tool for parents, Family Law Online Dispute Resolution (ODR), to resolve their child custody dispute. Parents can now attend mediation with a Family Court Services mediator via videoconference. Temporary Restraining Orders (TROs) are handled remotely, allowing judicial officers to expedite the ruling on cases. The Division has also made strides in assisting self-represented litigants by providing judgment assistance programs, guided tutorials and forms online. This initiative helps individuals initiate and resolve their cases without attorneys.

Finally, the Division is adapting to new changes in the law, including compliance with SB 320 (Chapter 685, Statutes of 2021), which requires coordination among courts and Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) when there is a violation of a firearm relinquishment order. The Division has prioritized minimizing delays in entering judgments and has increased communication with law enforcement on restraining order violations, partly through securing a grant in 2024 from the Judicial Council of California to better coordinate the relinquishment of firearms between the Court and its justice partners.

JUROR SERVICES DIVISION



The Court's people-centric approach is exemplified in the Juror Services Division, where staff is laser-focused on the people they serve. The Division mails approximately 2.3 million jury summonses to residents across Los Angeles County annually. From the moment that jurors receive their summons, to finding their way to the courthouse, to the rooms they sit in as they wait to be called, Juror Services is intent on creating a positive experience every step of the way.

"We really wanted to feel what jurors are feeling and how they respond when they do get a summons and what the process was like. Is it easy for them to call somebody when they have a question? Is it easy for them to go on the jury portal? There are a lot of great enhancements to make sure jury service is easier for people." – Doug Swart, Director of Juror Services

Across Los Angeles County, jury panels made up of an average of 35 people are assembled in 27 courthouses. With the goal of providing a fair and diverse jury pool, Juror Services is mindful of jurors' time and resources.

Notable achievements over the last two years include the continuation of the Direct-to-Courtroom model which reduced juror wait time, the implementation of sending text message and email reminders to jurors the day before they need to report and the revitalization of juror assembly rooms featuring new flooring, accessible restrooms, technology upgrades, and clean and comfortable seating. The Stanley Mosk Courthouse reopened its newly renovated jury assembly room in June 2024 with enhanced aesthetics, phone charging outlets and historical photos of Los Angeles courthouses and scenes related to the law in Los Angeles County.

Jurors can commute for free by bus or rail to or from jury service as part of a partnership that launched in 2023 between the Court and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro).

Looking ahead, Juror Services will soon launch an improved My Jury Duty Portal and pilot a check-in system using kiosks.


With its people-centric approach, Juror Services hopes its positive impact on jurors will benefit everybody in the community.



The remodeled jury assembly room at the Stanley Mosk Courthouse features new seating and wall panels detailing the Court's history.

JUVENILE DIVISION

The Juvenile Division handles juvenile dependency, juvenile justice and adoption matters. Its mission is to serve Los Angeles County's children and families. The Juvenile Dependency Court is committed to the protection, safety and well-being of all children. The Juvenile Justice Court is dedicated to balancing the interests of public safety, the rehabilitation of Los Angeles County youth and the preservation of family ties.



“We recognize the fact that there are too many youth involved in our juvenile systems. If we could address generational trauma, and stop some of these cycles of violence, or recurring issues that some of our families are experiencing, we could reduce the number of families that have to engage with the Court.”

– Judge Akemi Arakaki, Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court



In November 2023, the Juvenile Division opened the first infant-toddler dependency court in California, recently named HOP (Helping Our Parents) Court for Children. Located in the Compton Courthouse, HOP for Children Court serves families and infants up to age three with trauma-informed lawyers and social workers. A first-of-its-kind, court-employed Community Coordinator works with Judge Ashley Price to connect families to much needed resources such as housing opportunities, counseling, clothing, formula and diapers.

On November 18, 2023, Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero joined Presiding Judge Jessner and Assistant Presiding Judge Tapia, in celebrating the adoption of more than 230 children as part of the Court's 24th annual National Adoption Day Celebration.

