



FRESNO SUPERIOR COURT



In the Service of Justice

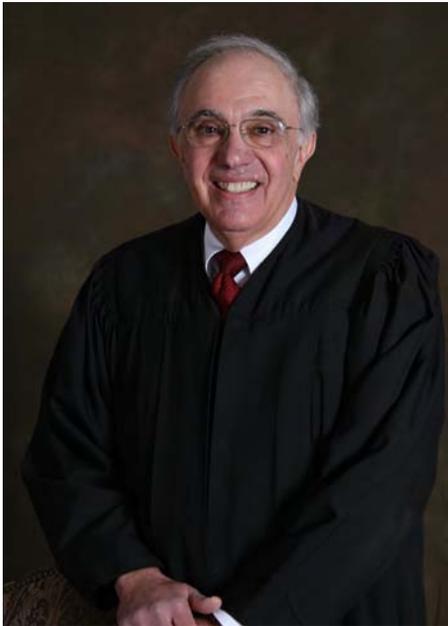
2006 Annual Report



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Welcome



At the end of my term as Presiding Judge, I submitted the following to the Superior Court Family. The thoughts and comments contained therein continue to reflect my views regarding the court and its future.

Dear Friends of the Court:

As the end of the year draws near and the privilege of serving as Presiding Judge comes to a close, I would like to thank everyone for your wonderful support and assistance.

A lot has transpired over the past two years and it would be too lengthy to recount all that has occurred. There have been many judicial retirements. Also, a large number of court personnel have retired. Sadly, some of our friends and colleagues have passed away. I considered whether or not to mention their names, but that is not necessary. We know who they are, and remember them in our own personal way. Nonetheless, the work of the court goes on, and will continue to do so, even when we are no longer with the court.

The future of the Fresno County Superior Court is very bright. Thanks to the hard work of many judges and administrators, a new facility at the Juvenile Justice Campus should be a reality in a few years. When that occurs, the "Justice" in that title will be realized.

Also, in the near future, the Sisk Building will be remodeled and retrofitted to accommodate sixteen new courtrooms for our civil cases, thus enabling our current courthouse to be dedicated to criminal matters. Ten new judgeships, and additional corresponding court personnel, are on the horizon. These are all exciting prospects, not only for the court, but also for the citizens of Fresno County.

In sum, the essence of this message is to simply extend a heartfelt thanks to each and everyone serving the Fresno County Superior Court. Many years ago, Alexander Hamilton wrote, "The ordinary administration of criminal and civil justice contributes more than any other circumstance to the people's affection, esteem, and reverence towards the government." Your excellent and dedicated work gives true meaning to this statement. I am certain that the Fresno County Superior Court will continue to be in excellent hands. Once again, thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward Sarkisian, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Edward Sarkisian, Jr.
2006 Presiding Judge

The Mission

The Superior Court Of California, County Of Fresno Will Serve The Community And Enhance Public Trust And Confidence In The Administration Of Justice By The Impartial And Timely Resolution Of Disputes, Ensuring Compliance With Court Directives, And By Fostering A Vital Court-Community Relationship.

Dear Friends,

It's been five years since the Superior Court has been able to present its annual report. In the midst of the state's fiscal crisis in 2002, we were forced to curtail many non-mandated court activities and programs to maintain adequate funding for our core mandated functions. Among the curtailments was the production of the annual report.

Fortunately, the fiscal crisis eventually came to an end, and we've been able to restore many activities and resume expanding the services we offer to the public. We again have the resources to produce our annual report, and are pleased to provide an update of what we have accomplished in the past year.

The year 2006 presented new opportunities for the Fresno Superior Court to enhance access to justice for all court users. Service to the public is a top priority for the court. In 2003, and due to the state's financial crises, the court was forced to reduce the clerk's public service office hours as well as close two outlying courts in the communities of Sanger and Selma. After three years of reduced operations, the court was able to restore the public service hours at the clerk's office and to reopen the two outlying courts. While the Sanger Court reopened in 2005, the Selma Division reopened in a new and much improved court facility in 2006, thus providing greater access to its citizenry.

Another facility improvement that enhanced access to the court was the remodeling of the Traffic Department, which resulted in nearly doubling the number of public service windows. For customer convenience, exterior walk-up windows were also installed and have proved to be hugely successful.

Other services restored or expanded this year include reaching out to the self-represented litigants in our rural communities. The Self-Help Center restored its mobile service center and instituted a toll-free phone number that anyone within the county can call to speak with someone at the Self-Help Center. Another growth opportunity occurred in our Youth Court. The number of students and school sites participating in the program nearly doubled. Sessions were held at Clovis, Edison, Fresno, Hoover, McLane and Sunnyside High Schools with 107 students participating.

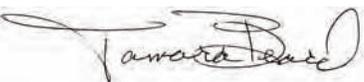
Many of these programs are funded by various grants, which has become an important part of our budget. The 2006 restoration of the court's full-time grant writer enabled us to make the maximum use of these revenue sources. New grants allowed the court to augment the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) program, giving civil and family law litigants more options in settling their cases faster, more cost effectively, and with greater satisfaction. Additionally, other grant funding has allowed the courts to expand services and outreach to litigants who are representing themselves in court on family law cases.

Through grant funding from the National Historical Publication and Records Commission, the court is partnering with the Fresno Historical Society to conserve 25,000 case documents dating from 1870 to 1911. With the participation of college interns, who will assist with the preservation work as part of their archivist training, this project truly bridges the past and the future. New grant funding will also allow the court to invest in new technology to keep pace with a growing service demand while continually upgrading services to court users.

At the same time we are growing and enhancing our services, our dedicated court staff deals with the daily challenges of operating 17 court locations. We have over 500 employees dispersed throughout Fresno County. Without the commitment to public service that our judges and staff bring to their jobs every day, and often under very challenging circumstances and conditions, our court system would not be able to achieve the excellence we have accomplished.

I am proud of everyone who works at the Fresno Superior Court, and look forward to working with them during the coming year on the many challenges facing our court.

Sincerely,



Tamara L. Beard
Court Executive Officer



Leadership

Committing to the highest ethical standard

2006 Executive Committee



Pictured from left to right, front row: Hon. Gary R. Orozco; Hon. Hilary A. Chittick, Assistant Presiding Judge; Hon. Edward Sarkisian, Jr., Presiding Judge; Hon. Donald R. Franson, Jr. Back row: Hon. Robert H. Oliver; Hon. Mark W. Snuffer; Hon. Gary D. Hoff; Tamara L. Beard, Court Executive Officer. Not pictured: Hon. Brad R. Hill.

Goals

- Enhanced or Optimized:**
- Public confidence in the court
 - Independence of court as a co-equal branch of government
 - Public access to the courts
 - Jury management
 - Case and calendar management
 - Cooperation with other justice system agencies

Core Values

Ensure and maintain justice according to the law.
Protect public trust and confidence.
Protect the independence of the judiciary.
Provide equal access to the court.
Commit to the highest ethical standard.
Promote efficient administration of justice.
Ensure courtesy to, respect for, and dignity of, the individual.

2006 Committees

Access to Justice/Public Outreach

Hon. Adolfo M. Corona, Chair
Hon. Nancy A. Cisneros
Hon. Jonathan B. Conklin
Hon. Gary D. Hoff
Hon. Dale Ikeda
Hon. Kimberly J. Nystrom-Geist
Hon. Rosendo Peña, Jr.

Facilities

Hon. Brad R. Hill, Chair
Hon. Donald S. Black
Hon. Donald R. Franson, Jr.
Hon. R. L. Putnam
Hon. Phillip A. Silva
Hon. Denise Whitehead

Library

Hon. Hilary A. Chittick, Chair
Hon. Brad R. Hill
Hon. Franklin Jones
Hon. Rosendo Peña, Jr.

