



## Judicial Council of California · Administrative Office of the Courts

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# REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

For business meeting on: April 25, 2014

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Title	Agenda Item Type
Court Facilities: Revised Courthouse Naming Policy	Action Required
Rules, Forms, Standards, or Statutes Affected	Effective Date
None	April 25, 2014
Recommended by	Date of Report
Court Facilities Advisory Committee	April 7, 2014
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### Executive Summary

The Court Facilities Advisory Committee recommends the Judicial Council adopt the revised *Courthouse Naming Policy* and approve the standard names of new courthouses that are completed or presently in construction. This revision replaces the current, interim policy that was adopted on behalf of the Judicial Council by the Executive and Planning Committee in 2009.

### Recommendation

The Court Facilities Advisory Committee recommends that the Judicial Council, effective April 25, 2014, take the following action:

1. Adopt the revised *Courthouse Naming Policy*.
2. Approve the standard names of new courthouses that are completed or presently in construction.

### **Previous Council Action**

In May 2009, the council's Executive and Planning Committee adopted the current policy on an interim basis, anticipating that the Subcommittee on Courthouse Names (the subcommittee) of the Court Facilities Advisory Committee (the CFAC) would be established in the future to recommend to its full advisory committee how this policy should be updated and revised.

### **Rationale for Recommendation**

It is the policy of the council, acting through the subcommittee and its directives to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) staff, to name courthouses based on standards directed by policy. In December 2012, the CFAC chair established the subcommittee to manage the naming process for court facilities. The subcommittee convened for four meetings in 2013 to consider the content of the interim policy. Because some time had passed since the interim policy was adopted, and since the subcommittee had been established, the subcommittee determined the need to update the current interim policy.

This determination was also based upon consideration of the interim policy's content and its implications for the present and future capital projects, as well as the management of the existing building portfolio. The subcommittee considered the intent of the council reflected by the original content of the interim policy, including: subcommittee membership; expanded criteria for categories of naming, including standard naming preferences and naming preferences for deceased or living individuals; a prescriptive process for submission, consideration, and approval of naming requests; delegation of authority for approving names; and identification of state courts on the exterior of existing and new buildings.

To support the subcommittee's deliberations, staff research was conducted establishing that there was little or no record of a comparable basis for courthouse naming standards in the federal government or other jurisdictions outside California.

As stated in the attached revised policy, its purpose is to provide consistency in identifying courthouses in California, following standards set for both new and existing courthouses, including courthouses which are renovated.

The revised policy encompasses three major tenets:

1. Provides naming standards for trial and appellate courthouses, including two naming preferences—one for standard names and one for names of deceased individuals;

2. Prescribes a specific process for naming courthouses with associated, delegated, and required approvals; and
3. Stipulates minimum content to be reflected in courthouse names on exterior signage.

The substantive revisions to the current interim policy were made to Section III and are described as follows:

1. The definitions have been updated to include a reference to the Court Facilities Advisory Committee and to describe the memberships of the subcommittee;
2. The categories of names have been changed from three to two, eliminating the category of *Living Persons* as a naming standard;
3. The category of *Deceased Person* as a naming standard has been expanded and redefined for greater clarity;
4. The process for requesting and approving the naming of courthouses has been expanded and redefined to include delegation of approvals to the chair of the subcommittee and the CFAC chair, subject to approval by the council; and
5. A section has been added concerning the designation of names in exterior building signage and plaques in order to clearly establish the identity of California courts for the public.

Because a number of courthouse capital projects have been completed or are in construction at this time—for which standard names have been designated by the courts and not formally approved under the naming policy—the subcommittee has recommended to its full advisory committee that the names of 21 projects be approved. Pursuant to the naming process outlined in the revised policy, the Court Facilities Advisory Committee recommends the council approve the project names in the attached list. Future naming requests for new or existing courthouses will be submitted for approval as stipulated in the revised policy.

### **Comments, Alternatives Considered, and Policy Implications**

The AOC did not solicit comments on the recommended council action. No alternatives to the recommended action were considered.