In the first half of 2023, the Juvenile Justice courts supervised litigation related to the closure of the state's Division of Juvenile Justice. The litigation resulted in the return of 70 youth to Los Angeles County and ushered in a new era of less restrictive placements in the juvenile justice system.

In February 2023, the Juvenile Dependency Court added two new courtrooms at Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court to address civil adoptions and dual status youth matters (youth involved in both the juvenile justice system and the child welfare system), non-minor dependent matters and juvenile justice matters concerning youth previously on probation who wish to remain in foster care.

COURT DIVISION REPORT

In July 2024, two additional courtrooms opened at the Edelman Children’s Courthouse. One courtroom serves youth who have suffered commercial sexual exploitation, known as DREAM Court (Dedication to Restoration through Empowerment, Advocacy and Mentoring), and one courtroom serves non-minor dependents.

As the Juvenile Division meets its families and children where they are, its goal is to support families and children in way so that they can pave a path to stability without further involvement from the Court.

The success of today’s Juvenile Division is rooted in its dedication to becoming a trauma-informed court bolstered by its community partnerships, collaboration with justice partners, and a diverse bench that is dedicated to thinking expansively about how to serve and support families and children throughout Los Angeles County.



Judge Ashley Price

At the Compton Courthouse, Judge Price oversees a dependency courtroom that is transforming the way cases are handled for babies and children under three years old. KQED visited the courtroom, known as HOPE Court for Children (Helping Our Parents Excel). It’s where all parties work to achieve a common goal: promoting the mental health and well-being of babies and toddlers. Read the article by [visiting this page](#).



The 2023 National Adoption Day news conference.

MENTAL HEALTH DIVISION

Unique to California, the Court's Mental Health Division uses a centralized model in two courthouse locations to address cases involving serious mental conditions and related legal issues. By grouping mental health cases, a dedicated group of justice partners work collaboratively, leading to better system efficiencies and improved outcomes among individuals.

This Division serves individuals with substance abuse disorders, serious mental health conditions, developmental disabilities and the justice-involved population, including defendants found incompetent to stand trial. The Division currently handles over 20,000 cases annually providing connections to a variety of services including psychiatric evaluations, investigations, and referrals for treatment, manages hearings and trials relating to involuntary detentions and hospitalizations, and the care and progress of individuals committed to various mental health programs. Additionally, the Mental Health Hearing Referee unit annually processes over 40,000 facility-based hearing requests and conducts over 25,000 hearings to determine probable cause for further involuntary detention and to determine an individual's capacity to refuse psychotropic medications.

"The primary mission is to connect individuals with services that will improve their quality of life, help them manage mental health challenges, promote independence, and integrate their families to support them through this process. We see a mark of success through improved individual outcomes, as well as integration of their families and community."

– Judge Robert S. Harrison, Site Judge for the Hollywood Courthouse

Over the past two years, the Division has taken on a steady increase in referrals of individuals with mental health issues involved with the justice system to treatment, instead of incarceration. The approach has shifted from restoring defendants to competency to instead referring high-need individuals to diversion programming or treatment options. For people who are impaired by their mental health conditions, treatment options include a voluntary CARE (Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment) agreement or plan obtained through CARE Court, Assisted Outpatient Treatment (Laura's Law), or for the gravely disabled, a Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) conservatorship. To respond to an increase in the number of cases because of a change in law, the Court has increased forensic experts and physicians to expedite evaluations and treatment initiation. Forensic experts are regularly scheduled to conduct evaluations in the jails to expedite proceedings for incarcerated individuals who are unable to be transported to Court.

The Division has also implemented technological advancements in the last two years, including the use of remote hearings and evaluations, which have created efficiencies and reduced the need for individuals to travel to court. This allows high-need individuals, such as conservatorship patients, to participate in hearings and evaluations from hospitals and treatment facilities.

“Our mental health judges treat all individuals that come before us with respect, recognizing their struggles and their unique mental health needs.”

– Judge Robert S. Harrison, Site Judge for the Hollywood Courthouse

Looking ahead, the Mental Health Division is preparing to adapt to new changes in statute, including the expanded definition of “gravely disabled” in 2026, which is expected to expand the population eligible for LPS conservatorships and involuntary holds.