Pro Tem Oversight

Hon. M. Bruce Smith, Chair
Hon. Glenda S. Allen-Hill
Hon. Arlan A. Harrell
Hon. Timothy Kams
Hon. Kimberly J. Nystrom-Geist
Hon. James M. Petrucelli
Hon. Jamileh L. Schwartzbart

ADR Oversight

Hon. Mark W. Snauffer, Chair
Hon. Gary D. Hoff
Hon. Dale Ikeda
Hon. Stephen Kane

Judicial Education/NJO/Mentor Oversight

Hon. James R. Oppliger, Chair
Hon. Gary S. Austin
Hon. Jane Cardoza
Hon. Wayne R. Ellison
Hon. Alan M. Simpson
Hon. M. Bruce Smith
Hon. Martin C. Suits

Local Rules

Hon. Gary S. Austin, Chair
Hon. Jane Cardoza
Hon. W. Kent Hamlin
Hon. David C. Kalemkarian
Hon. Debra J. Kazanjian
Hon. R. L. Putnam
Hon. Houry A. Sanderson
Hon. Mark W. Snauffer
Hon. Denise Whitehead

Security

Hon. Gary R. Orozco, Chair
Hon. Jeff Bird
Hon. Brant L. Bramer
Hon. Wayne Ellison
Hon. Donald R. Franson, Jr.
Hon. Phillip A. Silva
Hon. Alan M. Simpson

Commissioner Evaluation

Hon. Gary D. Hoff, Chair
Hon. Carlos A. Cabrera
Hon. Jon Nick Kapetan
Hon. Debra J. Kazanjian
Hon. W. Kent Levis
Hon. James R. Oppliger
Hon. John F. Vogt

Jury Oversight

Hon. Robert H. Oliver, Chair
Hon. Donald S. Black
Hon. Gregory Fain
Hon. Jeff Hamilton
Hon. Franklin Jones
Hon. Mark W. Snauffer

Program Oversight

Hon. David A. Gottlieb, Chair
Hon. Jeff Bird
Hon. Nancy A. Cisneros
Hon. Adolfo M. Corona
Hon. Arlan A. Harrell
Hon. Timothy Kams
Hon. Jamileh L. Schwartzbart
Hon. John F. Vogt

Technology

Hon. R. L. Putnam, Chair
Hon. David A. Gottlieb
Hon. Jeff Hamilton
Hon. W. Kent Hamlin
Hon. David C. Kalemkarian
Hon. Gary R. Orozco
Hon. Houry A. Sanderson
Hon. M. Bruce Smith

LIAISONS, ADVISORS, AND TRUSTEES

Bench-Bar-Media

Hon. Stephen Kane

Facilities Foundation

Hon. Brad R. Hill, Advisor

Law Library Board of Trustees

Hon. W. Kent Levis, President
Hon. Gregory Fain, Vice President
Hon. Jane Cardoza
Hon. Jonathan B. Conklin
Hon. James Quaschnick, Retired Judge

2006 in Review

Ensuring and maintaining justice according to the law

JANUARY

Uniform Civil Filing Fees

On January 1st, a new statewide uniform civil filing fee structure went into effect, which applied to civil, small claims, family law and probate cases. The new structure streamlined and simplified the process for litigants, and standardized civil fees across the state for the purpose of uniformity and consistency.



Clerk's Office Hours Expanded

Service to the public is a top priority for the court. Due to the state's financial crises and its impact on the court's budget in 2003, it was necessary to reduce the clerk's public service office hours. After three years of reduced hours, the court was pleased to restore 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. public service hours at the clerk's office, effective January 3, 2006.

Mandatory Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Through continued improvements in case flow management, the Civil Division worked toward eliminating backlogs and increasing access. Effective January 1, 2006, the court issued a standing order that required all litigants to engage in some form of ADR. The court has long recognized the value of early case management intervention and the use of ADR options for acceptable and eligible cases. Through ADR, many cases are adjudicated earlier in the court process, saving litigants time and money, and reducing the court's workload.

APRIL

Court Opens Again

The Selma Division reopened for business on April 3rd, after state budget cuts forced the court to close at another location in June, 2003. The new facility was designed from the ground up to be efficient and accessible. The re-opening of the Selma Division provides residents with greater access to justice and allows the public to pay traffic fines, enroll in traffic school, and litigate limited civil and small claims actions. The Selma Division is also the center for all of the court's countywide fine collection activities.



The Hon. Edward Sarkisian, Jr., Adolfo M. Corona, Anthony Ishi and Brad R. Hill cut the ribbon at the grand opening festivities in Selma.

MAY



Expedited Family Law Process

In May, the Family Law Division implemented a readiness calendar. This new case management process applies to litigants seeking first-time child custody and visitation orders resulting in decreased time between referral and mediation. Upon initial filing, litigants are given a readiness hearing date within six weeks. At the readiness hearing, if custody or visitation is contested the parties are ordered to family mediation and given a return court date. As a result of this new process, the entire process from filing of the motion to a signed custody order is now between eight and ten weeks as compared to five to six months previously. By appearing at the readiness calendar, only those parties needing a mediation appointment are scheduled, thus minimizing the failures to appear and increasing the efficiency of the family court mediators.

JUNE



New Courthouse Construction Funded

In June, Governor Schwarzenegger approved \$61.327 million to fund the construction project for the Fresno Sisk Federal Courthouse renovation. Upon completion, it will serve as a Civil and Family Law Justice Center. There will be 16 courtrooms and ancillary services at this location, such as the self-help center, which will greatly improve the delivery of services to court users.

Additional Judgeships Approved

The Legislature approved 50 new judgeship positions statewide and Governor Schwarzenegger approved \$5.45 million in funding to support the establishment of these judgeship positions and support staff. Fresno Superior Court will receive four new judges in the summer of 2007.



The Year Continued

JULY

Fresno Takes the Lead in Statewide Computer Effort

On July 3rd, Fresno Superior Court was the first court in the state to implement the California Case Management System Version 2, or simply V2. The system is a collaborative effort between the AOC, courts and justice partners to implement a unified case management system. Version 2 is comprised of criminal and traffic cases. The long-term goal of the program is that, once implemented statewide, court staff and justice partners will have the ability to access any case filed anywhere in the state with the touch of a button. After six months of operation in Fresno, 96,793 cases had been entered into V2. Once fully implemented, this program will vastly improve the administration of justice statewide.



Traffic Public Service Windows Expanded

The Fresno Superior Court's Traffic Division is one of the busiest areas in the main courthouse. Although the number of traffic violators has greatly increased over the years, the physical layout of the traffic department remained constant for nearly 40 years, often resulting in long waiting lines for court



users. This year, the court was able to remodel and expand the traffic area, nearly doubling the number of public service windows. In addition, two exterior walk-up windows were installed. The exterior windows provide an even greater access for customers who do not need to go through the entrance screening at the courthouse. These physical improvements were completed on July 31st and have greatly improved the court's ability to provide services to the public.

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OCTOBER

Employee Training Day Reinstated

Helping employees to reach their full potential improves access to and delivery of justice. This year, the court was able to reinstate a training officer position, which developed and presented in-house training programs for employees on important topics such as: preventing sexual harassment, stress management, computer upgrades, and other specially tailored courses. The highlight of the training year was the Employee Training Day, a large-scale employee training program that had been on a four-year hiatus due to budgetary constraints. Four hundred thirty-seven employees attended the training day, which featured fourteen classes. These job and personal enrichment sessions were held on Columbus Day, a judicial



holiday when court employees are at work but the court itself is, by law, not open to the public. The goal is to help employees become the best-informed and most courteous staff of any court in California.



Facility Transfer

In the fall, the responsibility for maintenance and operations of the leased Kerman Court transferred from Fresno County to the state. Eventually all court facilities will become the state's responsibility.

Help Line

The court continued its ongoing efforts to reach out to customers navigating the court system without the aid of an attorney by instituting a toll-free number that anyone within the county can call to speak with someone at the Self-Help Center. The toll-free number is **866-665-2345** and services are available in both English and Spanish.

Grants

Promoting efficient administration of justice

Many of the grants the court obtained in 2006 increased access to the court for a wide variety of persons ranging from self-represented litigants to those predominantly speaking languages other than English. The programs and projects funded by these grants will advance the court's mission to serve the community and enhance trust and confidence in the administration of justice.

Self-Help Services

In 2006, ongoing grants were augmented with new grant funding for: additional attorney and examiner time to assist more litigants, a new toll-free phone

line linking litigants in remote areas of the county with the Self-Help Center as well as Spanish-speaking staff to support it, an English and Spanish public awareness campaign on self-help services, and the establishment of the San Joaquin Valley Pro Per Task Force to maximize regional self-help and access resources.



FRESNO SUPERIOR COURT
Self-Help Center • Centro de Recursos Legales



Connecting With Court Users

The Community Forum grant will allow the court to exchange information with targeted cultural, geographic, and user groups on existing and needed court services, as well as enhance ongoing communication and trust between the court and these stakeholders. This information will be valuable for enhancing services at the Spanish Self-Help Center, the Family Law Facilitator's Office, and the Family Law Information Center, all of which operate jointly as the "Self-Help Center" to offer a seamless delivery of services to self-represented litigants.

The court also received a

grant for an assessment, planning and implementation project to enhance its fines and fees collection program.

In 2006, the court actively collaborated with a number of Fresno County agencies such as Probation and Children's Mental Health for a two-year grant to adjudicate non-violent juvenile offenders with mental illness. The project will use a multidisciplinary approach to provide intensive case management services to youth with severe emotional disturbances, with the goal of reducing the number of days they spend in custodial facilities.

ADR

The court also obtained three grants to enhance the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program. These ranged from a community needs assessment to strategic planning, including the feasibility of implementing an early neutral evaluation component. Early case evaluation can provide litigants with a good indication of the relative strengths and weaknesses of their cases, in some instances facilitating settlement sooner in the litigation process. This could reduce litigation costs for court users and the justice system while making more efficient use of resources.

Proposals Submitted*	Proposals Approved*	Funding Requests*	Grants Funded as of 12/31/06*
17	13	\$1,585,027	\$1,487,483

*Includes collaborative grants with other agencies.

Through these and other renewable grant funding, the court continues to explore innovative projects and programs that augment the number and quality of services for court users.

Core Work

Protecting public trust and confidence

The Superior Court of California, County of Fresno has jurisdiction over all countywide criminal, civil, and juvenile cases except for matters that fall under the authority of federal law.

