



Judicial Council of California

455 Golden Gate Avenue · San Francisco, California 94102-3688

www.courts.ca.gov

REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Item No.: 25-005

For business meeting on December 12, 2025

Title

Administrative Director's Report

Report Type

Information

Submitted by

Michelle Curran

Administrative Director

Date of Report

December 8, 2025

Contact

Tina Carroll, 415-865-4242

tina.carroll@jud.ca.gov

Executive Summary

The following information outlines some of the many activities staff are engaged in to further the Judicial Council's strategic goals and priorities for the judicial branch. The report focuses on action since the council's meeting on October 24, 2025, and is exclusive of items on the December business meeting agenda.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Beyond the Bench Conference.....	3
Judicial Branch Education	3
Legislative Advocacy and Outreach	3
Power of Democracy Civic Learning Outreach.....	3
Public Invitation to Comment on Court Rules Proposals (Winter Cycle).....	3
New and Revised Court Forms	4
Court Facilities.....	4
Competency to Stand Trial Web Resource	4
Statewide Information Technology Disaster Recovery Exercise	4
Virtual Customer Service Center Intelligent Chatbot Pilot Program.....	4
Pretrial Release Program.....	4
Judicial Resources and Technical Assistance Program	5
Labor and Employee Relations.....	5
Justice System Partner Collaboration	5
Advisory Bodies.....	5
Judicial Council Staffing Metrics	8
Judicial Appointments and Vacancies Report	10

Beyond the Bench Conference

Beyond the Bench—a multi-disciplinary statewide conference brought together more than 1000 participants focused on supporting children, youth, and families in the California court system. A total of 75 educational sessions addressed core legal issues in juvenile dependency and delinquency cases and crossover legal issues between juvenile and other legal areas, including domestic violence, tribal court–state court jurisdiction, mental health, and trauma-informed practice. This year’s conference was the first since 2019. Participants included judges, court professionals, attorneys, social workers, probation officers, agency leaders, students, Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteers, mental and behavioral health specialists, and court users who shared their lived experience.

Judicial Branch Education

In addition to the Beyond the Bench conference, more than 45 education programs and resource tools were created, updated, or delivered for judicial officers, court personnel, and justice system partners during this reporting period.

- Training programs included the Appellate Justice Institute and Appellate Staff Institute, Video Remote Interpreting Training for Court Interpreters, a presentation on Proposition 36 Implementation at the annual meeting of the California State Association of Counties, and workshops as part of the national Judges and Psychiatrist Leadership Initiative.
- Distance education programs included videos and podcasts on unlawful detainer basics, resist/ refuse in custody cases, enhancing judicial efficiency with AI powered legal research tools, and cybersecurity webinars and workshops.
- Publication updates included the pretrial diversion benchguide.

Legislative Advocacy and Outreach

- Visits for 11 legislators and their legislative staff to courthouses within their constituencies were coordinated with the Superior Courts of Los Angeles, Napa, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Sonoma Counties.
- At a joint informational hearing of the Senate Judiciary and Health Committees, Judge Scott Herin and staff of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County presented testimony on the role of the court in the Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment (CARE) Act process.

Power of Democracy Civic Learning Outreach

Classroom visits were coordinated for several judges participating in the *Judges in the Classroom* program at schools in Imperial County and Kern County.

Public Invitation to Comment on Court Rules Proposals (Winter Cycle)

Nine new rules proposals were posted to the California Courts website, at www.courts.ca.gov/policyadmin-invitationstocomment.htm. The proposals include:

- *Civil Practice and Procedure*: Enforcement of Judgment and Wage Garnishment Forms to implement Assembly Bill (AB) 774, Name Change and Gender Change Rules and Forms, and Guidelines for Adult Collaborative Treatment Courts;
- *Criminal Procedure*: Rule and Form Revisions related to the Racial Justice Act and Advisements on the Felony Plea Form;
- *Juvenile Law*: Update to Racial Justice Act Forms;
- *Mental Health Law*: Implementation of CARE Act Legislation; and
- *Access and Fairness*: Gender Inclusivity of Juror Identification and Juror Questionnaires (implementation of AB 1899).

