



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF
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Judicial Council to Hold Public Business Meeting on Friday, February 26

Council to Consider Judicial Election Reforms and Public Disclosure Procedures for Court Audits

San Francisco—The Judicial Council of California will hold a public business meeting from 9:45 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. on Friday, February 26, 2010, at the Judicial Council Conference Center, Hiram W. Johnson State Office Building, Third Floor, 455 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco.

Chaired by Chief Justice Ronald M. George, the council is the administrative policymaking body of the California courts. The meeting will be audiocast live on the California Courts Web site at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/>. Meeting materials are now available at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/age20100226.pdf>.

A summary of reports on the meeting agenda follows:

Court Audits: The Judicial Council will consider the adoption of new procedures that would govern the public disclosure of final court audit reports. The procedures would require formal reporting of audit results and audit activities to the council on a regular basis, and would create a process to report any impairment that would affect the independence of the Internal Audit Services unit of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). These recommendations support branch governance and enhance accountability through reporting and review of the financial, compliance, and operational activities of the judicial branch.

Judicial Elections: The Implementation Committee of the Commission for Impartial Courts recommends that the Judicial Council endorse three recommendations in the commission's final report pertaining to the disclosure of—and mandatory disqualification as a result of—certain campaign contributions received by judicial candidates. The commission proposes that those recommendations be referred to the California

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Supreme Court for further action. At a public meeting in December 2009, the council accepted the commission's final report and directed the Administrative Director of the Courts to provide an implementation plan for the commission's recommendations at this meeting.

AOC Conflict of Interest Code: The council will consider amendments to the Conflict of Interest Code for the AOC to bring the code up to date with the agency's current classification structure. In accordance with Government Code sections 87303 and 87306, the code must be updated "when change is necessitated by changed circumstances, including the creation of new positions," and the council must review proposed amendments to the code and approve the code as amended or direct that it be further revised and resubmitted for approval.

Access to Visitation Grant Program: Subject to the availability of federal funding, the Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee, recommends the allocation and distribution of approximately \$770,000 statewide for the fiscal year 2010–2011 Access to Visitation Grant Program. The federal funding would be directed to 12 superior courts representing 22 counties and involving 24 local community nonprofit service providers to support and facilitate noncustodial parents' access to and visitation with their children through supervised visitation and exchange services, parent education, and group counseling services. Family Code section 3204(b)(2) requires the Judicial Council to determine the final number and amount of grants to be awarded to the superior courts.

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The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and ensures leadership and excellence in court administration.