Civil

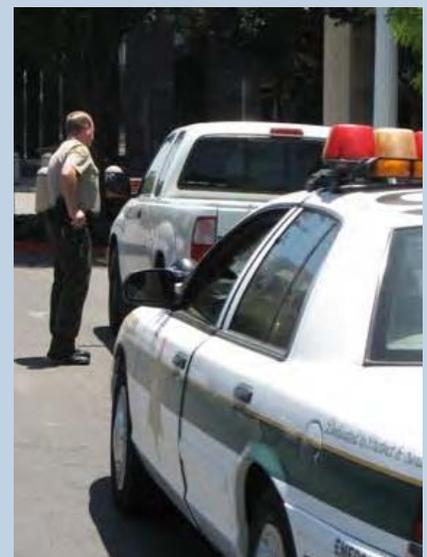
Civil cases are brought against individuals or organizations by other individuals, entities or organizations. In most civil cases, the plaintiff is seeking monetary damages although other remedies or court-ordered sanctions can be sought. Disputes in which the value exceeds \$25,000 are “unlimited civil” actions, while those in which the value is less are “limited civil” actions. Parties may resolve their dispute without going to court. The court offers various alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services to assist parties in reaching an agreement. Many of the ADR services are free of charge. Ninety-five percent of all civil cases are resolved without going to trial.



Criminal

Criminal cases range from relatively minor offenses, such as traffic infractions, to serious ones like robbery and murder. A criminal case typically begins when a person is arrested and/or a prosecutor files a formal charge. After filing criminal charges, the prosecution must prove to a judge or jury that the defendant is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. In 2006, there were more than 70,000 felony and misdemeanor case filings in Fresno County.

If a defendant is charged with a felony or misdemeanor and cannot afford to hire an attorney, the court may appoint one. State and local laws define crimes and specify a sentencing range. Generally, a misdemeanor is punishable by a year or less in a county jail facility, while felonies carry longer sentences and may be served in a state prison facility.

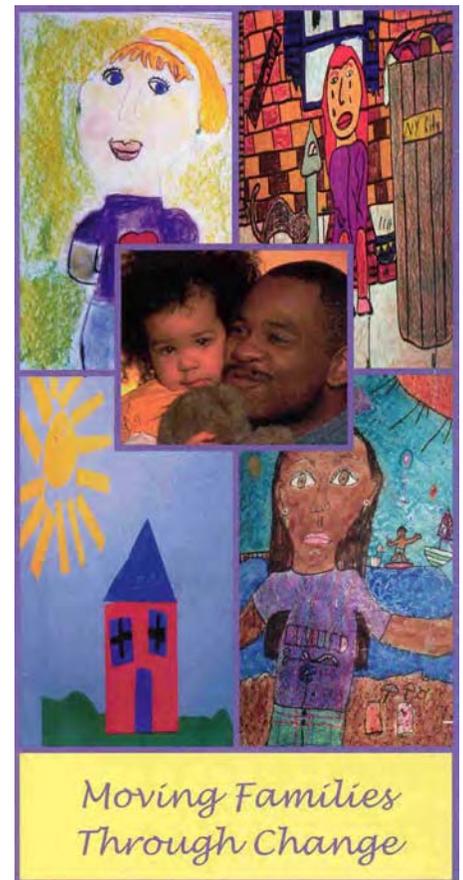
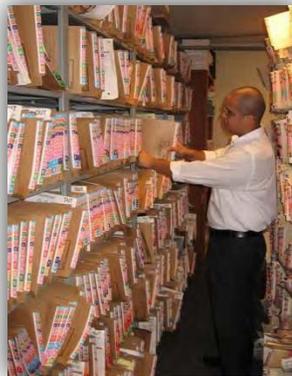


Traffic

Traffic Court cases involve all traffic infractions such as speeding, running red lights, driving without proof of insurance, etc. Non-traffic infraction cases involve various city municipal violations such as smoking in a prohibited area, pedestrian violations, bicycling on a sidewalk, and animal violations.

Family Law

Family Law cases are also “civil” cases. The court hears over 4,100 matters annually in dissolution, legal separation of spouses, child custody, visitation, child support, spousal support, division of marital property, and domestic violence petitions. In cases when parents cannot agree on a parenting plan, the parties are referred to Family Court Services for mediation. A parenting plan, also called a custody and visitation order, defines legal and physical custody, and a time share plan for the children. In 2006, there were 3650 mediations completed.



Juvenile Cases

Delinquency cases involve persons under 18 years of age who are accused of violating the law. If the allegations are found true, the court may order the juvenile to reside with his or her family under probation supervision, or place the child in a secure or unsecured facility. In determining an appropriate disposition, the court will consider the minor's age, prior criminal history, seriousness of the offense, and other factors.

Dependency cases involve allegations of child abuse, neglect or abandonment. Intervention through the court provides protection for the child or children in families in which the alleged abuse is occurring. The goal of the court is reunification with the family or a family member, but that is not always possible.

Probate

Cases include a variety of life-changing events from birth to death. These cases include **g u a r d i a n s h i p**, conservatorship, probate of wills, and creation and supervision of trusts. In guardianship matters, the court appoints someone to care for a person under the age of 18 or to manage the minor's estate. Adults who are unable to care for themselves may be appointed a conservator. Mental health cases involve danger to one's self, danger to others, grave disability due to a mental disorder, mental competency, and placement of people with developmental disabilities who are dangerous.



Small Claims

These cases involve disputes of not more than \$7,500, and can be resolved quickly and inexpensively. Attorneys do not represent the parties and the environment is less formal than in a traditional courtroom. In a small claims action, only the defendant can file an appeal of a judge's decision.

Access

Ensuring courtesy to, respect for, and dignity of the individual

Interpreter Services

Fresno County is one of the most diverse counties in the state, with 23 percent of the population being foreign born. The court is committed to providing meaningful access to justice for every person regardless of his or her fluency in English. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 44 percent of the county's population speaks a language other than English in the home. The significant amount of limited-English-proficient individuals, coupled with the number of different languages being spoken in Fresno, presents difficult challenges for the court. The Fresno Superior Court provides



interpreters to non-English speaking and limited speaking people in all criminal, traffic and juvenile cases for witnesses, victims and defendants. Furthermore, through grant funding the court is able to provide interpreters for indigent litigants in Family Law cases in which a

domestic violence restraining order is sought or issued. The court will provide an interpreter in other case types when one is available. Sixty-one interpreters, representing 37 languages, provided language services for our culturally diverse population in 2006. In that same year, interpreter services were provided in over 7,300 hearings. The most requested language

is Spanish. Complementing the services provided by interpreters in the courtroom are our bilingual court employees who assist customers at the counter or over the phone.

Fresno Superior Court has one of the highest overall usage rates of interpreters in the state. In the Central Valley, Fresno leads the area in the number of days of service for Spanish language interpreter services. For Hmong and Punjabi interpreter services, Fresno ranks 2nd and 4th, respectively, in the state for usage. Fresno also has the highest usage of Laotian interpreters in California.

Top Ten Languages Requested in Fresno County in 2006

1. Spanish
2. Hmong
3. Punjabi
4. American Sign Language
5. Cambodian
6. Laotian
7. Armenian
8. Arabic
9. Vietnamese
10. Mixteco

Helping Self-Represented Litigants

The Self-Help Center (SHC) offers no-cost legal information for self-represented litigants, enabling them to complete documents quickly, efficiently, and correctly. The SHC helps those litigants who choose to represent themselves in court, rather than have an attorney, with family law matters such as marriage dissolution, parentage, child support, and custody. Other services include assistance with probate guardianships, elder abuse cases, and restraining orders for domestic violence and civil harassment.

The SHC offers information through workshops, brochures, videos, and instruction packets. Knowledgeable staff members are available to help litigants understand materials and to review their completed court forms. There is no income eligibility requirement for services, which are available in English, Spanish, Hmong, and Arabic. While Self-Help Center staff members cannot represent individuals in court or give legal

advice, they can explain the court process and provide referrals to other agencies. This helps self-represented litigants better prepare for court appearances in order to resolve their cases faster.



To meet the growing demand for self-help services, the SHC implemented several program enhancements in 2006. Bilingual staff implemented on-site services in Selma and Kerman, where many customers are predominantly Spanish-speaking. The court augmented mobile services with a new, toll-free line that connects callers in any part of the county with the SHC. These enhancements contributed to the court's success in providing services to nearly 16,000 self-represented litigants in 2006.

After Criminal Traffic Infraction One-Stop Network (ACTION) Center

The legal process can be overwhelming and confusing for many people. Every courthouse is filled with individuals whose experience with the legal system has left them feeling lost, intimidated, and unsure where to turn for help. This confusion can lead to non-compliance and result in additional charges being filed. The ACTION Center provides immediate assistance to those convicted of traffic and criminal offenses to help them understand and comply with their court orders.



"The ACTION Center is a great program. They explain everything, give you directions to programs, and give you the tools to succeed."