New and Revised Court Forms

Two hundred and thirty new and revised court forms approved by the Judicial Council at its business meetings on July 12, 2024, and October 24, 2025, were shared with trial and appellate courts, with an effective date of January 1, 2026.

Court Facilities

Twenty-one real estate transactions were completed, including easements, renewal/extensions, and leasing/licensing amendments in 12 counties. As of December 2025, there are 780 court facility modifications in progress at an estimated cost of \$396 million.

Competency to Stand Trial Web Resource

A Competency to Stand Trial web resource was made available for court staff and court-appointed evaluators to assist in handling adult evaluations under Penal Code section 1368 et. seq. by providing information, learning materials, and training opportunities.

Statewide Information Technology Disaster Recovery Exercise

The annual information technology disaster recovery exercise was conducted—testing infrastructure, network services, and branchwide court applications.

Virtual Customer Service Center Intelligent Chatbot Pilot Program

The Virtual Customer Service Center Intelligent Chatbot was launched for the Superior Courts of Sierra (name change, small claims, and traffic case types) and Sacramento Counties (name change and traffic case types), bringing to 11 the total number of courts participating in the pilot phase.

Pretrial Release Program

A site visit was conducted by staff to the Superior Court of Contra Costa County and the Contra Costa Probation Department to observe pretrial operations, and a meeting was held with the Probation Department on the Community Corrections Performance Incentives Act (Senate Bill 678).

Judicial Resources and Technical Assistance Program

A review of juvenile case files was conducted at the Superior Courts of Santa Clara and San Diego Counties to identify legal issues and training needs. Reviews are conducted for all trial courts on a rotating basis.

Labor and Employee Relations

Labor negotiations assistance was provided to 29 trial courts, including side letter negotiations, impact bargaining, and successor memoranda of understanding negotiations. Additional support was provided on 34 labor and employee-related matters.

Justice System Partner Collaboration

- *Proposition 36 (Homelessness, Drug Addition, and Theft Reduction Act)*: A meeting was convened with the California Public Defenders Association and California District Attorneys Association to discuss issues related to indigent defense and Proposition 36 implementation.
- *California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation*: A meeting was held with Department representatives on record exchange and changes related to resentencing (Penal Code Section 1172.1).
- *Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)*: A meeting was held on data exchange and court/DMV communication.
- *All Rise (formerly National Association of Drug Court Professionals)*: A meeting was convened to discuss the organization's findings following site visits with collaborative court programs that received technical assistance as part of the All Rise federal grants program.

Advisory Bodies

The following [advisory bodies](#) convened since the October 2025 business meeting:

1. Administrative Presiding Justices Advisory Committee
2. Appellate Advisory Committee
3. Center for Judicial Education and Resources Advisory Committee
4. Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee
5. Court Executives Advisory Committee
6. Criminal Law Advisory Committee
7. Data Analytics Advisory Committee
8. Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee
9. Information Technology Advisory Committee
10. Remote Access to Electronic Court Records Working Group
11. Shriver Civil Counsel Act Implementation Committee
12. Traffic Advisory Committee
13. Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee
14. Trial Court Facility Modification Advisory Committee
15. Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee
16. Tribal Court–State Court Forum

Meeting Details

Administrative Presiding Justices Advisory Committee

- Received updates on appellate court education, human resources, technology services, and budget.

Appellate Advisory Committee

- Considered appellate rule and form changes for the winter cycle in relation to the Racial Justice Act.

Center for Judicial Education and Resources Advisory Committee

- Discussed cross assignment courses to increase access and fairness as well as the proposal to amend California Rules of Court, rule 10.465 education requirements and recommendations for justices, judges, and subordinate judicial officers on fairness and access.

Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee

- *Racial Justice, Equity, and Inclusion Subcommittee*: Discussed a work plan to advance recommendations outlined in the April 2025 report to the Judicial Council.
- *Proposition 36 Workgroup*: Assisted in the development of a legislatively mandated statewide survey on Proposition 36 implementation.