Senator Caroline Menjivar Visits the Hollywood Courthouse to learn more about the operations of the Mental Health Division.

PROBATE DIVISION

The Probate Division is responsible for overseeing some of the most vulnerable citizens in Los Angeles County via conservatorships and guardianships, as well as ensuring that the people it appoints as personal representatives, conservators and guardians, are fulfilling their responsibilities and complying with all applicable laws and rules. The Probate Division also addresses trust matters as well as end of life decisions in conservatorship proceedings.

In its effort to continue to meet the needs of Los Angeles County's growing vulnerable population and its changing demographics, the Probate Division has expanded over the last two years to enable it to continue to meet the needs of children, elderly adults and adults with physical or mental disabilities.



“We play an important role in the events that impact the daily lives of Los Angeles residents by focusing on services, resolutions and providing platforms for litigants, which allow them to move forward with their lives,”



– Judge Brenda J. Penny, Supervising Judge of the Probate and Mental Health Division

The increase in the region's aging population has resulted in a growing number of conservatorship and trust matters filed with the Court. In response, the Court has opened two more Probate courtrooms to accommodate growth in this area. Additional demands in this area also required the Court to add 20 more probate investigator positions to ensure the rights of those in conservatorships and guardianships are protected, bringing the Division's total number of probate investigators up to 50 investigators. The additional courtrooms and investigation resources allows for more timely resolution of Probate matters, improving access for litigants and overall service delivery to court users.

COURT DIVISION REPORT

From the beginning of 2023 to July 2024, the Probate Division conducted more than 16,000 investigations, including:



2,541
investigations on
conservatorship
appointment
petitions



9,745
investigations
on existing
conservatorship



4,434
guardianship
investigations

The Division has also taken the lead on piloting new programs to improve court access and end user experience. It was the first to transition to paperless files, to implement LACourtConnect (LACC), electronic filing and electronic order processing. In addition, Probate notes are now fully automated. In this spirit, the Probate Division was the first to transition to LACC 3.0, a new version of the Court’s remote courtroom appearance technology, with features such as same-day check-in (eliminating the existing pre-registration requirement) and standard Microsoft Teams features with industry-leading stability and ease of use. The Division is committed to making the court process easier for people who cannot physically come to court because they are unable to adjust their work schedules or for those without access to transportation or childcare.

As Los Angeles County’s population continues to age, the Probate Division expects the number of conservatorships to increase and is prepared to respond to the needs of vulnerable members of the population.



SELF-HELP SERVICES

The mission of the Court's Self-Help Services is to provide self-represented litigants with access to justice. Court-based self-help programs focus on providing neutral procedural information to litigants so they can make informed decisions. The Court's self-help service model focuses on educating litigants about the law, the Court's processes and how to complete forms and processes required to navigate their cases. Once litigants understand the options available to them, they can make educated choices as they fill out their own documents and represent themselves. Litigants who receive assistance from Self-Help are more likely to show up for their hearings with the proper forms completed and filed and with a better understanding of what will happen on their court date.



“One of Self-Help’s roles is to provide education and options, recognizing that different people will need different levels of assistance. We want to provide services that meet those different needs in a meaningful and impactful way.”

– Ruth Zacarias, Deputy Managing Self-Help Attorney

Self-Help offers remote and in-person assistance through one-on-one appointments and workshops. Self-Help operates in 13 courthouses countywide, bringing in-person services closer to where litigants live or work. A Self-Help call center is also staffed by court employees each court day for litigants to call in to receive answers to their questions.

In December 2023, the Court launched **CARE Court** for individuals with schizophrenia or other psychotic disorders. Eligibility hearings are heard at the Norwalk Courthouse. A new Self-Help center in the Norwalk Courthouse is dedicated to assisting litigants with information about the CARE process and guidance on completing CARE Petitions. CARE assistance is also available at 10 additional Self-Help centers countywide. Since the launch of CARE Court, the majority of people who have applied on behalf of a loved one have completed their petitions with the assistance of Self-Help Centers. Each center provides a dedicated private space with technology designed to help people connect with services from the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LADMH). Parties involved in CARE Court can also remotely attend hearings that take place at the Norwalk Courthouse. The new partnership with DMH is recognized in California as a forward-thinking innovative partnership that connects litigants and their loved ones with the mental health services available to them.