Court user response to survey

At the Center, bilingual staff will:

- Explain court orders;
- Answer offender's questions;
- Tell offenders what to do next;
- Sign offenders up for programs; and,
- Set up installment payment plans and take payments.



The ACTION Center was implemented in 2000 and is a partnership between the Superior Court, the Probation Department, and the Auditor-Controller's Office. In 2006, over 25,000 offenders received services at the ACTION Center. Services are provided in English, Spanish, and Hmong.



Online Services

Besides finding a wealth of valuable information about the court, its locations and operations, the public can also take care of some court business online, saving individuals a trip to the courthouse. The Fresno Superior Court created its first web site in 1998. Since that time, the court has continually strived to improve and expand this site. Among other features,

the site provides general and specific court information, fee schedules, local and state forms, on-line payment of traffic fines and fees, civil law and motion tentative rulings, self-help links, local court rules, juror reporting instructions, human resources information, news releases, and grand jury reports.

Also found on the website is the "Court Connect" system that provides the ability to search for case information in civil, family law, probate, small claims, and unlawful detainer cases by person or business name, case number and case type. To access any of these services simply link to the court's website, www.fresnosuperiorcourt.org.



Clinics and Workshops

Family Law:

At the Self-Help Center, weekly clinics are available to assist the self-represented litigant to better understand the family law process and procedures on a variety of family law topics. Clinics are available in English and Spanish.

Guardianship:

Twice per month, the court offers a clinic for self-represented litigants seeking guardianship of a minor. These clinics are held in the court's Probate Division and are designed to discuss the procedures for obtaining guardianship, introduce forms, and explain the overall process.



Collaborative Justice

Providing equal access to the court

Fresno County's Collaborative Courts are part of an innovative, nationwide movement to solve the problem of repeat offenders. These courts are designed to target various types of recurring behavior, such as drug and alcohol addiction, and domestic abuse. Collaborative justice courts, also known as problem-solving courts, promote accountability by combining judicial supervision with treatment and other rehabilitation services that are rigorously monitored and focused on recovery.

The objective is to reduce recidivism, enhance community safety, save money through a reduction in jail and prison costs, and promote healthy families and productive citizens. Sentences imposed usually feature intensive judicial supervision, life skills development, drug and alcohol counseling, community service, and jail time.

Adult Drug Court seeks to halt the revolving door of addiction and arrest by linking adjudicated offenders to drug treatment and rigorous judicial oversight. The Drug Court model, which serves as the template for the newer collaborative courts, requires strict accountability, frequent court appearances, close

probation supervision, drug and alcohol testing, intense individual and group counseling, and graduated sanctions and rewards. Eligible offenders are those charged with non-violent offenses where the underlying cause of the criminality is substance abuse. Drug Court participants make frequent appearances before a judicial officer who takes an active role in monitoring their rehabilitation. There are three distinct programs operating within drug court: PC 1000, a diversion program targeting first time drug offenders; "Prop 36"; and, Post-Conviction Drug Court (PCDC). Cases meeting eligibility for probation under the guidelines set forth in Proposition 36

represent the bulk of cases appearing in drug court. In 2006, there were 377 narcotic offenders who successfully completed their respective drug court program. Of this amount, 278 completions were within the PC 1000 program.

"Today I'm employed, living independently and able to raise my two-year old son because of the support I received in the Prop 36 program. The program helped me to see the world as endless possibilities as opposed to continual letdowns. This program literally saved my life."

Drug Court Graduate



PCDC graduation

Proposition 36 Drug Court

In 2000, California voters passed a ballot initiative that enacted a new sentencing structure for certain defendants convicted of non-violent drug offenses. Those offenders who meet certain eligibility criteria are given the opportunity to benefit from drug treatment and rehabilitation rather than incarceration. The court places these defendants on probation and orders them to complete a drug treatment program as a condition of probation. If a defendant successfully completes Proposition 36 probation, he or she may ask the court to set aside the conviction and dismiss the charges. On the other hand, if the court terminates probation for non-compliance, the person may be incarcerated. In 2006, there were 84 offenders who completed the program.



Domestic Violence (DV) Court

The Fresno Superior Court established a criminal **Domestic Violence Court** in 1996. Initially this specialized calendar was heard one day per week. Over the past decade, the number of domestic violence cases has risen to a level that this calendar now requires a full-time judicial officer five days per week plus another judicial officer one day per week.

This specialized court was designed to hold offenders accountable and enhance victim safety. A single judge presides over all aspects of these cases, except trials. Defendants are held accountable for their actions because a single judge knows the history of each case. The judge sets periodic reviews in each case to monitor compliance with protective orders and probation terms. A victim advocate, who makes contact with virtually all victims, is also present in court.

Victim advocates offer referrals and counseling services, help victims construct safety plans, and provide information about criminal proceedings. A key component of this court is the intensive judicial oversight coupled with the monitoring provided by the Fresno County Probation Department. The Probation Department provides information to the court on each defendant's progress in any court-ordered intervention, substance abuse, or mental health program.

The goal of DV Court is to prevent and reduce the incidence of family violence. This dedicated team ensures that defendants are carefully monitored, that victims have access to comprehensive services, and that judges have the information they need to handle these cases efficiently, effectively, and justly.



Homeless Court is a special Superior Court session for homeless defendants, convened in local homeless shelters, to resolve outstanding infractions and low-level misdemeanor offenses and warrants. The concept is to bring the law to the street by bringing the court to the shelters for these special hearings. This highly successful alternative court proceeding assists the homeless to



become productive members of our community by resolving minor law violations with sentences that often include participation in programs that offer help with overcoming social problems and developing employment skills. In 2006,

there were 252 cases calendared in Homeless Court with 78 percent of the defendants appearing.

Homeless Court builds on partnerships between the court, local shelters, community service agencies, the prosecutor, and the public defender. Problems that homelessness represents can be met with practical solutions through the Homeless Court. Initial referrals to Homeless Court originate in shelters and service agencies. The prosecution and defense attorneys review the cases before the court hearing. The court order for participation in agency programs is substituted for the traditional court sanctions of fines and custody.

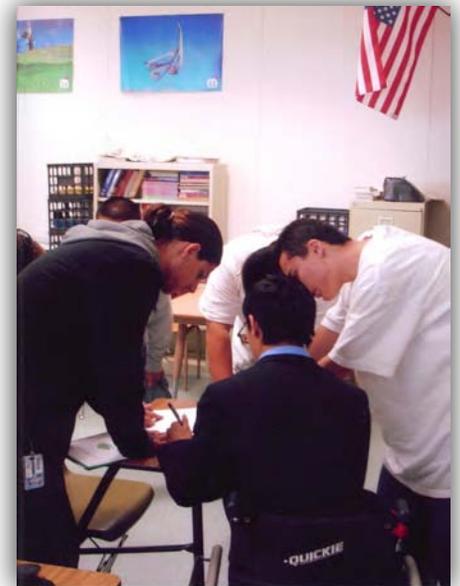
Youth Courts

Providing equal access to the court

Juvenile Delinquency Drug Court Program is a court-supervised, comprehensive treatment program for adolescents who exhibit delinquent behavior as a result of drug use. The non-adversarial "treatment team" consists of the judge as the team leader, probation officers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and treatment professionals working together to develop a plan that is in the best interest of the juvenile and the community. Multiple treatment phases include: counseling, drug testing, probation supervision, accountability-oriented sanctions, participation in self-help groups, and compliance with all conditions, as ordered by the court. Youths are rewarded with incentives for compliance and are sanctioned for non-compliance.

Juvenile Dependency Drug Court Program is a multi-disciplinary partnership between the court, the Department of Children and Family Services, County Counsel, District Attorney, Public Defender, Alternate Defense Office, and treatment providers. This court-supervised intervention and prevention program for dependents of the court involves court appearances, random drug testing, individual, group and family counseling. The partnership is dedicated to providing support, treatment, and guidance to juveniles so they may lead drug-free lives and thrive in our community.

Youth Court is an early intervention program that seeks to deliver justice in a way that promotes positive attitudes and prevents the occurrence of more serious crimes. It targets high school students who are first time offenders and accept responsibility for having committed low-level offenses. Youth Court holds teens accountable while diverting them from the formal court system. Unlike traditional courts, Youth Court is convened at local high schools and functions primarily as a sentencing body; it does not determine guilt or innocence. A Fresno Superior Court judge presides over the proceeding to ensure the process is fair. The jurors, made up of high school students, are responsible for determining the minor's sentence. Sentences may range from community service, serving as a juror in Youth Court, a written apology to victims and/or an essay relevant to the offense. When the sentence is completed, the minor's record is expunged. Youth Court provides an excellent opportunity to change a young person's pattern of behavior and for other youth to learn about the court system.



In 2006, there were 38 Youth Court hearings with 107 youth participating. Furthermore, the number of school sites in which proceedings are held doubled. Youth Court is currently held at Clovis, Edison, Fresno, Hoover, McLane and Sunnyside High Schools.