Court Executives Advisory Committee

- Held a nonpublic joint meeting with the Executive Committee of the Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee.

Criminal Law Advisory Committee

- *Pretrial Policy and Data Subcommittee*: Planned the upcoming year's goals based on the approved annual agenda, which include creating procedures for optional affordable bail determinations and developing guidance on current pretrial release processes.

Data Analytics Advisory Committee

- Received updates on the Judicial Workload Study, data dashboards, and a budget change concept proposal for data analytics.
- Welcomed two new members from the Superior Courts of Orange and Ventura Counties.

Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee

- Reviewed rules and forms proposals on the Racial Justice Act.
- Reviewed proposals to:
 - Amend rules 5.215 and 5.230 to align with AB 1974 (Stats. 2024, ch 303), which added advanced training requirements for child custody investigators and evaluators under Family Code section 1816; and
 - Revise summons forms to align with AB 1297 (Stats. 2025, ch 48), which amended Family Code section 2040 to require that the automatic temporary restraining orders on the summonses prohibit parties from allowing an insurance plan to lapse for nonpayment of premiums or failing to renew insurance until further order of the court.

Information Technology Advisory Committee

- Continued discussion on the 2026 annual agenda.

Remote Access to Electronic Court Records Working Group

- Discussed updates related to the working group’s legislative proposal.

Shriver Civil Counsel Act Implementation Committee

- Reviewed applications for 2026–2029 grant cycle.

Traffic Advisory Committee

- Developed and recommended adopting the Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules, 2026 Edition: Traffic, Boating, Forestry, Fish and Game, Public Utilities, Parks and Recreation, Business Licensing (Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedules).
- Previewed the committee’s annual agenda for 2026.

Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee

- Approved the fiscal year 2025–26 budget allocation of \$7 million for increased transcript rates.
- Approved the final year-end fund balance adjustment for fiscal year 2024–25 to comply with the statutory fund balance cap. This is the last step in the process to determine the final 2025–26 allocations to trial courts.
- Approved an update to the fiscal year 2025–26 Funding Methodology Subcommittee’s annual workplan to include a reevaluation of the existing court-appointed dependency counsel allocation methodology at the direction of the Judicial Council.
- Approved the committee’s annual agenda for 2026 for council consideration.

Trial Court Facility Modification Advisory Committee

- Authorized expenditures of \$14,147,122 and an additional \$342,707 for security-related projects.
- Approved the use of Priority 2 facility modifications over \$100K Budget to replace flex line connectors rated “poor” for a total cost to the Facility Modification Program budget of \$2,244,643.
- Received updates on fiscal year 2027–28 budget change concepts, court-funded requests, sustainability updates, and facilities maintenance performance.
- Approved the draft 2026 annual agenda and meeting schedule.

Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee

- Held a nonpublic joint meeting with the Executive Committee of the Court Executives Advisory Committee.

Tribal Court–State Court Forum

- Participated in the Tribal Advisory Committee and Tribal Consultation quarterly meeting convened by the California Department of Social Services.

