

AMENDMENTS TO THE CALIFORNIA RULES OF COURT

Adopted by the Judicial Council on October 27, 2015,

effective on December 1, 2015

1 **Rule 4.105. Appearance without deposit of bail in ~~traffic~~ infraction cases**

2
3 **(a) Application**

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5 This rule applies to any ~~traffic~~ infraction ~~violation of the Vehicle Code~~ for which
6 the defendant has received a written notice to appear.

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8 *(Subd (a) amended effective December 1, 2015.)*

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10 **(b) * * ***

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12 **(c) Deposit of bail**

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14 (1) Courts must require the deposit of bail when the defendant elects a statutory
15 procedure that requires the deposit of bail;

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17 (2) Courts may require the deposit of bail when the defendant does not sign a
18 written promise to appear as required by the court; ~~and~~.

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20 (3) Courts may require a deposit of bail before trial if the court finds, ~~based on~~
21 ~~the circumstances of a particular case~~, that the defendant is unlikely to appear
22 as ordered without a deposit of bail and the court expressly states the reasons
23 for the finding.

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25 (4) In determining the amount of bail set under (2) and (3), courts must consider
26 the totality of the circumstances.

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28 *(Subd (c) amended effective December 1, 2015.)*

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30 **(d) Notice**

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32 Courts must inform defendants of the option to appear in court without the deposit
33 of bail in any instructions or other materials courts provide for the public that relate
34 to bail for ~~traffic~~ infractions, including any website information, written
35 instructions, courtesy notices, and forms. ~~Courts must implement this subdivision~~
36 ~~as soon as reasonably possible but no later than September 15, 2015.~~

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38 *(Subd (d) amended effective December 1, 2015.)*

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40 *Rule 4.105 amended effective December 1, 2015; adopted effective June 8, 2015.*

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1 **Advisory Committee Comment**

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3 **Subdivision (a).** The rule is intended to apply only to an ~~traffic~~ infraction violation of the ~~Vehicle~~
4 ~~Code~~ for which the defendant has received a written notice to appear and has appeared by the
5 appearance date or an approved extension of that date. The rule does not apply to postconviction
6 matters or cases in which the defendant seeks an appearance in court after a failure to appear or
7 pay.

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9 **Subdivision (c).** This subdivision takes into account the distinct statutory purposes and functions
10 that bail and related considerations serve in infraction cases, including, for example, the posting
11 and forfeiting of bail in uncontested cases and the use of bail to satisfy later judgments, as
12 distinguished from felony and most misdemeanor cases.

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14 **Subdivision (c)(1).** Various statutory provisions authorize ~~traffic~~ infraction defendants who have
15 received a written notice to appear to elect to deposit bail in lieu of appearing in court or in
16 advance of the notice to appear date. (See, e.g., Veh. Code, §§ 40510 [authorizing defendants to
17 deposit bail before the notice to appear date]; 40519(a) [authorizing defendants who have
18 received a written notice to appear to declare the intention to plead not guilty and deposit bail
19 before the notice to appear date for purposes of electing to schedule an arraignment and trial on
20 the same date or on separate dates]; 40519(b) [authorizing defendants who have received a
21 written notice to appear to deposit bail and plead not guilty in writing in lieu of appearing in
22 person]; and 40902 [authorizing trial by written declaration].)

23
24 This rule is not intended to modify or contravene any statutorily authorized alternatives to
25 appearing in court. (See, e.g., Pen. Code, §§ 853.5, 853.6; Veh. Code, §§ 40510, 40512, and
26 40512.5 [authorizing defendants to post and forfeit bail in lieu of appearing for arraignment].)
27 The purpose of this rule is to clarify that if the defendant declines to use a statutorily authorized
28 alternative, courts must allow the defendant to appear *without* prior deposit of bail as provided
29 above.

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31 **Subdivision (c)(2).** As used in this subdivision, the phrase “written promise to appear as required
32 by the court” refers to a signed promise, made by a defendant who has appeared in court, to return
33 to court on a future date and time as ordered by the court.

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35 **Subdivision (c)(3).** In exercising discretion to require deposit of bail on a particular case, courts
36 should consider ~~the totality of the circumstances, including,~~ among other factors, whether
37 previous failures to pay or appear were willful or involved adequate notice.

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39 **Subdivision (c)(4).** In considering the “totality of the circumstances” under this subdivision,
40 courts may consider whether the bail amount would impose an undue hardship on the defendant.

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