Youth Programs

Protecting public trust and confidence

Mock Trial

By encouraging widespread participation in Youth Court and Mock Trial programs, young people are introduced to the possibility of a legal career. The program helps students to acquire a working knowledge of our judicial system, develop analytical abilities and communication skills while interacting with positive role models from their communities. Through sponsorships from the Constitutional Rights Foundation, the Fresno County Office of Education, and the court, 16 high school mock trial teams presented their cases this year in our courtrooms with the goals of competing for statewide and national honors. In 2006, more than 160 Fresno County students participated in this program.



For two months each fall, mock trial teams prepare their cases for competition. Over the course of six evenings in January and February, the students litigate criminal cases as pre-trial attorneys, prosecutors, defense attorneys or witnesses before a Fresno Superior Court judge. For the students, the high point of all their hours of preparation is the opportunity to appear before a real judge in a real courtroom and conduct a trial. Students also act as courtroom clerks and bailiffs.



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Adoption Day

On Saturday, November 4th, Fresno County celebrated its 12th Annual Adoption Day at the Craycroft "Sonshine" Ranch. The theme for the 2006 event was "Every Child is a Treasure." The adoptions of 35 children were finalized on this special day by Judge Jane Cardoza and Commissioner Jamileh Schwartzbart. Many volunteers, attorneys, court personnel, and community representatives participated in this meaningful event. Following the finalization of the adoptions, everyone celebrated with balloons, children's games, a fabulous lunch, and entertainment. Throughout the day there were many opportunities for family photographs, including pictures with the judicial officers.



Courtroom Tours

Our youth represent the leaders and citizens of tomorrow. Many learning opportunities exist at the courthouse and are available for teachers and students. In an effort to reach out to students, we offer courtroom tours at no charge. A tour can help students to better understand the rule of law, court procedures, and the roles of those that work in the court system. Students may tour a courtroom, observe various proceedings, and often are able to speak with judges and court staff regarding the functions of a trial court and their role in the judicial system. In 2006, nearly 750 students toured the court. These tours also open students' eyes to career opportunities that they may not have otherwise considered.

Children's Waiting Rooms

The Mario Olmos Children's Waiting Rooms were the dream of the late Superior Court Judge Mario G. Olmos, who believed that there should be a safe, nurturing, and protective environment for young children to stay while parents conduct court business. The children's waiting rooms are located in the main courthouse, the dependency court facility, and at the County Plaza building. This is a free service for those who have court business including: jurors, defendants, witnesses, litigants, persons filing papers, and those using Family Court Services or the Self-Help Center. The children's waiting rooms are a community outreach project by contract with YMCA of Fresno County, an organization with 30 years of childcare experience.



Jury Service

Promoting efficient administration of justice

The right to a trial by jury is a privilege of every person in the United States, whether they are a citizen or not. It applies to both criminal and civil cases and is recognized as the foundation of the American court system, guaranteed by both the United States and California Constitutions. Jury trials cannot be held unless people are willing to perform their civic duty.

“As Americans, we sometimes take for granted the rule of law that protects our freedoms. Trial by a jury of one’s peers is among the fundamental democratic ideals of our nation. Serving as jurors reminds us that these ideals exist only as long as individual citizens are willing to uphold them.”

Hon. Ronald M. George
Chief Justice of California

The Fresno Superior Court Juror Services Office touches the lives of more people than any other division of the court, and understands the commitment juror service entails for all who serve. Sometimes, the only contact citizens have with the court is through jury duty. Each year, the Fresno Superior Court summons 170,000 citizens from among our Fresno County residents.

Jurors are selected at random using both the voter registration and DMV lists. Once summoned, the actual time of service is either one trial or one day. Prospective jurors who have not been selected for a trial or are not in the middle of juror selection at the end of that first day will have completed their jury service for at least one year. As a result, the majority of jurors complete their service in just one

day. The average length of service is five days for those who are actually sworn in as a juror.

Before prospective jurors go into a courtroom, they are welcomed to the court by a judge. One of the first topics covered by judges during juror orientation is the important contribution jurors make to the administration of justice. Jury orientation also includes a video presentation. Assisted listening devices are available for hearing-impaired jurors.



Grand Jury

The court also supervises two grand juries. Separately, they investigate allegations of civil or criminal misconduct. Members of the civil grand jury volunteer for 12 months of service and investigate local government agencies and alleged irregularities.

Criminal grand juries are randomly selected from the general juror pool, and serve for the length of a particular case. Criminal grand juries may subpoena witnesses before deciding whether they will issue an indictment. Criminal grand juries are rare in Fresno County and there have been only five impaneled since 1997. Both grand juries are comprised of 19 members.

2006 JURY HIGHLIGHTS

Total number of jury trials	285
Number of sworn jurors	3,806
Longest trial	52 days
Highest number of summons for a single case (death penalty)	2,250

Type of Cases	Number of Trials	Average Trial Duration (days)
Criminal Felony	156	6
Criminal Misdemeanor	83	3
Civil Limited	43	10
Civil Unlimited	3	3

Juror Satisfaction in Fresno County

96% Felt they were treated well by
judicial officers, court staff,
and attorneys

92% Indicated that the court and
court staff were respectful of
their time

91% Rated their juror orientation as
good or excellent

Did You Know?

A goal of the court is to provide outstanding service to jurors. To achieve this, countless hours are devoted to attract, develop, and nurture a professional and well-trained work force. At the conclusion of their service, prospective jurors are asked to complete a Juror Exit Questionnaire, which strives to measure their level of satisfaction with the court and their overall experience as jurors.

Some of the services provided by the court to ensure a smooth juror experience include:

24/7 Access

The court's Juror Services Office maintains a telephone line to assist jurors with questions regarding juror services. A computerized system assists jurors seven days a week, 24 hours a day. This automated system provides jurors with reporting instructions, ability to schedule a service reminder phone call, request a work certification, or ask for a postponement. Jurors may also speak with a clerk during normal business hours to have their questions answered. The Juror Services Call Center can be reached at (559) 455-6000.

Web Access

Our web site offers summoned jurors with the ability to receive juror reporting instructions, get directions to all court locations, request a work certification, set-up a service reminder phone call and, if eligible, to postpone their service. The juror follows a few simple instructions to reschedule his or her service for a specific, more convenient week. Jurors can access these services online at www.fresnosuperiorcourt.org.



Excellence

Committing to the highest ethical standard

In 2006, a number of organizations honored Fresno Superior Court judicial officers for their excellence on the bench. These awards recognize the recipients' individual achievements and are collectively a testament to the culture of excellence that exists at the court.

Appellate Court Associate **Justice Brad R. Hill**, then a Fresno Superior Court judge, was presented with the *Bernard E. Witkin Lifetime Achievement Award* by the Fresno County Bar Association for his extraordinary service and significant contributions to the administration of justice. While serving on the Superior Court bench, Judge Hill was a leader in securing funding for local facility needs and increasing statewide judgeships. Throughout his career he has been at the forefront of bringing about needed change that has improved the quality of justice for all.



The Hon. Brad R. Hill (left) and Gordon Park, 2006 Fresno County Bar Association President.

The Fresno County Women's Lawyer's Association presented the *Pauline Hanson Award* to **Commissioner Nancy A. Cisneros** in November. This annual award honors an attorney or judicial officer exemplifying the late Justice Hanson's commitment to professional excellence, passion for supporting the advancement of women, as well as for promoting fair and equal justice under the law.



The Hon. Nancy A. Cisneros (left) and Magistrate Judge Sandra Snyder of the Federal District Court.

In November, **Judge Gary D. Hoff** received the *Champion for Justice Award* from the Central California Legal Services for his efforts to increase access to justice for low-income and under-represented residents in the community. Since joining the bench in 1994, Judge Hoff

"I accept the award on behalf of the court's efforts to improve access to justice."

Hon. Gary D. Hoff

has played a leading role in the development of a number of innovative court programs designed to meet the diverse needs of children, families, self-represented litigants, and the homeless in Fresno County.



The Hon. Gary D. Hoff (left) accepts his award from the Hon. Ronald M. George, Chief Justice of California, as Central California Legal Services Board Member David Rodriguez applauds.



On September 22nd, the Sullivan Center for Children recognized **Judges James M. Petrucelli and Denise Whitehead** for their efforts on behalf of youth.

Judge Petrucelli is passionate about the wellbeing of children and has spent much of his career advocating and working for youth, including a five-year term as Presiding Judge of the Family Law Division.

Judge Whitehead also has a zeal for helping children. In fact, her quest to improve the life of children in need was the driving force for establishing the Juvenile Behavioral Health Court. She has been a leader at the state and local levels in improving services for children. Judge Whitehead has served as Juvenile Delinquency Presiding Judge since 2004.



Star Performer

Established in 1998, the Star Performer Award recognizes stellar court employees for their commitment to the court system and to providing fair and efficient services for all court users.

Recipients of the Star Performer Award in 2006:

- Jennifer Ahlin
- Gail Broome
- Veronica Camacho
- Alicia Carrasco
- Ben Danielson
- Kim Day
- Denise Dedmon
- Kathy Fries
- Yolonda Garcia
- Francis Garza
- Charles Hipwell
- Elvia Lozano
- Cindy Matthews
- Cathy Molina
- Ron Nijmeddin
- Margaret Pearce
- Greg Rutherford
- Ramos Soto
- Imelda Sustaita
- Alice Talbot
- Gayla Welch
- Eddie Williams
- Susan Yepiz
- Jessica Young



Court Executive Officer **Tamara Beard** was recognized by the Marjaree Mason Center as one of the community's *2006 Top Ten Professional Women of the Year*. The award recipients represented a wide variety of occupations and their impressive accomplishments place them at the top of their fields.