Judicial Council Staffing Metrics

As of December 1, 2025

STAFFING	Audit Services	Executive Office	Governmental Affairs	Public Affairs	Leadership Support Services	Legal Services	Center for Families, Children and the Courts	Center for Judicial Education & Resources	Criminal Justice Services	Information Technology	Research, Analytics, and Data	Branch Accounting & Procurement	Budget Services	Facilities Services	Human Resources	Judicial Council
Authorized Position (FTE)	14.00	13.00	12.00	8.00	85.00	62.00	82.50	57.50	34.00	215.00	24.00	155.00	33.00	147.00	61.00	1003.00
Filled Authorized Position (FTE)	11.00	11.00	11.00	7.00	72.00	47.50	74.00	50.00	27.00	138.00	17.00	144.00	25.00	130.00	54.00	818.50
Headcount - Employees	11	11	11	7	73	48	74	50	27	138	17	144	25	130	54	820.00
Vacancy (FTE)	3.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	13.00	14.50	8.50	7.50	7.00	77.00	7.00	11.00	8.00	17.00	7.00	184.50
Vacancy Rate (FTE)	21.4%	15.4%	8.3%	12.5%	15.3%	23.4%	10.3%	13.0%	20.6%	35.8%	29.2%	7.1%	24.2%	11.6%	11.5%	18.39%
Judicial Council Temp Employee (909)	0	3	0	0	0	1	5	0	8	1	0	0	0	0	1	19.00
Employment Agency Temporary Worker (FTE)	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	8.00
Contractors (FTE)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	38.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	41.60
TOTAL WORKFORCE (based on FTE, 909s, Agency Temps & Contractors)	11.00	14.00	11.00	7.00	74.00	48.50	81.00	51.00	35.00	177.00	21.60	144.00	25.00	130.00	57.00	887.10

See the following page for definition of terms.

Staffing Category	Definition
Authorized Position (FTE)	All regular ongoing positions approved in the Budget Act for that year. The number is based on the position's approved full-time equivalency.
Filled Authorized Position (FTE)	The number of authorized positions filled based on the employee's full-time equivalency.
Headcount	The actual count of persons employed by the Judicial Council, regardless of FTE. This number could be more than the FTE count due to part-time employees being counted as "1." This count does not include Judicial Council Temporary Employees (909) or Employment Agency Temporary Workers.
Vacancy (FTE)	The number of authorized positions minus the number of filled authorized positions.
Vacancy Rate (FTE)	The number of authorized positions divided by the number of vacant authorized positions, excluding temporary employees ("909"-funded employees). See Judicial Council Temporary Employees, below.
Judicial Council Temporary Employees (909)	An employee whose salary is not funded through the Budget Act and who may receive benefits if employed at least half-time and the term of employment is for more than six months. A 909 position is categorized by the Office of the State Controller as a temporary position used in the absence of an authorized position. 909 positions may be occupied by regular full-time employees because of the unavailability of an authorized vacant position. Types of 909 Temporary Employees include retired annuitants, who are hired by their former employer or by another employer that participates in the same retirement system as the former employer. This includes a former participant in a state retirement system who has previously retired and who is currently receiving retirement benefits. Temporary: Employees employed on a temporary basis; they do not receive full benefits (but do receive CalPERS retirement service credit).
Employment Agency Temporary Workers (FTE)	Workers from/employees of an employment agency who provide short-term support for six months or less.
Contractor (FTE)	Individuals augmenting the work of the organization and providing services for a limited period (one year or less) or on a specific project, where a particular skill set is required that is either (1) not within an existing classification and/or job description, or (2) where recruitment issues require the use of a contractor.
Full-Time Equivalency (FTE)	The number of total maximum compensable hours designated in a year divided by actual hours worked in a year. For example, the work year is defined as 2,080 hours; one employee occupying a paid full-time job all year would consume one FTE. One employee working for 1,040 hours each year would consume 0.5 FTE.
Time Base	Full time: Employee is scheduled to work 40 hours per week. Receives full benefits. Part time: Employee is scheduled to work less than 40 hours per week. Employees who work more than 20 hours per week receive full benefits. Intermittent: Employee has no established work schedule and works on an as-needed basis that varies from one pay period to the next. Eligibility for certain benefits may be limited for these employees.
Regular Employee	Commonly referred to as "permanent employees." They receive full benefits.
Limited Term	A position that is funded through the Budget Act with a specific end date. The position is counted as an authorized position. Employees in limited-term positions may be regular or temporary.

Judicial Appointments and Vacancies Report

New Judicial Appointments

The Governor made 21 new judicial appointments since October 22, 2025:

Superior Courts: Fresno (1), Kings (1) Los Angeles (4), Mendocino (1), Monterey (1), Orange (2), Riverside (2), Sacramento (1), San Francisco (1), San Mateo (1), Santa Clara (1), Shasta (1), Solano (1), Stanislaus (1), Sutter (1), Tulare (1).