COURT DIVISION REPORT

In April 2024, Self-Help launched the Expedited Judgment Program (EJP) in every Self-Help Center throughout the county. Litigants who can reach a full settlement in their dissolution or parentage case can be referred by the courtroom for same-day judgment assistance. The program has proven to be popular with litigants and judicial officers alike, often delivering case resolution to litigants who leave court the same day with a signed judgment in hand, avoiding the need for further court appearances.

Self-Help endeavors to increase access to the public by using technology to create new ways to access services. Self-Help staff worked closely with Court Technology Services staff to redesign its Self-Help Service Catalog [web pages](#) to make them more informative and user friendly. In August 2023, Self-Help launched a Spanish version of its online on-demand Dissolution Orientation Workshop. Self-Help staff worked diligently to accurately translate its English Dissolution Orientation Workshop into Spanish, taking care to use plain language to make it more accessible. Self-Help continues to make new resources available on the Self-Help Catalog, with production underway on ten brief instructional videos to guide litigants through the completion of various court forms. The videos will be available on-demand in the Self-Help Service catalog.



“Some people prefer the convenience of remote workshops. Some are comfortable with on-demand services that they can access on their own schedule in the evening or on weekends. And others prefer the additional guidance and support of in-person assistance. Our goal is to meet people where they are.”

– Janice Shurlow, Deputy Managing Self-Help Attorney



In 2024, Self-Help celebrated the 20-year anniversary of the JusticeCorps program, a pioneering venture that began with the Court and has since been replicated in many other counties in California and in states throughout the country. JusticeCorps recruits undergraduate students and recent graduates to provide direct assistance to self-represented litigants in the Self-Help program.

Through Self-Help’s collaborative partnerships and dedicated efforts to meet litigants where they are, the Court can provide access to justice in an efficient manner that benefits all.

TRAFFIC DIVISION

The Traffic Division is the most common court division Los Angeles County residents interact with. With over 700,000 citations filed each year, the Court is dedicated to helping litigants resolve their matters expeditiously and fairly.

“There are so many litigants that access our courtrooms either in person or remotely. The judges and staff are committed to leaving a lasting positive impression on the litigants we serve with regard to how they’re treated and how their matters are handled, so those are very important encounters that our courts have with the litigants.”

– Judge Jana M. Seng, Assistant Supervising Judge of The Criminal Division, Traffic

The Court is committed to addressing the diverse needs traffic litigants and improving access to the courts and by implementing innovative online tools.

This year, the Court launched the online Ability to Pay (ATP) tool, allowing individuals to seek a reduction in the amount owed, a payment plan, or community service in lieu of fines and fees incurred due to traffic infractions. Payment options can be granted to the individual based on their financial circumstances. Looking ahead, the Court is working to further increase online services for court users by exploring technology that would allow litigants and witnesses to share evidence remotely. The remote services would improve convenience for the litigants and law enforcement witnesses.

The Court strives to improve equal access to justice and leave a lasting impact on the community by increasing public safety on the road.



A video shares how the online Ability to Pay tool works for Los Angeles County residents who have traffic tickets or other infractions.