Tamara Beard is known throughout the state as a leader for progressive service and community responsiveness. Through her vision, the court has implemented a broad array of programs that benefit all court users, particularly indigent and non-English speaking litigants.



Achievements

Ensuring courtesy to, respect for, and dignity of the individual

2006 Judicial Retirements



Judge Franklin Jones retired on November 1st after serving 15 years on the bench.

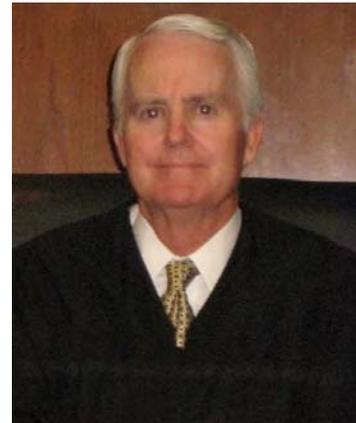


Judge R. L. "Chip" Putnam retired on December 16th after serving 20 years on the bench.

2006 Judicial Elevations



Judge Brad R. Hill was elevated in April to the Fifth District Court of Appeal.



Judge Stephen Kane was elevated to the Fifth District Court of Appeal in May.

Commemorating 25 Years of Service

In 2006, the following court employees celebrated 25 or more years of service with the court:

Winn Anderson	Anita Olvera
Cora Berumen	Sharon Parnell
Leslie Bjerke	Doreen Perkins
Alicia Carrasco	Linda Reed
Geraldine Castillo-Gilstrap	Virginia Rodela
Linda Esparza	Sherry Spears
Irene Gonzalez	Noreen Strickland
Peggy Littlefield	Imelda Sustaita
Diane McDowell	Laura Williams
Ted Molina	Delores Wilson

Training

Protecting public trust and confidence

The public's trust and confidence in the court system depends to a great extent on court employees providing excellent service. The court offers numerous training and continuing education opportunities for its employees to ensure the public receives efficient, consistent, and fair service.

Staff Education

The court is committed to continual learning opportunities and succession planning. The Training Department



provides ongoing training and educational opportunities for staff in varying employee classifications. The courses are designed to enhance both service to the public and employee satisfaction. The training covers a wide range of topics including improved customer service, team building, working more effectively with the community's diverse population, preventing sexual harassment in the workplace, and working with the automated case management systems and other computer applications.

In addition, the department conducts New Employee Orientation (NEO) training throughout the calendar year, which provides essential information to new hires in topics such as the personnel manual, court security, implications of the American with Disabilities Act, quality customer service, sexual harassment awareness and prevention, court ethics, personal and workplace safety, as well as an orientation to the judicial branch.

In 2006, the court reinstated its annual training day on Columbus Day in October. This courtwide event offered fourteen breakout sessions on topics including effective business writing, interview skills, time management, processing surety bonds, improving employee morale, and retirement planning. Four hundred thirty-seven employees attended the training day.

In 2006, all court staff became members of the California Court Association (CCA) and many of them serve on its Executive Board and/or committees. The CCA provides our court employees with a great opportunity for staff development through education and training, networking with other state court employees, and learning more about their professions.

Judicial Education

The California Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) provides an extensive, statewide educational program for judicial officers and staff. In recent years, several judicial officers from the Fresno Superior Court have served on CJER faculties and have taught a wide range of topics. Classes for judicial officers cover areas of judicial practice, including criminal, civil, family law, juvenile, domestic violence, mental health, and probate. Judicial officers also provide expertise in skill-building areas such as computers and budget.

In January 2006, through the leadership of then Assistant Presiding Judge Hilary A. Chittick, the Fresno Superior Court launched a local new judges orientation program to assist in the transition to the bench. The orientation strives to promote collegiality among judicial officers, provide an opportunity for new judicial officers to observe in a variety of court proceedings, and gain a broad understanding of court operations. This includes case filing, calendar management, transportation of inmates, court security, automation and record retention. In addition, the Judicial Education Committee chaired, by Judge James R. Oppliger, hosts lunchtime seminars to enhance judicial training opportunities.

Fresno County judges also provide training and education workshops for local bar associations. Judicial officers hosted two training sessions for approximately 75 attorneys who sit as temporary judges. These members of the legal community in turn make a vital contribution to the administration of justice in Fresno County by volunteering their time and expertise to serve on the bench.



Training Day by the Bay
The California Court Association
March 4, 2006

Appointments

Protecting the independence of the judiciary

Jonathan B. Conklin joined the Fresno Superior Court bench in January. Prior to his appointment Judge Conklin served as a United States Attorney for



15 years prosecuting white collar crime, political corruption, child pornography and other serious federal crimes. While at the U.S. Attorney's Office Judge Conklin served as Senior Litigation Counsel and was responsible for handling long-term and complex trials.

From approximately 2002 until his departure in December of 2005, Judge Conklin was the Deputy Chief of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Fresno. His responsibilities included supervising the support staff and attorney training.

Judge Conklin earned a Juris Doctorate from McGeorge School of Law and a Bachelor of Arts from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

Houry Alanjian Sanderson joined the Fresno Superior Court bench in January. Judge Sanderson had 15 year experience prosecuting serious crimes, including serving as co-prosecutor in a gang trial involving 23 defendants.



While at the Fresno County District Attorney's Office, Judge Sanderson served in various capacities including that of Deputy, Senior Deputy and Chief Deputy. As Chief Deputy, she supervised a team of 27 attorneys. Before joining the District Attorney's Office in 1990, Judge Sanderson was a Deputy in the Fresno County Counsel's Office.

Judge Sanderson earned a Juris Doctorate degree from San Joaquin College of Law and a Bachelor of Science degree from California State University, Fresno.



Arlan L. Harrell was appointed to the Fresno Superior Court by Governor Schwarzenegger in May. Immediately prior to his appointment, Judge Harrell served as a commissioner for the court for over two years. Before joining the bench, he served for nearly a decade as a Deputy District Attorney prosecuting "Three Strikes" and other serious felony offenses. He began his legal career as a legal extern for Bankruptcy Court Judge Richard T. Ford of the Eastern District and as an associate with the Fresno civil law firm of Lang, Richert & Patch.

Judge Harrell earned a Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Riverside and a Juris Doctorate from the University of California, Davis School of Law.



D. Tyler Tharpe joined the Fresno Superior Court bench in June. Prior to his appointment to the court, Judge Tharpe served as a partner in the Fresno law firm of Kimble, MacMichael & Upton, where he predominantly practiced in the area of complex civil litigation. Judge Tharpe tried numerous cases throughout the State of California. Before entering private practice, Judge Tharpe served as a research attorney for the California Court of Appeal, Fifth Appellate District.

Judge Tharpe earned a Juris Doctorate degree from McGeorge School of Law and both a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Science from California State University, Fresno.

Mary D. Dolas was selected as a Court Commissioner by the judges of the court in August.

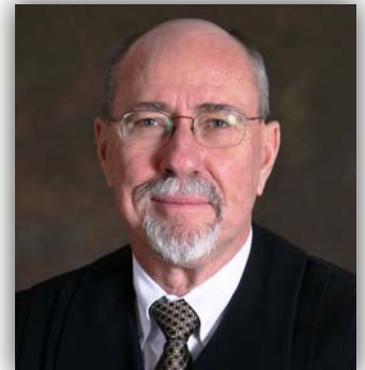


Commissioner Dolas previously served nine years as a Fresno County Deputy Public Defender representing both adults and juveniles in various criminal matters. She served as lead attorney while serving in the juvenile division. In 2005, she received certification as a criminal law specialist. Before joining the Public

Defender's Office, she worked as an editor and writer for Thompson Publishing in San Francisco.

Commissioner Dolas earned a Bachelor of Arts from California State University, Sonoma and a Juris Doctorate Degree from John F. Kennedy University School of Law.

Donald D. Penner was appointed to the Fresno Superior Court by Governor Schwarzenegger in November. Prior to his appointment, Judge Penner served the public for 30 years as a prosecutor for the Fresno County District Attorney's Office. While at the District Attorney's Office, he served in the various capacities of Deputy, Senior Deputy, and Chief Deputy. His last assignment there was as Assistant District Attorney.



Judge Penner earned a Juris Doctorate degree from San Joaquin College of Law and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from California State University, Fresno.

Judicial Officers

Committing to the highest ethical standard

Judges



Hon. Edward Sarkisian, Jr.
2006 Presiding Judge



Hon. Hilary A. Chittick
Assistant Presiding Judge



Hon. Gary S. Austin



Hon. Donald S. Black



Hon. Carlos A. Cabrera



Hon. Jane Cardoza



Hon. Jonathan B. Conklin



Hon. Adolfo M. Corona



Hon. Wayne Ellison



Hon. Gregory Fain



Hon. Donald R. Franson, Jr.



