



Judicial Council of California
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

455 Golden Gate Avenue • San Francisco, California 94102-3688
Telephone 415-865-4200 • Fax 415-865-4205 • TDD 415-865-4272

TANI CANTIL-SAKAUYE
Chief Justice of California
Chair of the Judicial Council

WILLIAM C. VICKREY
Administrative Director of the Courts

RONALD G. OVERHOLT
Chief Deputy Director

July 5, 2011

Hon. Darrell S. Steinberg
President pro Tempore of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, California 95814

Hon. John A. Pérez
Speaker of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 219
Sacramento, California 95814

Hon. Noreen Evans
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
State Capitol, Room 4032
Sacramento, California 95814

Hon. Mike Feuer
Chair, Assembly Judiciary Committee
State Capitol, Room 2013
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: Notification of Vacancies and Allocation of Conversion of Subordinate Judicial Officer
Positions as Required Under Government Code Section 69615

Dear Senator Steinberg, Senator Evans, Speaker Pérez, and Assembly Member Feuer:

Assembly Bill 159 (Stats. 2007, ch. 722) authorized the Judicial Council to convert 162 subordinate judicial officer (SJO) positions, upon vacancy, to judgeships at a rate of up to 16 per fiscal year. Government Code section 69615 requires the Judicial Council to file notice of the vacancies in SJO positions that the council would be seeking to convert in the coming fiscal year, as well as the allocation of conversions among the courts eligible for conversion of SJO positions.

For fiscal year 2011–2012, the Judicial Council has approved the following methodology for allocating the 16 conversions among the remaining courts eligible for conversions:

Superior Courts (by County)	Number of Conversions Set Aside for FY 2010–2011
Group 1: Los Angeles	7
Group 2: Orange	2
Group 3: Alameda, Contra Costa, Riverside, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco	4
Group 4: Fresno, Kern, Marin, Merced, Napa, Placer, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Tulare, Yolo	3

The Judicial Council has approved conversions to judgeships of 11 vacant or soon to be vacant positions for fiscal year 2011–2012, contingent on the Legislature’s ratification of the council’s exercise of this authority. The Budget Act of 2011 (Sen. Bill 87) included the authorization for conversion of subordinate judicial officers in 2011–2012. Item 0250-101-0932, provision 10 states: “Sixteen (16.0) subordinate judicial officer positions are authorized to be converted to judgeships in the 2011–12 fiscal year in the manner and pursuant to the authority described in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 69615 of the Government Code, as described in the notice filed by the Judicial Council under subdivision (b) of paragraph (3) of Section 69615.”

The 11 positions approved by the council for conversion are allocated as follows: 1 position has been approved for conversion to a judgeship in both Marin and Santa Cruz; 7 positions have been approved for conversion in Los Angeles; and 2 positions in Orange. In accordance with the Judicial Council methodology, 4 conversions are set aside for the 6 courts that compose Group 3, and 1 additional conversion is reserved for the 10 courts in Group 4 that remain eligible for conversions (Santa Cruz has no more positions eligible after the 1 conversion already approved by the council). Under Judicial Council policy, if the courts for whom the conversions are set aside do not report any subordinate judicial officer vacancies or anticipated vacancies by January 1, the remaining positions set aside for conversion will be distributed to any other eligible court on a first-come, first-served basis.

The methodology for allocating the annual 16 conversions among the eligible courts balances the long-term goal of achieving a more appropriate balance between judgeship and SJO positions in the superior courts with the short-term, immediate needs of the courts to handle their workload. The Judicial Council determined that compiling a full list of all the positions that come vacant in a given year and waiting until the end of that year to allocate those positions among the eligible courts would create unnecessary uncertainty and place an added burden on courts with vacant positions by

requiring that they hold open positions that may not be converted in the near term. The adopted allocation methodology allows the Judicial Council to make an immediate determination if a court with a vacant SJO position qualifies to have the position converted.

As a result of the 16 conversions each year in FY 2007–2008, 2008–2009, and 2009–2010, and 2010–2011, along with the 11 conversions already tentatively approved for FY 2011–2012, 7 of the 25 courts designated for conversions have converted all of their eligible positions to judgeships, leaving 18 eligible courts and 97 subordinate judicial officer positions remaining to be converted to judgeships.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact Donna Hershkowitz, Assistant Director, AOC Office of Governmental Affairs, at 916-323-3121 or donna.hershkowitz@jud.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



William C. Vickrey
Administrative Director of the Courts

WCV/DSH/lmb

cc: Members of the Judicial Council
Ronald G. Overholt, AOC Chief Deputy Director
Curtis L. Child, Director, AOC Office of Governmental Affairs
Kenneth L. Kann, Director, AOC Executive Office Programs Division
Nathan Barankin, Policy Consultant, Office of the President pro Tempore of the Senate
Fredericka McGee, General Counsel, Office of the Speaker of the Assembly
Saskia Kim, Chief Counsel, Senate Judiciary Committee
Mike Petersen, Consultant, Senate Republican Policy Office
Drew Liebert, Chief Counsel, Assembly Judiciary Committee
Mark Redmond, Consultant, Assembly Republican Policy Office