



**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

---

## MEMORANDUM

---

Date	Action Requested
April 3, 2007	Please review
To	Deadline
Members of the Judicial Council	N/A
From	Contact
Hon. Terry B. Friedman, Team Leader	Mr. Scott Burritt
Ms. Sheila Calabro, Regional Administrative Director	Southern Regional Office
	818-558-3075 phone
	818-558-3112 fax
	scott.burritt@jud.ca.gov
Subject	
Judicial Council Site Visits to the Superior Court of Orange County and the Fourth District Court of Appeal, Division Three	

---

### Courts Visited

Superior Court of Orange County  
Fourth District Court of Appeal, Division Three

### Dates of Visit

January 18–19, 2007

### Judicial Council Members Participating in Site Visits

Hon. Terry B. Friedman, Judge, Superior Court of Los Angeles County, Team Leader  
Hon. Ronald E. Albers, Commissioner, Superior Court of Sacramento County  
Hon. Candace D. Cooper, Presiding Justice, Second Appellate District, Division Eight  
Hon. Scott L. Kays, Judge, Superior Court of Solano County  
Hon. Eileen C. Moore, Associate Justice, Fourth Appellate District, Division Three

Members of the Judicial Council

April 3, 2007

Page 2

Hon. Nancy Wieben Stock, Presiding Judge, Superior Court of Orange County

Mr. Raymond G. Aragon, Vice President, State Bar of California Board of Governors

Mr. Anthony P. Capozzi, Attorney, Law Offices of Anthony Capozzi

Ms. Deena Fawcett, Clerk/Administrator, Third Appellate District

#### Administrative Office of the Courts Staff Participating in Site Visits

Mr. William C. Vickrey, Administrative Director of the Courts

Ms. Sheila Calabro, Regional Administrative Director, Southern Region

Ms. Kim Davis, Director, Office of Court Construction and Management

Ms. Diane Nunn, Director, Center for Families, Children & the Courts

Ms. Florence Prushan, Assistant Director, Southern Region

Mr. Malcolm Franklin, Senior Emergency Response and Planning Manager, Emergency Response and Security Unit

Ms. Marcia Caballin, Budget Manager, Finance Division

Mr. Scott A. Burritt, Supervising Court Services Analyst, Southern Region

Mr. Edward Ellestad, Senior Security Coordinator, Emergency Response and Security Unit

Mr. Patrick Ballard, Senior Budget Analyst, Finance Division

#### Superior Court of Orange County

Orange County is located on the Southern California coast with Los Angeles County to the north, San Diego County to the south, and Riverside and San Bernardino counties to the east. The county, covering 798 square miles, has 34 incorporated cities.

The population of Orange County was 3,056,865 as of January 2005, representing an average annual increase of 1.5% between 2000 and 2005. According to the 2000 Census, Orange County is one of the most densely populated counties, ranking 18th among all counties nationwide and second in California, after San Francisco.

The two-day site visit to the Superior Court of Orange County began at the Central Justice Center in Santa Ana on January 18, 2007. Hon. Nancy Wieben Stock, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Orange County, and Hon. Eileen Moore, Associate Justice of the Fourth Appellate District, Division Three, welcomed the Judicial Council team members and facilitated introductions. Presiding Judge Nancy Wieben Stock and Chief Executive Officer Alan Slater gave a preview of the two-day visit, including a summary of issues facing the court and an overview of innovative court programs.

A number of judges and members of the court's management team joined the Judicial Council members for an informal working lunch. Following lunch, Presiding Judge Nancy Wieben Stock introduced a presentation by members of the court entitled "Justice in Focus: The Hurdles and

Highs of Implementing the Judicial Branch Strategic Priorities in Orange County.” The presentation focused on the ways in which the court is implementing the Judicial Branch Strategic Priorities and the challenges they face in doing so, which are discussed below.