Hon. David A. Gottlieb



Hon. Jeff Hamilton



Hon. W. Kent Hamlin



Hon. Arlan L. Harrell



Hon. Gary D. Hoff



Hon. Dale Ikeda



Hon. Franklin Jones



Hon. David C. Kalemkarian



Hon. Timothy Kams



Hon. Jon Nick Kapetan



Hon. Debra J. Kazanjian



Hon. W. Kent Levis



Hon. Robert H. Oliver



Hon. James R. Oppliger



Hon. Gary R. Orozco



Hon. Rosendo Peña, Jr.



Hon. Donald D. Penner



Hon. James M. Petrucelli



Hon. R. L. "Chip" Putnam



Hon. Houry A. Sanderson



Hon. Mark W. Snauffer



Hon. Alan M. Simpson



Hon. M. Bruce Smith



Hon. D. Tyler Tharpe



Hon. John F. Vogt



Hon. Denise Whitehead

Commissioners



Hon. Glenda S. Allen-Hill



Hon. Brant K. Bramer



Hon. Jeff Bird



Hon. Nancy A. Cisneros



Hon. Mary D. Dolas



Hon. Kimberly J. Nystrom-Geist



Hon. Phillip A. Silva



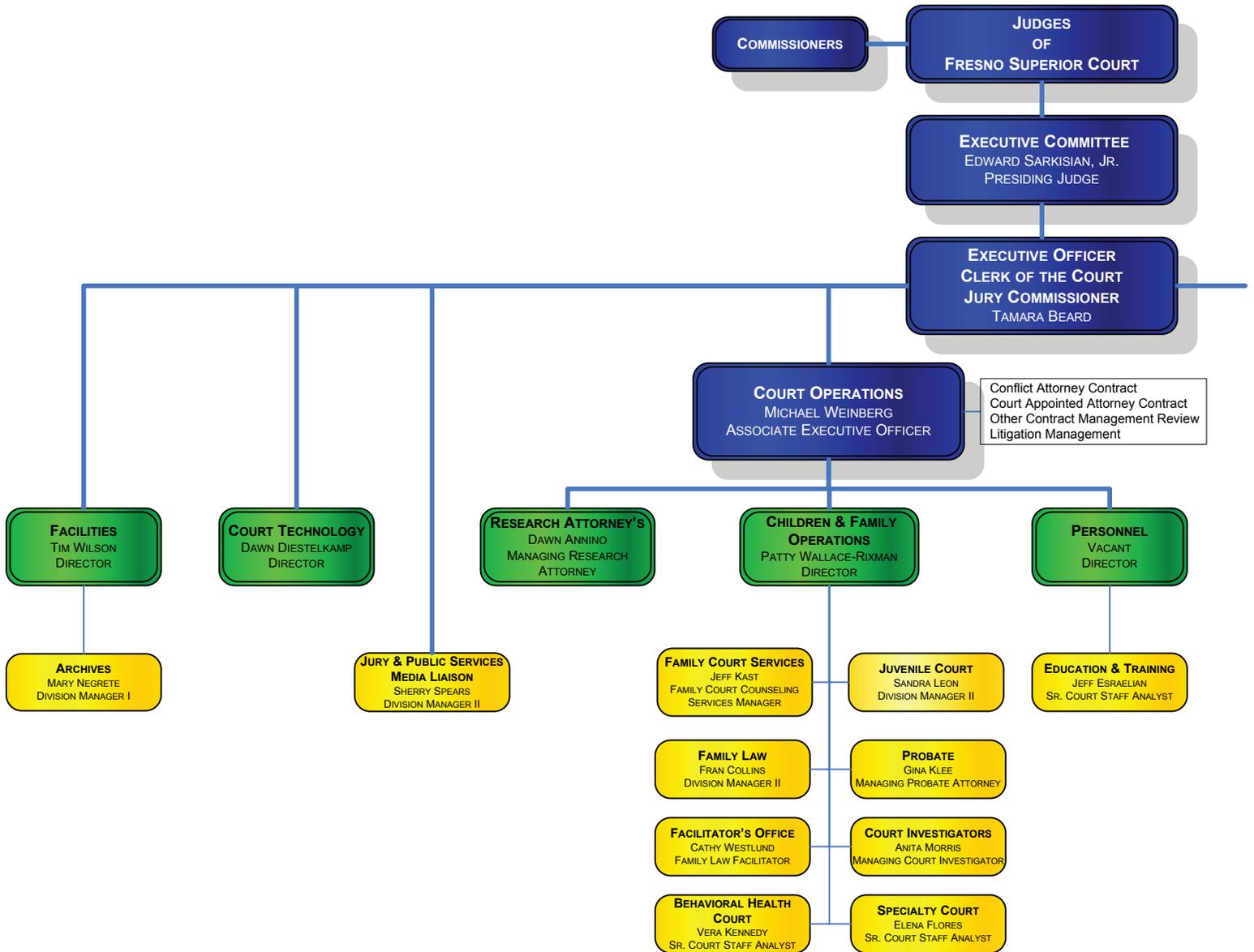
Hon. Jamileh L. Schwartzbart

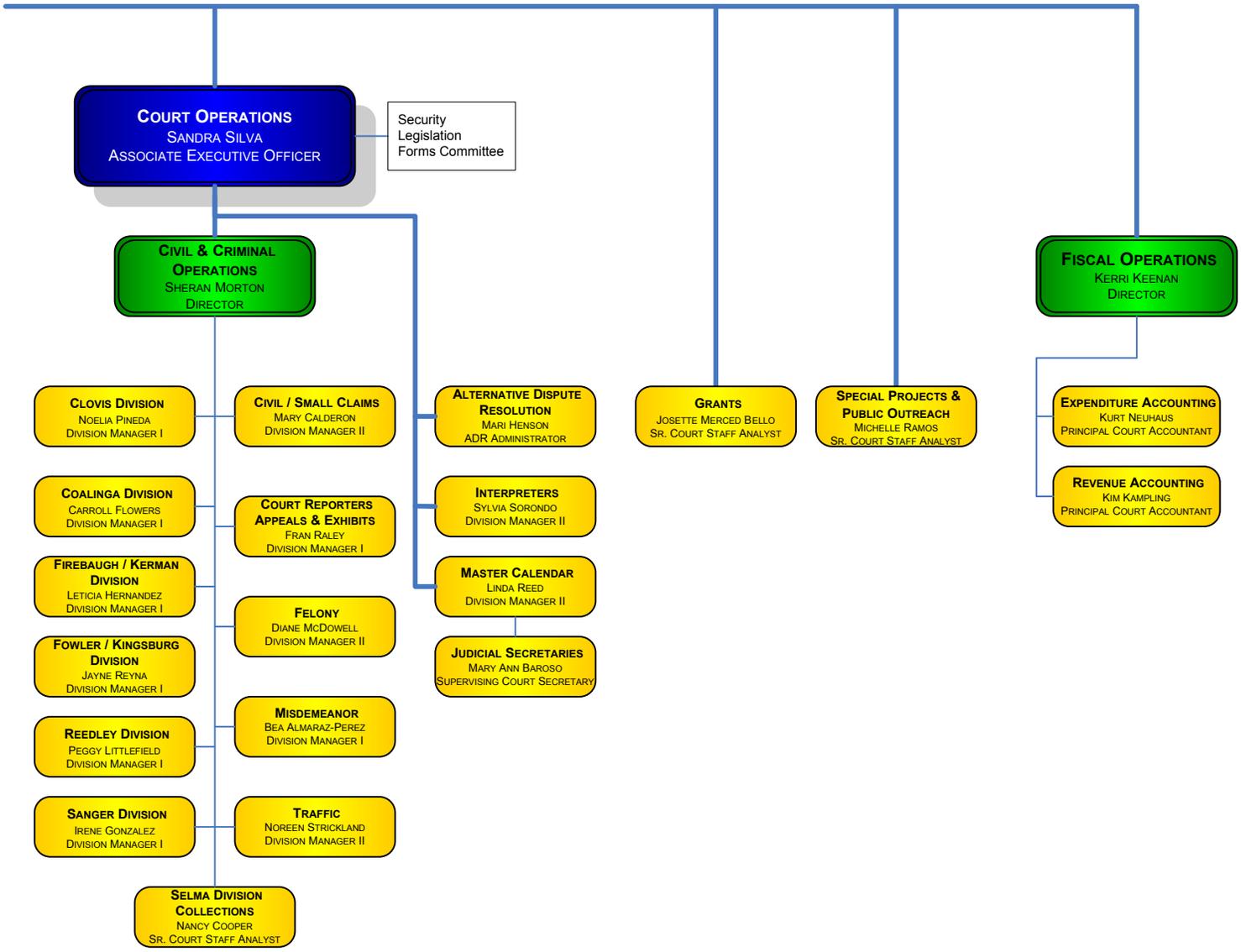


Hon. Martin C. Suits

Organization

Ensuring and maintaining justice according to the law





Operational Statistics

2006 Statistics Summary

Case Filings Summary

Civil General	4,352
Civil Limited	9,988
Small Claims	4,063
Felony	12,202
Misdemeanor	58,795
Family Law	4,115
Juvenile Dependency	680
Juvenile Delinquency	4,147
Probate	1,098
Infractions	133,981
Appellate	287