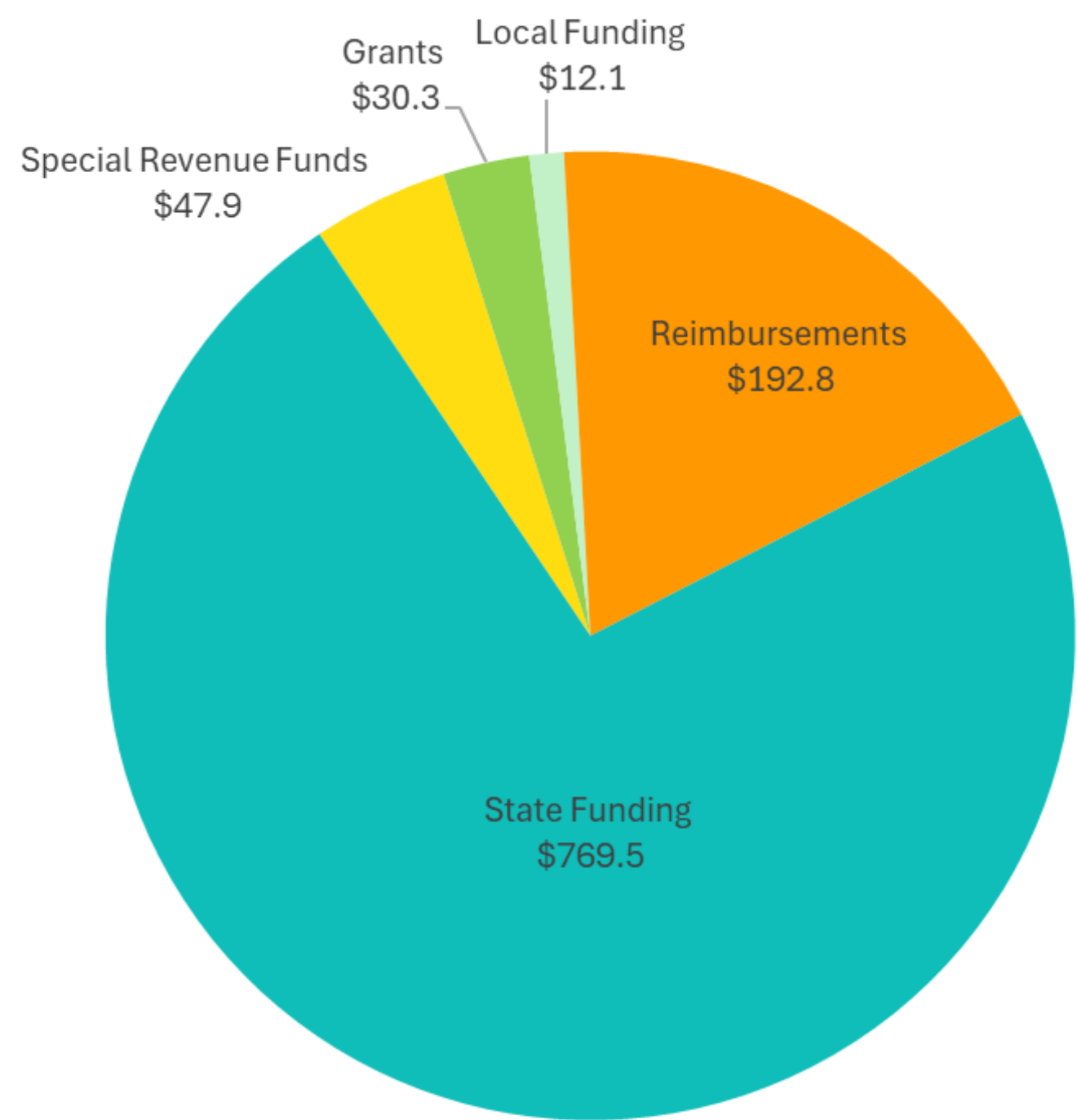
FILING INFORMATION – FISCAL YEAR 2023/2024