### **Implementation Requirements, Costs, and Operational Impacts**

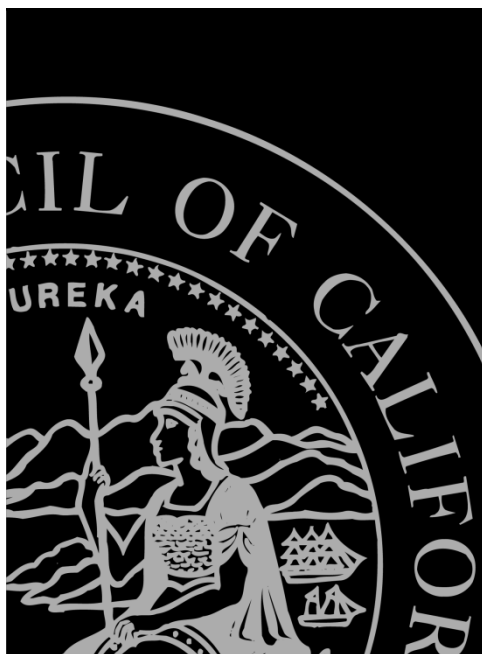
No costs are involved in implementing the recommended council action, because it is performed on behalf of the council by the AOC. Costs associated with the design, fabrication, and installation of signage on new courthouses or renovations to existing court facilities are paid for by capital project budgets funded from Senate Bill 1732 (Escutia; Stats. 2002, ch. 1082), Senate Bill 1407 (Perata; Stats. 2008, ch. 311) revenues, or other funds.

## **Relevant Strategic Plan Goals and Operational Plan Objectives**

The recommended council action supports Goal III (Modernization of Management and Administration) and Goal VI (Branchwide Infrastructure for Service Excellence).

## **Attachments**

1. *Courthouse Naming Policy*, revised April 25, 2014
2. Courthouse Names: Trial Court Capital Projects Completed or in Construction, dated April 25, 2014



# Courthouse Naming Policy

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ADOPTED: MAY 11, 2009

REVISED: APRIL 25, 2014



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
OF THE COURTS

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JUDICIAL AND COURT OPERATIONS  
SERVICES DIVISION

JUDICIAL BRANCH CAPITAL PROGRAM OFFICE

## I. Purpose of the Policy

The Judicial Council of California (Judicial Council) is responsible for California's courthouses under the Trial Court Facilities Act of 2002 and related legislation, which includes responsibility for construction of new courthouses and renovation of existing courthouses. It is the policy of the Judicial Council, acting through the Court Facilities Advisory Committee, Subcommittee on Courthouse Names, through its directives to the staff of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), to name courthouses based on standards. This will provide consistency in identifying courthouses in California.

The naming of courthouses will follow the standards set forth in this policy in naming new courthouses, and in naming existing courthouses—including court facilities that are renovated.

## II. Application of Courthouse Naming Standards

The Judicial Council's naming standards will be applied to newly constructed courthouses and renovated courthouses which the Judicial Council has financed—in whole or in part—and to existing courthouses, where the judicial branch is the facility owner or majority tenant.

## III. Names for Trial and Appellate Courthouses

### A. Definitions

*Court facility* refers to any building that the local court occupies to provide its main services, its branch services, or other services and operations. As used in this policy, the word *courthouse* is considered interchangeable with this term.

*Court Facilities Advisory Committee (CFAC)* is an advisory body to the Judicial Council on all facilities-related matters. The members of this advisory committee are appointed by the Chief Justice of California. The CFAC, formerly the Court Facilities Working Group, is charged with providing ongoing oversight of the Judicial Branch program that manages new construction and renovations for the superior courts and Courts of Appeal throughout the state. It oversees the work of the AOC in its management of court facilities statewide and in its effort to implement the judicial branch's capital improvement program.

*Subcommittee on Courthouse Names* (the subcommittee) is the subcommittee of the CFAC charged with responsibility to review and consider options in naming specific new and existing courthouses. The chair of the Subcommittee on Courthouse Names is appointed by the chair of the CFAC. The members of the subcommittee are appointed by the subcommittee chair. Its membership, including the appointed chair, will comprise the following: five superior court judges, an appellate court justice, two members of the State Bar of California, and one professional from the design, construction or real estate industry. The subcommittee is responsible for recommending to the CFAC names for courthouses and in doing so may consider comments from members of CFAC, or refer requests for naming to the Judicial Council where appropriate. The subcommittee's operating protocols, including the term of each member, will be established by the CFAC.