Judicial Vacancy Roster Report

Number of judgeships authorized, filled, and vacant as of December 1, 2025

Type of Court	Number of Courts	Number of Judgeships				
		Authorized	Filled	Vacant	Filled (Last Month)	Vacant (Last Month)
Supreme Court	1	7	6	1	6	1
Courts of Appeal	6	106	98	8	98	8
Superior Courts	58	1,755	1,711	44	1,708	47
All Courts	65	1,868	1,815	53	1,812	56

Judicial Vacancies: Supreme Court

	Vacancies	Reason for Vacancy	Justice to be Replaced	Last Day
Supreme Court	1			
		Retired	Hon. Martin J. Jenkins	10/31/2025
TOTAL SUPREME COURT VACANCIES	1			

Judicial Vacancies: Courts of Appeal

Appellate District	Vacancies	Reason for Vacancy	Justice to be Replaced	Last Day
1st District	1			
Division Four		Elevated	Hon. Tracie L. Brown	04/07/2023
2nd District	1			
Division Two		Retired	Hon. Judith Ashmann-Gerst	09/30/2025
3rd District	1			
Third Appellate District		Elevated	Hon. Laurie M. Earl	07/10/2023
4th District	3			

Division One		Retired	Hon. Richard D. Huffman	07/01/2025
Division Three		Retired	Hon. Kathleen E. O'Leary	07/31/2025
Division Three		Retired	Hon. Thomas M. Goethals	03/01/2025
5th District	1			
Fifth Appellate District		Retired	Hon. M. Bruce Smith	06/30/2025
6th District	1			
Sixth Appellate District		Retired	Hon. Patricia Bamattre-Manoukian	04/30/2025
TOTAL APPELLATE COURT VACANCIES	8			

Judicial Vacancies: Superior Courts

County	Vacancies	Reason for Vacancy	Judge to be Replaced	Last Day
Alameda	1			
		Retired	Hon. Jo-Lynne Q. Lee	06/27/2025
Contra Costa	3			
		Retired	Hon. Charles B. Burch ¹	11/04/2025
		Retired	Hon. Charles S. Treat	10/03/2025
		Retired	Hon. Patricia M. Scanlon	05/01/2025
Fresno	1			
		Elevated	Hon. Arlan L. Harrell	08/07/2025
Humboldt	1			
		Retired	Hon. Joyce D. Hinrichs	01/09/2025
Kings	1			
		Retired	Hon. Michael J. Reinhart	09/07/2025
Lake	1			
		Retired	Hon. Andrew S. Blum	07/08/2025
Los Angeles	16			
		Retired	Hon. Thomas C. Falls	09/30/2025
		Retired	Hon. Robert S. Wada	08/11/2025
		Retired	Hon. Christopher G. Estes	08/01/2025
		Retired	Hon. Mark E. Windham	08/01/2025
		Retired	Hon. Stuart M. Rice	07/28/2025
		Retired	Hon. Ana Maria Luna	07/18/2025

¹ Highlighting indicates retirement since the last report.

County	Vacancies	Reason for Vacancy	Judge to be Replaced	Last Day
		Retired	Hon. Sanjay T. Kumar	07/15/2025
		Retired	Hon. Jacqueline H. Lewis	07/10/2025
		Retired	Hon. Patrick T. Madden	07/01/2025
		Retired	Hon. John J. Kralik	06/29/2025
		Retired	Hon. Scott T. Millington	05/15/2025
		Retired	Hon. Juan Carlos Dominguez	05/09/2025
		Elevated	Hon. Armen Tamzarian	05/07/2025
		Elevated	Hon. Mark K. Hanasono	05/07/2025
		Retired	Hon. Craig J. Mitchell	05/01/2024
		Retired	Hon. Dianna J. Gould-Saltman	03/01/2024
Madera	1			
		Retired	Hon. Brian Austin	09/05/2025
Mendocino	1			
		Retired	Hon. Clayton L. Brennan	10/31/2025
Placer	1			
		Retired	Hon. Alan V. Pineschi	10/01/2025
Sacramento	1			
		Retired	Hon. Maryanne G. Gilliard	08/15/2025
San Bernardino	2			
		Elevated	Hon. Corey G. Lee	08/07/2025
		Retired	Hon. David S. Cohn	06/29/2025
San Diego	1			
		Retired	Hon. Timothy B. Taylor	09/22/2025
San Francisco	1			
		Retired	Hon. Andrew Y.S. Cheng	08/04/2025
San Joaquin	2			
		Retired	Hon. Lauren P. Thomasson	11/05/2025
		Retired	Hon. Barbara A. Kronlund	11/01/2025
San Mateo	1			
		Retired	Hon. V. Raymond Swope	08/06/2025
Santa Barbara	1			
		Resigned	Hon. Michael J. Carrozzo	09/09/2025
Santa Clara	3			
		Retired	Hon. Thang Nguyen Barrett	09/09/2025

