



Judicial Council of California

Family & Juvenile Law Advisory
Committee

courts.ca.gov/familyjuvenilecomm.htm
familyjuvenilecomm@jud.ca.gov

FAMILY AND JUVENILE LAW ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF ACTION BY EMAIL

February 13, 2025

Advisory Body Members Present: Hon. Tari Cody (cochair) Hon. Stephanie Hulse (cochair), Hon. Akemi Arakaki, Hon. Craig Arthur, Hon. Bunmi Awoniyi, Hon. Brett Bianco, Hon. Brooke Blecher, Hon. Roger Chan, Ms. Trina Edwards, Hon. Ana España, Hon. Katherine Fogarty, Hon. Susan Gill, Hon. Jennifer Guillani, Ms. Julia Hanagan, Mx. Cory Hernandez, Ms. Diane Iglesias, Hon. Esther Kim, Ms. Selis Koker, Hon. Mary Kreber Varipapa, Mr. Jonathan Laba, Ms. Sharon Lawrence, Hon. Frank Menetrez, Hon. Kelly Neel, Ms. Sherry Petterson, Ms. Melissa Poulos, Chief Brian Richart, Hon. Lawrence Riff, Hon. B. Scott Thomsen, Ms. Susan Thrall, Hon. Rubén Villalobos, and Hon. Monica Wiley.

Advisory Body Members Absent: Ms. Risé Donlon and Ms. Leslie Heimov.

Others Present: Ms. Sarah Jacobvitz, Ms. Shelly La Botte, Ms. Stephanie Lacambra, and Mr. Gregory Tanaka.

ACTION BY EMAIL

As provided in the California Rules of Court, rule 10.75 (o)(1)(B), the chair concluded that prompt action was needed. This action by email concerned matters that would otherwise be discussed in an open meeting; therefore, in accordance with rule 10.75(o)(2), public notice and the proposal were posted on February 4, 2025, to allow at least one complete business day for public comment before the committee took action. No public comments were received.

ACTION ITEMS (ITEM 1)

Item 1

Email Vote to Reallocate Access to Visitation Funds

The co-chairs of Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee have concluded that prompt action is needed regarding a recommendation to the Judicial Council that funds for the Access to Visitation Grant Program be reallocated. The Judicial Council has delegated authority to the Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee to reallocate and distribute any unspent funds for the contract funding years based on the courts' justification of need for any additional funds. This authority ensures that unused allocations can be redistributed to the courts in a timely manner, in alignment with the requirements of the federal grant year.

Action: The recommendation to reallocate Access to Visitation funds was approved.

Results of the email vote:

Yes: 34

No: 0

No response: 2

CLOSURE OF ACTION

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Approved by the advisory body on enter date.



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FAMILY AND JUVENILE LAW ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING

May 12, 2025

4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Zoom

Advisory Body Members Present: Hon. Stephanie Hulse (cochair), Hon. Akemi Arakaki, Hon. Bunmi Awoniyi, Hon. Brett Bianco, Hon. Roger Chan, Hon. Ana España, Ms. Julia Hanagan, Mx. Cory Hernandez, Mr. Jonathan Laba, Ms. Sharon Lawrence, Hon. Frank Menetrez, Mr. Joe Navarro, Hon. Kelly Neel, Ms. Sherry Peterson, Ms. Melissa Poulos, Chief Brian Richart, Hon. Lawrence Riff, and Ms. Susan Thrall.

Advisory Body Members Absent: Hon. Tari Cody (cochair), Hon. Craig Arthur, Hon. Brooke Blecher, Ms. Risé Donlon, Ms. Trina Edwards, Hon. Katherine Fogarty, Hon. Susan Gill, Hon. Jennifer Guiliani, Ms. Leslie Heimov, Ms. Diane Iglesias, Hon. Esther Kim, Ms. Rose Klein, Ms. Selis Koker, Mr. Joseph Koller, Hon. Mary Kreber Varipapa, Hon. B. Scott Thomsen, Hon. Rubén Villalobos, and Hon. Monica Wiley.

Others Present: Ms. Sarah Jacobvitz, Ms. Tracy Kenny, Ms. Stephanie Lacambra, Ms. Amanda Morris, Ms. Sarah Saria, and Ms. Christy Simons.

OPEN MEETING

Call to Order and Roll Call

The chair called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and took roll call.

Approval of Minutes

The advisory body reviewed and approved the minutes of the April 28, 2025, Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee meeting.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS (ITEM 1)

Item 1

Report to the Legislature: California Court Appointed Special Advocate Association Allocations and Program Development: Year Three (Action Required)

(Presenter: Sarah Saria, Attorney, Center for Families, Children & the Courts, Judicial Council of California)

The committee reviewed and considered a report to the Legislature on allocations of the \$20 million appropriated for year three (fiscal year 2024-25) for local court-appointed special advocate (CASA) programs to expand capacity, recruitment, and training and to stabilize local budgets and staffing and expand CASA services.