*Case type* can include but is not limited to the following caseload identifiers: family law, juvenile, criminal, civil, traffic, probate, small claims, mental health, and drug.

*Location* of a court facility refers to the building’s physical location in either an incorporated (i.e., town or city) or unincorporated (i.e., county or region) geographical area.

**B. Naming Standards for Trial and Appellate Courthouses**

1. Courthouses will be named based on one of the following two categories:
  - a. Location and case type, which is the category most commonly used; or
  - b. Deceased person, which is a rarely used category.

A courthouse name will not include the name of any business entity, institution, foundation, or other organization, whether for profit or not for profit.

2. An explanation of each category follows. For all name categories, the courthouse name must include “Superior Court” or “Court of Appeal” *and* “California.” In each case, the building name may include the term “Courthouse,” “Justice Center,” or “Hall of Justice.”

- a. Naming Preference 1: Location and Case Type (Most Commonly Used). It is the preference of the Judicial Council to name courthouses after their location and, if applicable, case type. This convention supports the Judicial Council’s goal of enhancing access to justice because naming courthouses after the location and case type provides users with key information about where the courthouse is located and the type of proceedings conducted within the courthouse.

Examples of courthouse names under the preferred naming standard for trial courts are as follows:

<b>Format Examples</b>	<b>Courthouses</b>	<b>Justice Centers</b>	<b>Halls of Justice</b>
<b>Example 1</b>	El Centro Family Courthouse Superior Court of California County of Imperial	Selma Regional Justice Center Superior Court of California County of Fresno	East County Hall of Justice Superior Court of California County of Alameda
<b>Example 2</b>	El Centro Family Courthouse Superior Court of California Imperial County	Selma Regional Justice Center Superior Court of California Fresno County	East County Hall of Justice Superior Court of California Alameda County

Examples of courthouse names under the preferred naming standard for appellate courts are as follows:

<b>Format Examples</b>	<b>Appellate Courthouse Names</b>
<b>Example 1</b>	State of California Court of Appeal First Appellate District Courthouse
<b>Example 2</b>	California Court of Appeal Fourth Appellate District Division Three
<b>Example 3</b>	State of California Court of Appeal Fifth Appellate District

- b. Naming Preference 2: Deceased Person (Rarely Used). Naming a courthouse after a deceased person must be carefully considered to protect the integrity and independence of the judicial branch. A courthouse may be named after a deceased person based on *all* the following criteria:
- i. The person made recognizable, significant contributions to the state or national justice system.
  - ii. The person shall have been deceased a minimum of 10 years. The subcommittee deems that 10 years is a reasonable period of time to establish the individual’s character within which unknown facts would come to light. This 10-year period is consistent with the 10-year practice period requirement for consideration for judgeship in the State of California.<sup>1</sup>
  - iii. The person, or the estate of the person, or any otherwise related entity deemed to pose a potential conflict of interest by the subcommittee, does not have any case pending before any court, and no such case is reasonably likely to come before any court, in future litigation.
  - iv. The naming does not present a potential conflict of interest as may be viewed by the public, government entities, or private businesses.
  - v. Consistency with the California Code of Judicial Ethics.

Examples of deceased persons who meet these criteria may include a former president of a state or local bar association, a trial court judge, an appellate court justice, or a state or federal legislator; or may include a former Governor of California or a former Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court, or a member of the United States Supreme Court. Courthouses may not be named for living persons.

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Const., art. VI, § 15. A person is ineligible to be a judge of a court of record unless for 10 years immediately preceding selection, the person has been a member of the State Bar or served as a judge of a court of record in this State.