County	Vacancies	Reason for Vacancy	Judge to be Replaced	Last Day
		Retired	Hon. Julianne Sylva	04/18/2025
		Retired	Hon. Drew C. Takaichi	04/15/2025
Shasta	1			
		Retired	Hon. Monique D. McKee	08/29/2025
Stanislaus	1			
		Deceased	Hon. Shawn D. Bessey	05/01/2025
Tulare	1			
		Retired	Hon. Juliet L. Boccone	09/03/2025
Tuolumne	1			
		Retired	Hon. Kevin M. Seibert	10/10/2025
Ventura	1			
		Deceased	Hon. Ryan J. Wright	09/24/2025
TOTAL TRIAL COURT VACANCIES	44			
STATEWIDE TOTAL	53			

Number of Judgeships Authorized, Filled, and Vacant: November 2023–November 2025

	Superior Courts				Courts of Appeal			
Month	Authorized	Filled	Vacancy	Vacancy Rate	Authorized	Filled	Vacancy	Vacancy Rate
Nov-23	1,755	1,662	93	5.3%	106	99	7	6.6%
Dec-23	1,755	1,673	82	4.7%	106	98	8	7.5%
Jan-24	1,755	1,666	89	5.1%	106	100	6	5.7%
Feb-24	1,755	1,665	90	5.1%	106	100	6	5.7%
Mar-24	1,755	1,651	104	5.9%	106	99	7	6.6%
Apr-24	1,755	1,639	116	6.6%	106	99	7	6.6%
May-24	1,755	1,636	119	6.8%	106	98	8	7.5%
Jun-24	1,755	1,650	105	6.0%	106	101	5	4.7%
Jul-24	1,755	1,647	108	6.2%	106	100	6	5.7%
Aug-24	1,755	1,653	102	5.8%	106	100	6	5.7%
Sep-24	1,755	1,652	103	5.9%	106	101	5	4.7%
Oct-24	1,755	1,666	89	5.1%	106	99	7	6.6%
Nov-24	1,755	1,666	89	5.1%	106	100	6	5.7%
Dec-24	1,755	1,675	80	4.6%	106	100	6	5.7%
Jan-25	1,755	1,680	75	4.3%	106	99	7	6.6%
Feb-25	1,755	1,684	71	4.0%	106	100	6	5.7%
Mar-25	1,755	1,686	69	3.9%	106	99	7	6.6%
Apr-25	1,755	1,679	76	4.3%	106	98	8	7.5%
May-25	1,755	1,685	70	4.0%	106	98	8	7.5%
Jun-25	1,756	1,690	65	3.7%	106	97	9	8.5%
Jul-25	1,756	1,680	76	4.3%	106	96	10	9.4%
Aug-25	1,756	1,690	66	3.8%	106	99	7	6.6%
Sep-25	1,756	1,686	60	3.4%	106	98	8	7.5%
Oct-25	1,756	1,710	46	2.6%	106	98	8	7.5%
Nov-25	1,755	1,711	44	2.5%	106	98	8	7.5%

Percentage of Superior Court Judgeships Vacant: November 2023–November 2025