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

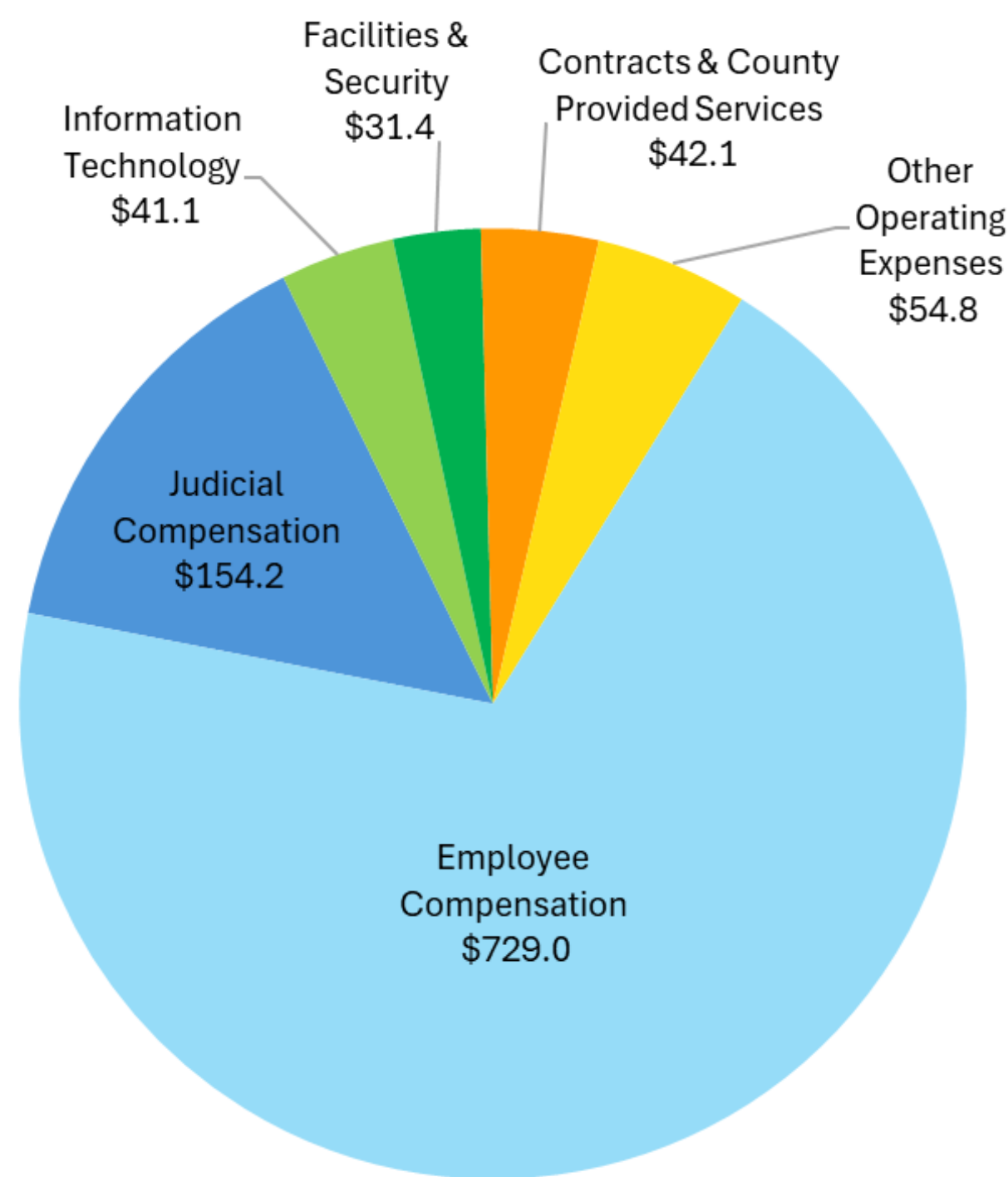
Civil	
Civil Unlimited	86,580
Civil Limited (non-Unlawful Detainer/Eviction)	101,559
Small Claims/Other Civil	25,720
Unlawful Detainer/Eviction	46,825
All Filings	260,684
Criminal	
Felonies	30,039
Misdemeanors	69,969
Infractions (non-traffic)	14,892
Habeas Corpus	147
Miscellaneous Criminal Petition	1,794
All Filings	116,841
Family Law	
Dissolution (Divorce)	24,893
Child Support	23,312
Domestic Violence and Civil Harassment	32,269
Parentage	6,511
Family Law-Other	8,960
Adoptions	656
Legal Separation	571
Nullity	218
All Filings	97,390
Juvenile	
Juvenile Justice	4,938
Juvenile Dependency	14,166
All Filings	19,104
Mental Health	
Lanterman-Petris-Short Conservatorships	660
Mental Health-Other	2,142
Competency to Stand Trial	9,554
Mental Health Hospital Certification	37,089
All Filings	49,445
Probate	
All Filings	19,046
Traffic	
All Filings	687,499
Appellate	
All Filings	774
Grand Total	1,250,783

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

FY 2023/24 Revenue In Millions



FY 2023/24 Expenditures In Millions



Compensation includes salaries and benefits.

