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JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF
CALIFORNIA
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS
Public Information Office
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3688
www.courtinfo.ca.gov

415-865-7740

Lynn Holton
Public Information Officer

Judicial Council to Hold Public Business Meeting in San Francisco

Meeting Set December 14, on Legislative Priorities, Funding Allocations, and Election Reform

San Francisco—The Judicial Council of California will hold a public business meeting from 8:30 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. on Tuesday, December 14, 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 www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/. The meeting materials are available at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/age20101214.pdf>.

Reports on the council's discussion agenda include the following.

Legislative Priorities: The Judicial Council will consider new legislative priorities for 2011 to further council objectives. Recommended priorities focus on the judicial branch budget, including advocating for sufficient overall funding and funding for court security, dependency council, probate conservatorship programs, and court interpreters.

Allocation of Special Funds: The council will consider recommendations on the allocations from statewide special funds for projects and programs that support the trial courts. The special funds are from the Trial Court Improvement Fund, the Judicial Administration Efficiency and Modernization Fund, and the Trial Court Trust Fund.

Local Fiscal Management of Two Trial Courts: The Administrative Director of the Courts recommends that the Judicial Council reinstate local responsibility for fiscal management of the Superior Courts of Placer and Glenn Counties. On April 23, 2009, the council directed the Administrative Director to provide oversight for the fiscal operations of

those courts under Government Code section 77206.1. The courts have significantly improved their fiscal condition since fiscal year 2008–2009, established internal fiscal oversight controls, implemented appropriate financial and operating policies and procedures, stabilized revenue and expenditure streams, and have sufficient operating and emergency reserves.

Commission for Impartial Courts: Two recommendations to improve the judicial appointment process will be proposed by the Implementation Committee of the Commission for Impartial Courts. If accepted by the council, both recommendations would be referred to the State Bar of California for further action. The Implementation Committee also will provide an update on the first year of implementation efforts, following submission of its final report last year.

Family Law: The council will hear an interim progress report from the Elkins Family Law Implementation Task Force, presented by Justice Laurie D. Zelon, of the Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Six (Los Angeles.) Appointed by Chief Justice George in May 2008, the task force conducted a comprehensive review of family law proceedings and made recommendations to the Judicial Council to increase access to justice for all family law litigants, including self-represented litigants; ensure fairness and due process; and provide for more effective and consistent family law rules, policies, and procedures.

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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 promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.