



Judicial Council of California

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**TRIBAL COURT–STATE COURT FORUM  
MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING WITH CLOSED SESSION  
(DRAFT)**

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June 11, 2026

12:15-1:15 p.m.

Zoom

**Members Present:** Hon. Abby Abinanti, Cochair, Hon. Shama Mesiwala, Cochair, Ms. Janet Bill, Ms. Laila DeRouen, Hon. Leonard Edwards, Hon. Michele Fahley, Hon. Benjamin Hanna, Mr. Christopher Haug, Hon. Patricia Lenzi, Ms. S. Lynn Martinez, Hon. Nicholas Mazanec, Hon. Dorothy McLaughlin, Hon. Karen Riess, Hon. Victorio Shaw, Hon. Gary Slossberg, Hon. Alison Tucher, Hon. Juan Ulloa, Hon. Rebecca Wightman, and Hon. Zeke Zeidler.

**Members Absent:** Hon. Yvette Ayala Henderson, Hon. Ana España, Hon. Devin Flesher, Hon. Jennifer Lee, Hon. Kristina Lindquist, Hon. April Olson, Hon. Stephen Place, Ms. Christina Snider-Ashtari, and Hon. Dean Stout.

**Others Present:** Ms. Vida Castaneda, Mr. Aaron Cook, Ms. Sarah Davis, Ms. Audrey Fancy, Ms. Anne Hadreas, Mr. Cyrus Ip, Ms. Merri Lopez-Keifer, Ms. Amanda Morris, Ms. Terrie L. Robinson, and Ms. Kristen Schmit.

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**OPEN MEETING**

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**Call to Order and Roll Call**

The chair called the meeting to order at 12:16 p.m. and took roll call.

**Approval of Minutes**

The advisory body reviewed and approved the minutes of the April 9, 2026, Tribal Court–State Court Forum meeting. Justice Shama Mesiwala moved to approve, and Judge Leonard Edwards seconded the motion.

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**DISCUSSION ITEMS (ITEMS 1–3)**

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**Item 1**

**Tribal Court-State Court Forum Ad Hoc Work Groups (No Action Required)**

(Facilitator: Ms. Vida Castaneda, Senior Analyst, Judicial Council of California, Center for Families, Children & the Courts)

Ms Vida Castaneda, on behalf of the ICWA ad hoc working group, provided members with an update on their education resources review project. Documents available on the California courts website involving ICWA inquiry that were previously identified as out of date have been

updated. The edited documents are currently under review and will be presented to committee members when they are completed.

Judge Gary Slossberg, on behalf of the Tribal Court Orders Enforcement ad hoc working group, provided committee members with an update on their ongoing projects. The group is actively developing a new standardized form for restraining orders across the state. This form would assist law enforcement to recognize tribal court orders. Plans to create an educational video for law enforcement are in process.

Ms. Terrie L. Robinson, on behalf of the DUI on Tribal Lands ad hoc working group, informed committee members of their plan to collect data on how tribes are currently handling DUIs on tribal lands. The group drafted a survey to gather this information and intend to mail it to tribal leaders in California. The survey and cover letter were reviewed by committee members, and a vote was taken to approve distribution. The motion passed with no objections or abstentions.

## **Item 2**

### **Center for Indigenous Law & Justice (No Action Required)**

Presenter: Ms. Merri Lopez-Keifer, Executive Director, Center for Indigenous Law & Justice, University of California Berkely School of Law

Due to time constraints, this item was moved to the next Forum meeting on August 13, 2026.

## **Item 3**

### **Tribute to Judge Richard Blake**

The committee voted to add a third agenda item to the open portion of the meeting to pay tribute to Judge Richard Blake.

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## **A D J O U R N M E N T**

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There being no further open meeting business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

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## **C L O S E D   S E S S I O N   ( C A L .   R U L E S   O F   C O U R T ,   R U L E   1 0 . 7 5 ( D ) ( 1 ) )**

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### **Approval of Minutes**

The advisory body reviewed and approved the closed session minutes of the April 9, 2026, Tribal Court–State Court Forum meeting. Justice Shama Mesiwala moved to approve, and Judge Patricia Lenzi seconded the motion. Ms. Laila DeRouen abstained from voting.

## **Item 1**

### **Tribal Nominations (Action Required)**

Members discussed and approved updated nominations processes for tribal judge positions on the Forum.

***Action: Members voted to approve an updated nominations process for tribal positions on the Forum outside of the open nominations period. Cochairs will give current Forum members 5 business days to provide input before making their final decision. Justice Shama Mesiwala moved to approve, and Judge Gary Slossberg seconded the motion. Judge Zeke Zeidler abstained from voting.***

Adjourned closed session at 1:16 p.m.

Approved by the advisory body on enter date.