

JUDICIAL COUNCIL AWARDS GRANTS TO COURT OF APPEAL, FIFTH APPELLATE DISTRICT

In July 2017, the Court of Appeal, Fifth Appellate District in Fresno, California signed contracts with the Judicial Council of California in which funding for the following two grants was awarded as part of the Court Innovations Grant Program (\$25 million allocated by the Budget Act of 2016 for the establishment, operation, administration and staffing of trial and appellate court programs and practices that promote innovation, modernization, and efficiency):

- (1) Modernize the Transcript Assembly Program; and
- (2) Self-Help and Learning Center Website

Modernize the Transcript Assembly Program

A total of \$793,000 was awarded to modernize the Transcript Assembly Program (TAP) software currently being used in the majority of trial courts within the Fifth Appellate District, and make this software available statewide to all trial courts for one year (cloud-based). TAP allows electronic submission of the clerk's transcript to every appellate court in the state, and increased access to the public because they will not need to retrieve multiple boxes of records from the trial court in order to obtain a copy of the record. One year will provide all interested trial and appellate courts the opportunity to realize the benefits gained by producing and utilizing an electronic clerk's transcript and achieve the savings that will result from automating a fully manual staff process (in some courts) to one that is accomplished by the click of a button. The target date for completion of this project is June 30, 2019.

Self-Help and Learning Center Website

The Self-Help and Learning Center Website grant is a collaboration between the Fourth and Fifth Appellate Districts to design and deploy a statewide website primarily targeting self-represented litigants, attorneys and their staff unfamiliar with the appellate process, as well as the general public. A total of \$317,916 was awarded to contract with an information technology and web development vendor to design and help deploy an ADA compliant Self-Help and Learning Center website. The website will not provide legal advice, but will assist users with understanding appellate procedures and rules, accessing and completing court forms and templates for documents to be filed in the appellate courts, and explaining unfamiliar appellate terminology. In addition, the website will lead users to the correct resources and information in response to their questions when filing an appeal or an original proceeding for general civil (including family law and probate). The website will also offer assistance for notices of intent to file writ petitions pursuant to California Rules of Court, rule 8.450. If possible, assistance with guardianship, conservatorship, and mental health appellate filings will also be offered. The learning center will be an additional component to the website, providing a comprehensive, easy-to-navigate resource offering education and encouraging learning about the appellate process. Deployment of the website is anticipated by August 30, 2019.