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Judicial Council Approves Uniform Standards for Court Security Funding

San Francisco—In an action that may lead to improved safety in state trial courts, the Judicial Council of California has approved the state's first uniform standards for funding court security.

Chaired by Chief Justice Ronald M. George, the council unanimously approved the new standards, which are designed to improve the funding process for court security and create an objective process for apportioning state funds among the state's 58 trial courts. The standards are based on a number of factors, including the number of filings and judgeships in each trial court.

The uniform standards will guide funding for security for entrance screening stations, courtrooms; and holding cells; the internal transportation of defendants; and supervision of deputies.

To view the report by the council's Working Group on Court Security and the Administrative Office of the Courts, see www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/documents/reports/0405itemf.pdf.

OTHER ACTIONS

In other actions taken at its public business meeting last week, the 27-member Judicial Council:

- **New budget process:** Adopted a new State Appropriations Limit (SAL) allocation process and template as part of the judicial branch's annual budget procedures. The new process will (1) ensure distribution to courts of new monies to address mandated costs in a uniform and equitable manner; (2) provide for increases and adjustments in funding for areas of reimbursable costs; (3) provide for Judicial Council priorities; (4) allocate discretionary funds for the courts to use for operational needs; and (5) provide a means for addressing funding

(over)

needs for areas that have been priorities in the past. The report is available at: www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/documents/reports/0405iteme.pdf.

- **Court of Appeal building:** Approved the selection of the Santa Ana Civic Center as the site for a new Court of Appeal building for the Fourth Appellate District. The council selected the site after a comprehensive review of two competing site proposals from the City of Santa Ana and the University of California at Irvine. The staff recommendation to the council noted that both proposals were excellent, but concluded that the Santa Ana proposal “exceeds the site requirements in terms of economy of purchase price, provisions for parking, and flexibility for future expansion of the facility.” The report is available at: www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/documents/reports/0405itemd.pdf.
- **State council appointment:** Approved the appointment of Judge Rebecca S. Riley, of the Superior Court of Ventura County, to the California Council for Interstate Adult Offender Supervision. The primary role of Judge Riley will be to serve as a liaison between the state council and state judges in an educational capacity. The report is available at: www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/documents/reports/0405itemb.pdf.
- **Child support:** Adopted a rule of court that permits telephone appearances in interstate and intrastate child support cases in which the local child support agency is providing services. Accompanying forms also were adopted. The report is available at: www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/documents/reports/0405itema3.pdf.
- **Electronic documents:** Adopted a rule of court that authorizes parties to complex coordination proceedings or cases for which coordination is sought, to submit documents electronically to the chair of the Judicial Council. The report is available at: www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/documents/reports/0405itema2.pdf.

The Judicial Council also adopted new rules and forms relating to appellate procedure, domestic violence, child support, family law motions, probate, and traffic cases. It announced the recipients of the Ralph N. Kelps Awards, which honor individual court programs for improving the administration of justice. The announcement is at: (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/presscenter/newsreleases/nr21-05.pdf.)

In other action, council member Richard D. Huffman, associate justice of the Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District, Division One (San Diego), was honored for his longtime contributions to the state’s juvenile courts by the Juvenile Court Judges of California.

Council member Michael Nash, presiding judge of the Los Angeles Juvenile Court, noted that Justice Huffman is one of the few appellate court justices in California who serves on assignment in juvenile courts. He also serves as a presenter at juvenile court conferences

and chairs a Judicial Council committee that is seeking to improve the quality of representation for children and parents in the dependency court system.

The audiocast of the Judicial Council's meeting is at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courtadmin/jc/.

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The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.