Action: The committee approved the proposed Judicial Council Report to the Legislature for funding local court-appointed special advocate (CASA) programs for fiscal year 2024-25 with one abstention and without objection.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

Approved by the advisory body on enter date.

DRAFT



Judicial Council of California

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Telephone 415-865-4200 · Fax 415-865-4205

M E M O R A N D U M

Date

December 17, 2025

Action Requested

Please review and vote

To

Family and Juvenile Law Advisory
Committee

Hon. Tari L. Cody, Cochair

Hon. Stephanie E. Hulsey, Cochair

Deadline

December 22, 2025

Contact

Randie Chance

Criminal Justice Services

916-643-6985

Randie.Chance@jud.ca.gov

From

Francine Byrne, Director

Criminal Justice Services

Subject

Firearms Relinquishment Program Funds
Reallocation

Background

As part of the Budget Act of 2022 (Assem. Bill 178; Stats. 2022, ch. 45), the Legislature appropriated \$40 million in one-time funding to the Judicial Council to support court-based firearm relinquishment programs. The purpose of the program is to “ensure the consistent and safe removal of firearms from individuals who become prohibited from owning or possessing firearms and ammunition pursuant to court order.”¹

This funding established, on a one-time basis, the first state budget funded firearms relinquishment program specifically for the courts in California. Under this program, courts and law enforcement work to ensure that firearms are relinquished by individuals who currently own

¹ Stats. 2022, ch. 45, item 0250-001-0001, provision 11,
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB178 (as of Sept. 18, 2025).

firearms but have become prohibited from doing so. Since September 2022, thirteen courts were awarded funding in three separate Requests for Proposals (RFP) cycles to support their firearm relinquishment programs. A total of \$28.5 million was allocated to these programs. In 2024, \$9.2 million unallocated program funding reverted to the state to assist with the statewide budget deficit. The bulk of the remaining funds are used by the Judicial Council for program implementation activities including contracting, data collection and reporting, training and technical assistance, and to support a program evaluation being conducted by the University of California at Davis, as required in the Budget Act of 2022.² Funding for this program must be spent or encumbered by June 30, 2026. As required by the Budget Act, the Judicial Council submitted annual program progress reports to the legislature in 2023, 2024, and 2025.³

Funding Availability and Resource Needs

To ensure that the funding was effectively utilized, Judicial Council staff surveyed all grantee courts to identify potential unspent funds remaining at the end of Fiscal Year 2024-25 and determine whether any current grantees needed, and able to utilize the unspent FRG funds.⁴ Judicial Council staff identified approximately \$750,000 that may be reallocated to courts who meet the eligibility requirements. The funding must be expended or encumbered by December 31, 2026. Encumbered funds must be fully expended by the end of the current contracts.⁵ Reallocating the unspent funds will enable courts to continue their important work while expending as much of the appropriation as possible before these funds revert to the state in December 2028.⁶

In response to the survey, six courts indicated their interest in additional funds. The courts requesting additional funds each submitted statements of work documenting their intended use of

² In February 2023, seven courts were awarded funding in Cycle 1. In July 2023, one court was awarded funding in Cycle 2. In December 2024, six courts were awarded funding in Cycle 3; however, one court withdrew from the program prior to the allocation of the funding. To encourage full utilization of program funds, the Judicial Council is identifying unspent project funds and is in the process of reallocating funding to awardee courts with demonstrated program need.

³ <https://courts.ca.gov/sites/default/files/courts/default/2024-12/lr-2023-allocation-of-funding-fy-2022-23-court-based-firearm-relinquishment-program.pdf>;

<https://courts.ca.gov/system/files/file/lr-2024-allocation-funding-fy-2023-24-court-based-firearm-relinquishment-program.pdf>;

<https://courts.ca.gov/system/files/file/lr-2025-report-firearms-relinquishment-grant-program-2024-25.pdf>

⁴ In May 2025, the Judicial Council transferred responsibility for the FRG program from the Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC) to Criminal Justice Services (CJS) consolidate the Judicial Council's firearms grants under one office

⁵ The expenditure timelines vary based on the RFP cycle in which the funding was award. Cycle 1 (5 courts) and Cycle 2 (1 court) must expend all funds by April 30, 2027. Cycle 3 must expend all funds by April 30, 2028.

⁶ In November 2024, the Judicial Council delegated authority to the Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee to reallocate and distribute any unspent funding allocated to any of the awarded courts in Cycles 1, 2, and 3 based on the same criteria established during the application period.

the funding, if awarded. The projected total request from these six courts is approximately \$2.7 million, exceeding the remaining unallocated funds.

Eligibility and selection criteria

Original criteria

- Courts must contract with at least one law enforcement agency located within the county for activities that cannot reasonably and safely be conducted by the court.
- At least 30 percent of the funding allocated to each court must be directed to law enforcement through contracts with the court.
- The selection process must consider statewide diversity in geographic location and court size.
- Priority must be given to firearm relinquishment activities related to civil court orders including domestic violence restraining orders and gun violence restraining orders.
- Priority must be given to courts with higher numbers of requests, per capita, for domestic violence restraining orders or gun violence restraining orders filed.