COURTHOUSE CONTACT INFORMATION

AP = Appellate **CIV** = Civil **CRM** = Criminal **FL** = Family Law **JVDEP** = Juvenile Dependency
JVDEL = Juvenile Delinquency **MH** = Mental Health **PRB** = Probate **SMCL** = Small Claims **TR** = Traffic



Airport Courthouse
11701 S. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90451
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(310) 725-3000
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CRM



Alfred J. McCourtney Juvenile Justice Center Courthouse
1040 W. Ave. J, Lancaster, CA 93534
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(661) 483-5924
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
JVDEP



Alhambra Courthouse
150 W. Commonwealth Ave., Alhambra, CA 91801
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(626) 293-2100
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRM



Bellflower Courthouse
10025 E. Flower St., Bellflower, CA 90706
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(562) 345-3300
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CRM SMCL



Beverly Hills Courthouse
9355 Burton Way, Beverly Hills, CA 90210
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(310) 281-2400
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV TR



Burbank Courthouse
300 E. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91502
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(818) 260-8400
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRM



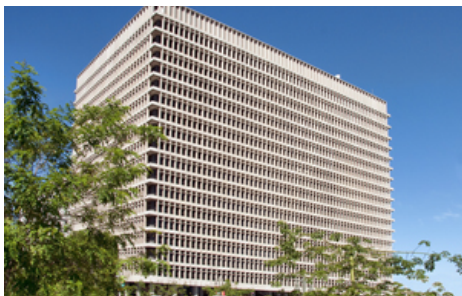
Catalina Courthouse
215 Sumner Ave., Avalon, CA 90704
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(562) 256-3100
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CRM



Central Arraignment Courthouse
429 Bauchet St., Los Angeles, CA 90012
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(213) 617-5600
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CRM



Chatsworth Courthouse
9425 Penfield Ave., Chatsworth, CA 91311
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(818) 407-2200
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV FL SMCL TR



Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center
210 W. Temple St., Los Angeles, CA 90012
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(213) 628-7700
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CRM



Compton Courthouse
200 W. Compton Blvd., Compton, CA 90220
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(310) 761-4300
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRM FL JVDEL SMCL TR



Downey Courthouse
7500 E. Imperial Highway, Downey, CA 90242
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(562) 658-0500
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CRM TR



East Los Angeles Courthouse
4848 E. Civic Center Way, Los Angeles, CA 90022
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(323) 881-5800
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CRM JVDEL



Edmund D. Edelman Children's Courthouse
201 Centre Plaza Drive, Monterey Park, CA 91754
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(323) 307-8000
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
JVDEP



El Monte Courthouse
11234 E. Valley Blvd., El Monte, CA 91731
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(626) 401-2200
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CRM TR



Glendale Courthouse
600 E. Broadway, Glendale, CA 91206
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(818) 265-6400
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRIM TR

COURTHOUSE CONTACT INFORMATION

AP = Appellate **CIV** = Civil **CRM** = Criminal **FL** = Family Law **JVDEP** = Juvenile Dependency
JVDEL = Juvenile Delinquency **MH** = Mental Health **PRB** = Probate **SMCL** = Small Claims **TR** = Traffic



Governor George Deukmejian Courthouse
275 Magnolia Ave., Long Beach, CA 90802
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(562) 256-3100
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRIM FL JVDEL SMCL TR



Hollywood Courthouse
5925 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90028
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(323) 441-1800
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
MH



Inglewood Courthouse
One Regent St., Inglewood, CA 90301
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(310) 419-1300
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRM SMCL TR



Inglewood Juvenile Courthouse
110 Regent St., Inglewood, CA 90301
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(661) 483-5500
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRIM FL JVDEL PRB SMCL TR



