



Judicial Council of California

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www.courts.ca.gov

REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Item No.: 24-115

For business meeting on July 12, 2024

Title

Trial Courts: Public Notice of Court Closures
or Reduced Clerks' Office Hours

Agenda Item Type

Information Only

Submitted by

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Executive Summary

Government Code section 68106 directs (1) trial courts to notify the public and the Judicial Council before closing courtrooms or clerks' offices or reducing clerks' regular office hours; and (2) the council to post all such notices on its website and relay them to the Legislature. This report lists the latest court notices received by the council under this statutory requirement. Since the previous report, one superior court—the Superior Court of Glenn County—has issued a new notice.

Relevant Previous Council Action

Since the enactment of section 68106, 64 notices have been issued by courts under its requirements. The Judicial Council has posted such notices as they have been received.

Analysis/Rationale

Mandate in Government Code section 68106

In providing fee increases and fund transfers for the courts in the judiciary budget trailer bill in 2010 (Sen. Bill 857; Stats. 2010, ch. 720), the Legislature expressly declared its intention that trial courts remain open to the public on all days that are not judicial holidays and that access to court services for civil litigants be preserved to the extent practicable. Statements in Government Code section 68106 (see [Link A](#)) affirmed this intent, and the 2012 amendment of the statute strengthened it.

Section 68106 imposes the following requirements on trial courts and the Judicial Council:

- Trial courts must provide written notice to the public at least 60 days before closing any courtroom or clerk’s office, or reducing clerks’ office hours,¹ although “[n]othing in this section is intended to affect, limit, or otherwise interfere with regular court management decisionmaking, including calendar management and scheduling decisions.”²
- The trial court is to provide this notice “by conspicuous posting within or about its facilities, on its public Internet Web site, and by electronic distribution to individuals who have subscribed to the court’s electronic distribution service, and to the Judicial Council.”³
- The notice must describe the scope of the closure or reduction in hours, state the financial constraints or other reasons that make the closure or reduction necessary, and invite public comment.⁴ Courts are, expressly, not obligated to respond to comments received.⁵
- If a court changes its plan “as a result of the comments received or for any other reason” during the 60-day notice period, it must “immediately provide notice to the public by posting [and distributing] a revised notice” using the procedure previously described, including distribution to the council. The change in plan does not require notification, however, beyond the original 60-day period.⁶
- The Judicial Council must, within 15 days of receiving a notice from a trial court, “conspicuously” post the notice “on its Internet Web site” and forward a copy to the chairs and vice-chairs of both the Senate and Assembly Committees on the Judiciary, the chair of the Assembly Committee on Budget, and the chair of the Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review.⁷

Notices received from courts since last report

The Judicial Council has received one new notice (see [Attachment A](#)):

Superior Court of Glenn County. The court provided notice that, effective June 24, 2024, it will reduce its public service hours by one hour, from 8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m.,

¹ Gov. Code, § 68106(b)(1).

² *Id.*, § 68106(c).

³ *Id.*, § 68106(b)(1).

⁴ *Id.*, § 68106(b)(1) & (2)(A).

⁵ *Id.*, § 68106(b)(2)(B).

⁶ *Id.*, § 68106(b)(2)(A).

⁷ *Id.*, § 68106(b)(3).

because of a lack of resources. The court's reduced hours will continue until further notice, and its drop box will remain available for filings when the public counter is closed.

The notice detailed above has been added to the "Reduced Court Services" webpage (www.courts.ca.gov/12973.htm) of the California Courts website. The webpage contains a summary of section 68106 and all notices received from trial courts about closures of courtrooms or clerks' offices, or reductions in clerks' office hours. Judicial Council staff have also forwarded the notices from these courts to the designated legislative leaders.

Fiscal Impact and Policy Implications

Posting the notice to the California Courts website fulfills a legislative mandate and has no fiscal impact or policy implications.

Attachments and Links

1. Attachment A: Notice from the Superior Court of Glenn County, April 23, 2024
2. Link A: Gov. Code, § 68106,
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV§ionNum=68106

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Superior Court of California, County of Glenn

PUBLIC NOTICE OF REDUCTION IN COURT PUBLIC SERVICE HOURS

April 23, 2024

In accordance with California Government Code sec. 68106(b), this shall serve as notice of the Court's intention to reduce its public service hours from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., to 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., effective June 24, 2024 until further notice.* This reduction in hours will apply to both public window service and telephone service.

This reduction is being made primarily for the following reasons:

1. To provide time for needed training of court staff.
2. To provide needed desk time for staff to address backlogs in case processing.
3. To better align the Court's public service hours with the public service hours of other courts in this area/region of California.

As required by Gov. Code sec. 68106(b)(2)(A), the public has sixty (60) days from the date of this notice to provide written comments on the Court's plan to reduce its Clerk window and telephone public service hours. Comments may be submitted in writing either at the Court's public service windows, or by sending an email to courtadmin@glenncourt.ca.gov

*Note that the Court drop box remains available for filings when the public counter is closed.