To be eligible for additional grant funding, the court must be compliant with their current contracting requirements.

Currently Funded Court Program Summaries (of those who requested reallocation funding)

1. Superior Court of Imperial County – The court, district attorney’s office, and Sheriff’s office expanded an existing program to ensure firearms compliance in all types of civil restraining orders, felony and misdemeanor cases that carry firearms prohibition, and cases involving mental health-related prohibitions.
2. Superior Court of Los Angeles County – Los Angeles county’s project has focused largely on the development of a new communication portal that allows the court to quickly notify all 88 law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles County of noncompliance with the firearm relinquishment requirement in DVRO cases as required under SB 320. The grant funds have also supported law enforcement partners, Los Angeles Sherriff’s Department and Los Angeles Police Department in relinquishment activities.
3. Superior Court of Orange County – Orange focused on establishing a new program that created new court procedures for reviewing firearms compliance for domestic violence restraining order cases, notifying the appropriate law enforcement agency when a restrained person is noncompliant, and working with law enforcement and community stakeholders on training related to firearms relinquishment.
4. Superior Court of San Mateo County – San Mateo focused their efforts on establishing procedures for reviewing firearms compliance in civil restraining order cases, notifying the appropriate law enforcement agency when a restrained person is noncompliant, helping with restraining orders in the self-help center and courtroom, and informing

community stakeholders on the program and its progress. They partnered with the district attorney's office who investigates court-referred cases when a prohibited person has not complied with the prohibition, obtains search warrants, and coordinate with other law enforcement in the county.

5. Superior Court of San Diego County – San Diego's project expanded an existing program to ensure firearms compliance in GVRO cases and worked with San Diego City Attorney's Office and local law enforcement to ensure firearms compliance in DVRO and other civil restraining order cases.
6. Superior Court of Sacramento County – The court and district attorney's office is working to expand an existing program focused on ensuring firearms compliance in criminal protective order matters. The program is going to establish a task force to address firearms relinquishment and provide training and education to stakeholders and the public.

Working Group Recommendation

Using the criteria outlined above, each court was scored based on their application materials. All courts proposed activities that focused on using funds in a way that directly supported firearms relinquishment activities. Most variation in scores were in the strength of the program activities. More points were awarded to courts where the activities focused on investing in the branch and where the work could be sustainable and replicable. For example, more points were awarded to the Superior Court of San Mateo as they proposed using their new funds to continue support of a commissioner and court staff. The Superior Court of Orange County also focused their funding on continuing their staffing and for training, in addition to expanding their work into criminal cases which will help fulfill new legislative requirements effective January 1, 2026, under SB 899. Finally, the Superior Court of Los Angeles planned to use their funding to continue maintaining their new portal for both criminal and civil cases. There was also variation in scores in response to the impact on a court if their request for additional funding was not granted. The response from Los Angeles was the strongest based on their reference to using additional funds to further support the court's portal to report noncompliance while the other courts provided vague responses or didn't directly state how their programs would be impacted. As a result, staff recommend funding Los Angeles scores highest, receiving 98 out of 100 points, however funding their application did not expend all \$750,000 funding. Tying for second place was Orange and San Mateo, both receiving 95 out of 100 points. As a result, the Firearms Relinquishment Grant Working Group recommend splitting the \$750,000 equally across the three courts.

Proposal Summaries

1. Superior Court of Imperial County – Proposes to use funds to purchase three secure firearm storage boxes for each vehicle of assigned district attorney investigators.
2. Superior Court of Los Angeles County – Proposes to use additional funds to continue funding court staff and to retain contractors who would maintain the civil and criminal portals used to communicate firearms noncompliance to law enforcement.
3. Superior Court of Orange County – Proposes to use additional funding to expand their current project to include criminal case types. They propose to focus on expanding and implementing policies and procedures for firearm relinquishment in criminal cases leveraging the current staff expertise and experience based on the focus on civil under SB 320 Funding will also allow for continued support of the law enforcement partner handling all firearms relinquishment non-compliance that is referred to them by the court through April 2027 and for additional court staff training.
4. Superior Court of San Mateo County – Proposes to continue funding law enforcement, Commissioner and staff for fifth year.
5. Superior Court of San Diego County – Proposes to increase and extend the funding of the subgrantee partners by 13 months. The focus would be on funding a second city attorney investigator who would investigate notices of noncompliance with a firearm or ammunition order that are referred to their office for initial investigation.
6. Superior Court of Sacramento County – Proposes to expand their partnerships to include a local law enforcement agency who would pursue noncompliance.

Conclusion

The Firearms Relinquishment Grant Working Group submits its recommendation to award Superior Courts of Los Angeles, San Mateo, and Orange counties \$250,000 each for review and approval, or selection of alternative option.