



NEWS RELEASE

Release Number: 40

Release Date: June 29, 2007

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Judicial Council Takes Action on State Courthouse Selection, Jury Instructions, and Family Law Funding

San Francisco—The Judicial Council of California today adopted a statewide policy that will govern the selection and competitive acquisition of sites for new courthouses throughout the state.

The new policy will assist the council as it plans the construction of new courthouses to improve public access, safety, and security under the Trial Court Facilities Act of 2002.

Approved at a public meeting, the new policy is designed to provide open, balanced, and reasoned consideration of desired site qualities before any property search is made. The policy establishes that a diverse advisory group for each courthouse project will determine the criteria for site selection and that prospective sites will be solicited competitively.

The 29-member Judicial Council, the administrative policymaking body of the state courts, is chaired by Chief Justice Ronald M. George. In other action, the council:

- Approved a site acquisition for the new Portola/Loyalton Courthouse and the final study and declaration performed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.
- Approved the publication of the second set of revisions and additions to the *Criminal Jury Instructions (CALCRIM)*. The changes will improve the clarity, accuracy, and breadth of the instructions.
- Approved the allocation of non-trial court funding to local courts for the child support commissioner and family law facilitator program.

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An audiocast of the Judicial Council's meeting is available on the California Courts Web site at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc. The meeting agenda and reports are available at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/age062907.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 promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.