

The Superior Court of California

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE COURT

MICHAEL M. RODDY
Executive Officer and Clerk
Jury Commissioner

Post Office Box 122724
San Diego, California 92112-2724
(619) 450-5478

September 20, 2012

VIA E-MAIL AND MAIL

Ms. Debora Morrison
Senior Attorney, Office of the General Counsel
Administrative Office of the Courts
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3688

Re: Notification Pursuant to Government Code Section 68106

Dear Ms. Morrison:

Effective on the dates set out below, due to the severe and ongoing reductions imposed on the California judicial branch, the Superior Court of California, County of San Diego will implement the following changes and closure of courtrooms and court services:

- The one independent calendar civil courtroom in the South County Division, at 500 3d Avenue, Chula Vista, will be closed effective November 19, 2012. The judge assigned to this courtroom will be reassigned to other duties within the Superior Court. Civil Harassment/Elder Abuse matters will be the only civil matters heard in the South County Division. All existing South County cases other than Civil Harassment/Elder Abuse will be transferred to the Central Division.
- One of two independent calendar civil courtrooms in the East County Division will be closed effective November 19, 2012. The judge assigned to this courtroom will be reassigned to other duties within the Superior Court. Civil cases other than small claims will continue to be heard in the remaining independent calendar civil courtroom. Civil Harassment/Elder Abuse cases will also continue to be heard in the East County Division.
- The civil business office operations located at the East County Division and at the South County Division will be closed to the public effective at the end of business on December 28, 2012. To effectuate these changes, the following interim steps will be taken: Beginning November 5, 2012, the East County and South County Division business offices will no longer accept filings in *new* civil cases and petitions (including small claims), with the exception of Civil Harassment/Elder Abuse cases. Beginning on November 19, 2012, the East and South County business offices will no longer accept *any* civil filings, except those in Civil Harassment/Elder Abuse cases.

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- Beginning December 14, 2012, small claims actions will no longer be heard at the East and South County Divisions; those actions will be heard at the Central Division Kearny Mesa branch, located at 8950 Clairemont Message Blvd., San Diego.

As you are well aware, since 2007-08, the funding for the California judicial branch has been reduced by \$653 million. In addition, the 2012-13 state budget contains additional branch reductions of \$544 million. The cumulative effect in San Diego since 2007-08 will be a reduction in our operating revenue of approximately 25%.

To address the cuts over the past four fiscal years, our court has implemented a number of reductions. We have previously reduced business operating hours in 2009, reduced staff through attrition and a voluntary separation program, reduced our operating expenses and technology expenses and implemented other wage and benefit reductions to limit the impact of our budget cuts on public access to our courts. However, with the latest round of cuts in the 2012-13 budget, we can no longer continue to operate without additional significant and permanent changes in our operations.

In addition to the changes already made and those referenced in this letter, our budget reduction plans include layoffs and furloughs of court staff, further cuts in operating and technology expenses, and the closure of additional courtrooms by the beginning of FY 2013-14 when we expect further reductions in our local court budget. We estimate that by the beginning of FY 2013-14 we will need to reduce our current operating budget by \$33 million. These very difficult decisions being enacted by the court will enable us to meet this target.

Pursuant to Government Code section 68106, the public may submit comments regarding these changes. We have attached the public notices that will be posted throughout our facilities and posted to our court website (www.sdcourt.ca.gov) to notify the public and court users of these proposed changes and the name and address where their comments can be directed.

We are available to answer any questions or concerns that you may have regarding these most unfortunate, but necessary actions that will erode the public's access to our San Diego court system.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL M. RODDY
Executive Officer

Attachments

c: Hon. Robert J. Trentacosta, Presiding Judge
Hon. David J. Danielsen, Assistant Presiding Judge

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

PUBLIC NOTICE

(Pursuant to Government Code section 68106 & California Rule of Court 10.620)

**CLOSURE OF SOUTH AND EAST COURTROOMS
AND CIVIL BUSINESS OFFICES**

Pursuant to Government Code §68106 and California Rules of Court, rule 10.620, the Superior Court of California, County of San Diego, is providing 60 days' notice of the decision to close one independent calendar civil courtroom in its South County Division and one independent civil calendar courtroom in its East County Division, and to consolidate civil business office operations of its South and East County Divisions with those in its Central Division.

Effective November 19, 2012, the one independent calendar civil courtroom located at the South County Division, 500 3rd Avenue, Chula Vista, will be closed, one of the independent calendar civil courtrooms located in the East County Division, 250 East Main Street, El Cajon, will be closed, and the civil business offices in the East and South County Divisions will no longer accept any civil filings (including small claims), except those in Civil Harassment/Elder Abuse cases. To prepare for this, as of November 5, 2012, the East and South County Division civil business offices will not accept filings in *new* civil cases and petitions (including small claims), with the exception of Civil Harassment/Elder Abuse cases. Small claims cases will not be heard in the East and South County Divisions after December 13, 2012. The civil business offices of the East and South County Divisions will close to the public at the end of business on December 28, 2012.

This action is being taken due to unprecedented and ongoing state budget cuts. The San Diego Court has estimated that it faces a \$33 million cut in funding for FY 2012-2013, which will continue into fiscal year 2013-2014. These cuts are in addition to reductions incurred during the preceding four fiscal years. As a result, the Court is facing the most significant reduction of services in its history.

Pursuant to Government Code section §68511.7, the Court is inviting public comment on this change prior to implementation. To ensure prompt review and consideration, comments should be submitted electronically through the Court's website at www.sdcourt.ca.gov (click on "Invitation to Comment").

For those without easy internet access, comments may be mailed to:

Superior Court of California, County of San Diego
Attn: Michael Roddy, Court Executive Officer
220 West Broadway, Executive Office
San Diego, CA 92101