Metropolitan Courthouse
1945 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90007
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(213) 745-3200
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRM TR



Michael D. Antonovich Antelope Valley Courthouse
42011 4th St. W., Lancaster, CA 93534
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(661) 483-5500
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRIM FL JVDEL PRB SMCL TR



Norwalk Courthouse
12720 Norwalk Blvd., Norwalk, CA 90650
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(562) 345-3700
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRM



Pasadena Courthouse
300 E. Walnut St., Pasadena, CA 91101
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(626) 396-3300
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRM FL SMCL TR



Pomona Courthouse South
400 Civic Center Plaza, Pomona, CA 91766
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(909) 802-1100
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRM FL JVDEL JVDEP



San Fernando Courthouse
900 Third St., San Fernando, CA 91340
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(818) 256-1800
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CRM



Santa Clarita Courthouse
23747 W. Valencia Blvd., Santa Clarita, CA 91355
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(661) 253-5600
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CRM TR



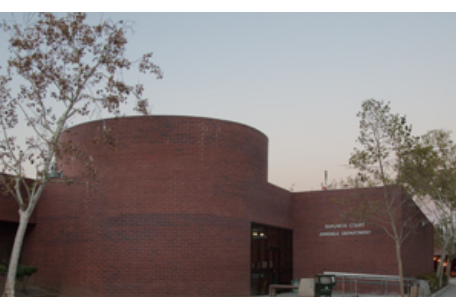
Santa Monica Courthouse
1725 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(310) 255-1840
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV FL SMCL TR



Spring Street Courthouse
312 N. Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90012
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(213) 310-7000
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV



Stanley Mosk Courthouse (Central)
111 N. Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90012
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(213) 830-0800
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
AP CIV FL PRB SMCL



Sylmar Juvenile Courthouse
16350 Filbert St., Sylmar, CA 91342
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(818) 256-1180
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
JVDEL



Torrance Courthouse
825 Maple Ave., Torrance, CA 90503
Clerk's Office Call Center Phone Number:
(310) 787-3700
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRM FL TR

COURTHOUSE CONTACT INFORMATION

AP = Appellate **CIV** = Civil **CRM** = Criminal **FL** = Family Law **JVDEP** = Juvenile Dependency
JVDEL = Juvenile Delinquency **MH** = Mental Health **PRB** = Probate **SMCL** = Small Claims **TR** = Traffic



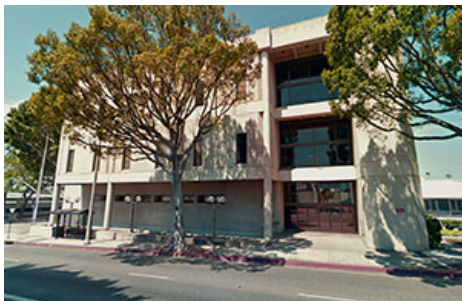
Van Nuys East Courthouse
6230 Sylmar Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91401
Clerk’s Office Call Center Phone Number:
(818) 901-4600
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV FL SMCL



Van Nuys West Courthouse
14400 Erwin St. Mall, Van Nuys, CA 91401
Clerk’s Office Call Center Phone Number:
(818) 989-6900
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CRM TR



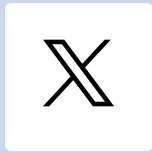
West Covina Courthouse
1427 W. Covina Parkway, West Covina, CA 91790
Clerk’s Office Call Center Phone Number:
(626) 430-2600
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
CIV CRM SMCL TR



Whittier Courthouse
7339 S. Painter Ave., Whittier, CA 90602
Clerk’s Office Call Center Phone Number:
(562) 968-2699
Types of cases heard at this courthouse:
FL

Additional Call Center Numbers:

- Traffic Call Center:**
(213) 633-6300
- Family Law Call Center:**
(213) 633-6363
- Self-Help Call Center:**
(213) 830-0845
- AB 1058 Child Support Commissioner Program:**
(213) 351-7500
- Civil Call Center:**
(213) 633-6333



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