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**NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Judicial Council Leaders Invite Public Comment on Draft Open-Meeting Rule**

*Draft rule designed to increase transparency of judicial administration  
while maintaining confidentiality required by ethics rules*

SAN FRANCISCO—Five members of the Judicial Council of California today posted for public comment a [draft rule](#) designed to greatly increase transparency within the judicial branch. The draft rule, proposed by the five chairs of the council's [internal committees](#) opens the council's advisory committee meetings to the public.

“This unprecedented judicial branch rule must balance the need for transparency with the unique ethical concerns of justices and judges who volunteer on our advisory committees,” said [Justice Douglas P. Miller](#), chair of the council's Executive and Planning Committee. “The proposal we circulated in November generated helpful comments and many discussions—including a lively discussion at the December Judicial Council meeting—about how to achieve that balance. In this draft rule, we've explained and clarified the distinctions between discussions where justices and judges have the greatest ethical concerns—for example, rule-making discussions—and those where our obligation for public transparency is paramount—for example, budgetary matters. We believe the draft rule thoughtfully strikes that balance, but it's still a work in progress, and we look forward to gathering further comment.”

The five members of the council who developed the preliminary draft include Justice Miller, [Justice Harry E. Hull, Jr.](#), chair of the Rules and Projects Committee; [Judge Mary Ann O'Malley](#), chair of the Litigation Management Committee; [Judge Ken K. So](#), chair of the Policy Coordination and Liaison Committee; and [Judge James E. Herman](#), chair of the Technology Committee.

The draft rule and [invitation to comment](#) are posted on the California Courts website. The deadline for comment is Feb 7, 2014.

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