Judicial and Staff Positions

Judges	36
Commissioners	9
Employees	477
Estimated need for judicial officers based on workload. . .	75

Facilities

Number of courthouses	14
Number of other court facilities . . .	4

Juror Services

Number of Criminal Jury Trials	239
Number of Civil Jury Trials	50
Number of Jurors Who Served on a Trial	3,806
Average Days Served	1.31

Alternative Dispute Resolution

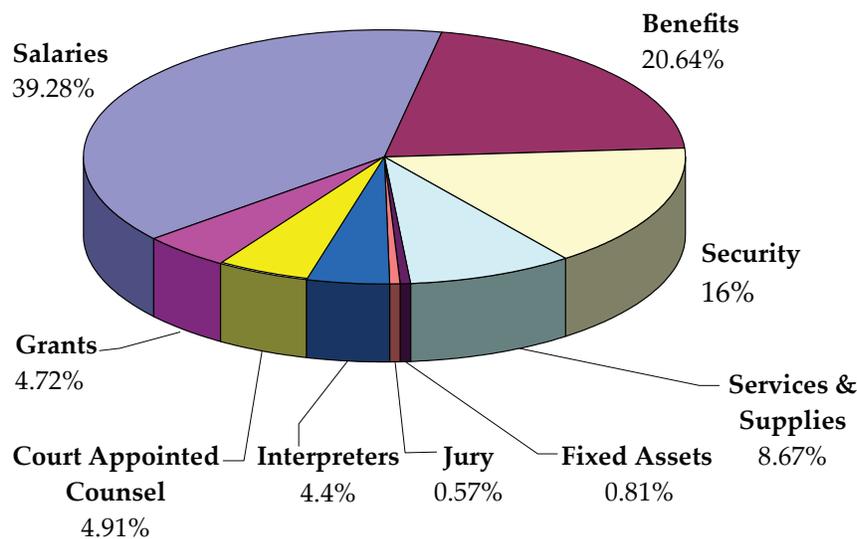
Civil MSC Resolution Rate38%
Civil Harassment Mediation	243 cases
Unlawful Detainer Resolution Rate75%
Small Claims Resolution Rate52%
Family Law Resolution Rate60%
Total Pro Tem Attorney Volunteer Hours	2,541

2006 Budget

Promoting the efficient administration of justice

The goal of the Superior Court of California, County of Fresno is to provide the highest level of service within budgeted appropriations.

05-06 General Fund & Grant Budget



FY 05-06 General Fund & Grant Budget

	Budgeted amount	Percentage of total budget
Salaries	\$20,619,719	39.28%
Benefits	\$10,835,260	20.64%
Security	\$ 8,400,000	16.00%
Services & Supplies	\$4,552,571	8.67%
Court Appointed Counsel - Juvenile Dependency	\$ 2,577,269	4.91%
Grants	\$2,476,413	4.72%
Interpreters	\$ 2,311,948	4.40%
Fixed Assets	\$425,965	0.81%
Jury	\$300,000	0.57%
TOTAL	\$52,499,145	100.00%

In Memoriam

Katherine Jolly



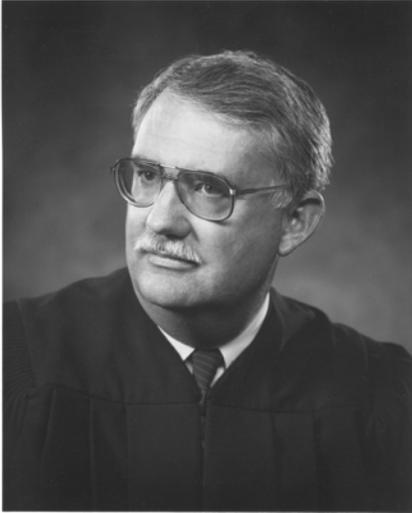
Katherine "Kathy" Jolly, born on December 6, 1945, and passed away on November 17, 2006. Kathy graduated from the University of Hawaii at Hilo with an Associate of Science degree and worked for law firms for approximately 20 years. She met and married William Eugene Jolly in Hawaii in 1988 and they moved to Fresno in 1997. Upon arriving in Fresno, Kathy became employed as a Judicial Secretary for the Fresno County Superior Court. Kathy spent her nine-year court career as a secretary in Delinquency Court, where judicial officers and co-workers appreciated her dependability, superior organization skills, and helpful attitude. She had a warm smile that was infectious to everyone around her. She has been greatly missed.

Linda Mann



Our court suffered the loss of a long-time employee and the Family Law Department lost a valued team member and good friend with the passing of Linda Mann on January 4, 2007, after a courageous battle with cancer. Linda began her career with the court in 1994 and joined the Family Law Department in 2001. She was a dedicated, diligent employee and a core staff member. Linda loved working for the court and it was reflected in her positive attitude. Throughout Linda's career with the court, she formed many friendships with co-workers. One of those friends, Roxann Severin-Diaz stated, "What I remember most about Linda was that she loved everything about life. She always found good in everything."

Linda was also devoted to her family, her church, and her cats; all one had to do was ask about one of those topics to see her become very animated. Linda kept many pictures of her children and her cats at her desk. Her faith was an integral part of her character, enabling Linda to stay positive and to continue to work as long as she did in spite of her illness. She was kind and forgiving. The memory of her life will remain etched in the minds of many court employees.



Justice William A. Stone

Justice William (Bill) A. Stone was born in Porterville on July 24, 1939. Justice Stone grew up in Visalia and graduated twice from Stanford University, receiving his degree in Political Science in 1961 and his law degree in 1964. He began his legal career with the law firm of Mack, Bianco and Means in Bakersfield, where he practiced law until his appointment to the Bakersfield Municipal Court by Governor Ronald Reagan in 1971. In 1977, Judge Stone was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown to the Kern County Superior Court. Ten years later, Governor Deukmejian appointed Justice Stone to the appellate bench. Justice Stone's father, Frederick, who had been a Tulare County Superior Court Judge and later the Presiding Judge of the Fifth District Court of Appeal, administered the oath of office to his son for all three of his court assignments.

After retiring from the Fifth District Court of Appeal in Fresno in 1991, Justice Stone did not choose to let his considerable skill and experience as a judge go to waste. Instead, he happily volunteered to sit in full time the Fresno Superior Court, where he enjoyed the increased contact with people in our busy trial courts from 1999 – 2005. According to Presiding Judge Edward Sarkisian, Justice Stone served with great distinction and earned universal admiration. "Our lives were enriched by knowing this wonderful man. He was self-effacing, warm, kind, gentle, and intelligent - all of those qualities wrapped up into one person," observed Judge Sarkisian.

Justice Stone will be remembered as a role model for all judges to aspire to: modest, humble, calm, kind and respectful of others regardless of rank or title. Throughout the years, Justice Stone served the Central Valley with wisdom, character and dedication. He was devoted to his family, God, and his profession. Justice Stone truly was a special person and will be missed.

Fresno Superior Court
1100 Van Ness Avenue
Fresno, CA 93724
(559) 488-1825

Clovis Courthouse

1011 Fifth Street
Clovis, CA 93612
(559) 299-4964

Coalinga Courthouse

160 W. Elm Street
Coalinga, CA 93210
(559) 935-2017

Firebaugh Courthouse

1325 "O" Street
Firebaugh, CA 93622
(559) 659-2011

Fowler Courthouse

127 E. Merced Street
Fowler, CA 93625
(559) 834-3215

Kerman Courthouse

719 S. Madera Avenue
Kerman, CA 93630
(559) 846-7371

Kingsburg Courthouse

1600 California Street
Kingsburg, CA 93631
(559) 897-2241

Reedley Courthouse

815 "G" Street
Reedley, CA 93654
(559) 638-3114

Sanger Courthouse

619 "N" Street
Sanger, CA 93657
(559) 876-6000

Selma Courthouse

2424 McCall
Selma, CA 93662
(559) 891-3120

Juvenile Delinquency Facility

742 S. Tenth Street
Fresno, CA 93702
(559) 455-5195

Juvenile Dependency Facility

1255 Fulton Mall
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 488-2626

Family Court Services

2220 Tulare, Suite 1111
Fresno, CA 93741
(559) 488-3241

Family Support

2220 Tulare, Suite 10
Fresno, CA 93724
(559) 488-6755

Probate Division

1999 Tuolumne St., Suite 501
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 263-8700

Self-Help Center

255 N. Fulton, Suite 106
Fresno, CA 93701
(559) 497-6500
Toll-free in Fresno County:
1-866-665-2345

ACTION Center (After

Criminal Traffic Infraction
One-Stop Network)
1100 Van Ness Avenue
(East side of courthouse
breezeway, around corner from
Jury Assembly Room)
Fresno, CA 93724

Archives Facility

1963 "E" Street
Fresno, CA 93706
(559) 233-2800



FRESNO SUPERIOR COURT