Judge Stock emphasized that the court has been able to maintain its local identity while implementing statewide priorities by getting input from local groups through active outreach efforts. The attempt to align the court’s strategic priorities with the branch strategic priorities also exemplifies the strong working relationship between the Superior Court of Orange County and the Administrative Office of the Courts.

A number of judges and justices, many of whom could not participate during the day, joined the Judicial Council members for a memorable dinner arranged by the court.

The second day of the site visit began at the Lamoreaux Justice Center, which is dedicated to family law, juvenile, probate, and mental health matters. Judicial Council members met with judges located at the Lamoreaux Justice Center to discuss court programs, tour the facility, and attend a family law facilitators workshop. The site visit team then traveled to the Harbor Justice Center, Newport Beach, where they were briefed on innovative programs being undertaken at that location, including the community court, Prop 63 mental health court, domestic violence court, and DUI court. The site visit team also had the opportunity to attend a DUI court graduation. As judges and management discussed their projects and programs, their passion was apparent. The Judicial Council members were enthusiastic in their praise for the work of the court and the extraordinary innovations their programs represent.

### **Overview**

The Superior Court of Orange County has nine court locations, the Central Justice Center, the Central Justice Center Annex, and the Complex Civil Center, all in Santa Ana; the Lamoreaux Justice Center in Orange; the Harbor Justice Center, Newport Beach; the Harbor Justice Center, Laguna Niguel; the Harbor Justice Center, Laguna Hills; the North Justice Center in Fullerton; and the West Justice Center in Westminster. The bench is composed of 109 judges and 34 subordinate judicial officers, with approximately 1,780 support staff.

### **Innovative Programs**

The Superior Court of Orange County has long committed itself to innovation and has a number of programs that it has implemented or is currently undertaking, including the following:

**California Court Protective Order Depository.** In collaboration with the Attorney General’s Office, the court is developing an electronic repository for protective orders that will enable law enforcement statewide to retrieve scanned copies of protective orders via computers. This

program will improve public safety by providing law enforcement with immediate access to copies of protective orders.

**Community Court.** The community court is planned to open in the latter part of 2007. Court leaders consulted with many groups to identify the community needs in establishing this court. On-site services to improve the success of the participants will include drug, alcohol, and mental health assessment; assistance with medical and legal services; and job training and placement. The Central Justice Center Drug Court, the Co-occurring Disorders Court, and the Homeless Outreach Court will be housed at this facility.

**Domestic Violence Project.** The court has created a Domestic Violence Project to focus on instances of domestic violence where children are present. In Orange County approximately 36% of all domestic violence 911 calls are placed by children. The program consists of an interdisciplinary team of professionals who collaborate to try to prevent recurrences of violence in the home. Data indicates that recidivism rates are lower for defendants participating in this program.

**Truancy Response Program.** The Truancy Response Program, implemented in 2001, targets chronically truant youth and their families through the involvement of the juvenile court, the probation department, the Department of Education, the district attorney, the public defender, social services, and the community-based Parent Empowerment Program. The primary goal of the program is to reduce serious chronic truancy, thereby reducing the number of youth at risk for delinquency and increasing their chances of future success.

**Family Law Self-represented Party Calendar.** This calendar is one of the court's most successful new programs. Only cases where both sides are unrepresented by attorneys are accepted. The range of services includes the assistance of volunteer attorneys, interpreters, Family Court Services, and the Family Law Facilitator. More than 50 percent of cases scheduled are resolved, and the parties are able to leave court with a family law judgment in hand. The court believes that by expanding the program, this calendar could manage 4,000 cases per year.

**DUI Court.** Created with the assistance of a California State Office of Traffic Safety grant in 2004, the DUI Court has graduated 110 participants and has a current enrollment of 140. The program has proven successful in reducing recidivism rates. Currently there is a four-month waiting list for entrance into the program and insufficient resources to expand the program at the Harbor Justice Center in Newport Beach. This DUI court is the only such court in Orange County and one of only two DUI courts in the state. The court received a new Office of Traffic Safety grant to begin DUI Court in the North Justice Center in Fullerton.

