



# MEDIA ADVISORY

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## Judicial Council to Hold Public Meeting in San Francisco on Friday, December 1

### ***Council to Consider New Strategic Plan To Guide Future of California Courts***

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San Francisco—The Judicial Council of California will hold a public business meeting from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Friday, December 1, 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 28-member 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/>. The agenda and meeting materials are online at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/age120106.pdf>.

Reports to be considered include:

**Public Confidence in the Courts:** Council members will hear a report on public trust and confidence in the state courts, as a follow up to the council's landmark survey last fall that showed public confidence in courts is substantially higher than in previous years. In the new report, public court users and judicial branch members who participated in focus groups express their views about state courts. The report is online at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/reports/120106item9.pdf>

**Strategic Plan:** The council will consider adopting a new strategic plan that will guide the direction of the California judicial branch for the next six years. Developed over the last 18 months, *Justice in Focus: The Strategic Plan for California's Judicial Branch, 2006-2012*, has been shaped by the contributions from more than 3,000 stakeholders in the judicial branch. The report is online at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/reports/120106item10.pdf>

**Domestic Violence:** The Judicial Council Domestic Violence Practice and Procedure Task Force will present an interim report that will summarize its activities since it was appointed by Chief Justice George one year ago.

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The report discusses a new pilot project it has launched to improve entry of protective orders into the statewide database, a key task force objective. The report is online at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/reports/120106item11.pdf>

**Legislative Priorities for Courts:** The council will consider the adoption of legislative priorities for 2007, including creating new judgeships, converting eligible subordinate judicial officer positions, improving and expediting the court facility transfer process, modifying the judicial retirement system, and reducing the disparity among local judicial benefit packages throughout the state. The report is online at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/reports/120106item12A.pdf>.

**Jury Reform Proposals:** The council will consider the adoption of proposed rules of court that would assist judicial officers by instituting innovative trial court practices that clarify judicial authority and assist trial court judges and litigants with recommended techniques. The proposed rules include those that would permit jurors to take notes during trials and to submit written questions directed to witnesses. The report is online at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/reports/120106item14A.pdf>

**Court Facilities:** The council will consider approving the first of a series of annual reports to the Legislature's Budget and Fiscal Committees on *County Reporting on Local Courthouse Construction Funds for the Period of January 1, 1998 to December 31, 2005*. The report is mandated by statute. The report is online at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/reports/120106item13.pdf>.

**Juvenile Dependency:** The council will be asked to direct that a final pilot program report on Dependency Representation, Administration, Funding, and Training (DRAFT) be presented in August 2007. That report is to include recommendations on proper court-appointed counsel caseload, compensation, and performance standards for statewide implementation. The report is online at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/reports/120106item17.pdf>.

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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.*