**Dependency Drug Court.** This is a collaborative effort within Juvenile Court designed to help parents with substance-abuse problems to reunify their families in a relatively short period of time.

**Family Law Facilitator.** With a staff of seven, including three attorneys, one paralegal, and three clerical support staff, the Family Law Facilitator offers daily workshops and assists approximately 50 people each day in preparing their documents for court. Workshops can be conducted in English, Spanish, or Vietnamese. The court is exploring the possibility of conducting workshops in the evenings and on weekends. Partnership grants with legal aid providers have helped support and expand the program's services.

**Court Resources Office.** A court resources office was created to provide the public with information about the court and to make referrals to a broad spectrum of services. The court resources office also serves in a complaint resolution capacity, which improves public trust and confidence in the courts. Statistics are compiled on the type of questions asked so the court can better understand how to improve services to the public.

**Appellate Case Electronic Records.** The court is currently undertaking a pilot project with the California Supreme Court to provide appellate records electronically in a searchable form.

### **Operational Issues**

**Staffing.** The court has experienced a 9–10% vacancy rate since 2003, including 150 retirements since March 2005. There have been 445 hires and promotions since July 2005, representing 25% of the court's workforce. New employees are sworn in during a formal ceremony conducted by a member of the bench.

The court conducted an employee survey that found the top three priorities for employees were 1) effective leadership, 2) respect and recognition, and 3) a sense of teamwork. Pay and benefits ranked eighth and ninth, respectively.

**Interpreters.** The court employs 85 interpreters and has a pool of 30 opt-out interpreters. The primary need is for interpreters in Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, American Sign, and Mandarin. The opt-out interpreters have the most experience, but as they retire, the court has been unable to replace them due to the shortage of certified interpreters.

**Technology Issues.** The court is committed to technological innovation. It is involved with several technology initiatives and is trying to balance implementation of these projects with limited staff resources.

**Facilities.** The new South Justice Center, to be located in Laguna Niguel, is scheduled to open in 2010. The court will have 14 courtrooms and will serve 650,000 residents of the area.

The court is experiencing difficulties working with the county to maintain court facilities. For example, there is a need to increase air conditioning in the court's data center. A recent loss of

air conditioning caused hardware damage totaling \$500,000, which was covered under an equipment warranty.

**Court Security.** The court has weapons screening at six of its seven facilities. This year the court will spend \$37 million on security, accounting for 17–19% of its budget. Although the court maintains a good relationship with the sheriff, security costs are always an issue. The court is exploring the use of technology to lower security costs and is undertaking a security assessment by the National Center for State Courts.

**Probate Cases.** As a result of revisions to probate statutes, the court anticipates the need to hire 13 additional staff. The court anticipates that both funding to hire and space to house the new staff will be an issue.

**Grant Funding.** The court would like to see more flexibility in grant funding so that self-help and other programs can be customized to meet the community's needs.

#### Fourth District Court of Appeal, Division Three

The site visit team visited the Fourth District Court of Appeal, Division Three on January 18, 2007. Participating in the site visit were Presiding Justice David G. Sills, Associate Justice Eileen C. Moore, and Assistant Clerk/Administrator Kevin Stinson. The visit included a tour of the Court of Appeal followed by a visit to the site of the court's new facility, currently under construction.

#### **Overview**

The Fourth District Court of Appeal, Division Three, located in the city of Santa Ana, handles all appellate matters from Orange County. Division Three houses eight justices. Justice David G. Sills is the court's presiding justice, and Kevin Stinson is the Assistant Clerk/Administrator.

#### **Construction of New Courthouse**

The court moved into its current location in January 1989. With only six judicial chambers, there is insufficient room for all the court's justices and staff. As a result, the court now occupies a second facility, located about three-quarters of a mile away. Located in the heart of the Santa Ana Civil Center, the new court will house all justices and staff in one facility containing nine judicial chambers and a state-of-the-art courtroom. Completion of the courthouse is scheduled for late 2008 or early 2009.