### C. Process for Naming Courthouses

#### Courthouses will be named by the following process:

1. Requests for courthouse naming will be submitted to the chair of the subcommittee by the presiding judge or assistant presiding judge, or the court executive officer or the administrative presiding justice, or the clerk of the Court of Appeal, or their designee, of the subject court. Concurrently, the chair of the subcommittee will in turn provide the request(s) to the local court or committee as to process and minimum requirements set forth in this policy.
2. The subcommittee will evaluate each proposed name under the standards set forth in this policy.
3. Upon consideration of any request, the chair of the subcommittee will propose requests for names under section 2(a) preference 1, and all requests under section 2 (b) preference 2, for consideration by the CFAC.
4. Upon consideration, the CFAC shall present a recommendation on the name of a courthouse to the Judicial Council, which presentation will include the subcommittee's recommendation.
5. Where appropriate, the chair of the subcommittee will be delegated by the chair of CFAC to approve standard courthouse names under section 2(a) of this policy, on behalf of the CFAC of the Judicial Council. This approval shall be subject to ratification by the Judicial Council. Requests for those names must have been duly submitted under C.1 of this policy.

### D. Designation of Courthouse Names in Building Signage and Plaques

Signage and plaques on buildings shall designate the duly approved names under this policy subject to the following requirements:

1. Standards: All signage and plaques must comply with the requirements of the *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*<sup>2</sup> and its addenda as pertain to signage, use of seals by courts<sup>3</sup> and plaques.
2. Application of courthouse names: Subject to the foregoing, each state courthouse shall have reflected in its exterior signage designated under this policy: "Superior Court of California, County of [County name]" and the Great Seal of the State of California.

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<sup>2</sup> Judicial Council's *California Trial Court Facilities Standards*, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Gov. Code §§ 68074, 68076 *et seq.*

**Judicial Branch Capital Program**  
**Trial Court Capital Projects - Courthouse Names of Projects Completed and in Construction**

April 25, 2014

a	b	c	d
County	Trial Court Capital-Outlay Plan Project Name	Courthouse Names	Project Status
1 Butte	New North Butte County Courthouse	Superior Court of California, North Butte County Courthouse	Construction
2 Calaveras	New San Andreas Courthouse	Superior Court of California, Calaveras County Courthouse	Completed
3 Fresno	New Juvenile Delinquency Court	Fresno County Juvenile Justice Delinquency Court	Completed
4 Fresno	Renovate B.F. Sisk Courthouse	B. F. Sisk Courthouse, County of Fresno	Completed
5 Kings	New Hanford Courthouse	Superior Court of California, County of Kings	Construction
6 Lassen	New Susanville Courthouse	Hall of Justice, Superior Court of California, County of Lassen	Completed
7 Madera	New Madera Courthouse	Superior Court of California, County of Madera	Construction
8 Merced	New Downtown Merced Courthouse	Superior Court of California, County of Merced	Completed
9 Mono	New Mammoth Lakes Courthouse	Mammoth Lakes Courthouse	Completed
10 Plumas/Sierra <sup>3</sup>	New Portola/Loyalton Courthouse	Plumas/Sierra Regional Courthouse	Completed
11 Riverside	New Riverside Mid-County Region Courthouse	Banning Justice Center, Superior Court of California, Riverside County	Construction
12 San Benito	New Hollister Courthouse	Superior Court of California San Benito County	Completed
13 San Bernardino	New San Bernardino Courthouse	San Bernardino Justice Center	Completed
14 San Diego <sup>3</sup>	New Central San Diego Courthouse	San Diego Central Courthouse	Construction
15 San Joaquin <sup>1</sup>	Renovation and Addition to Juvenile Justice Center	County of San Joaquin Juvenile Justice Center	Construction
16 San Joaquin	New Stockton Courthouse	Superior Court of San Joaquin County Stockton Courthouse	Construction
17 Santa Clara <sup>3</sup>	New Santa Clara Family Justice Center	Santa Clara Family Justice Center	Construction
18 Solano <sup>1</sup>	Renovation to Fairfield Old Solano Courthouse	Solano County Courthouse	Construction
19 Sutter <sup>2</sup>	New Yuba City Courthouse	Superior Court of California, County of Sutter	Construction
20 Tulare	New Porterville Courthouse	Superior Court of California, County of Tulare South County Justice Center	Completed
21 Yolo	New Woodland Courthouse	Yolo Superior Court, State of California	Construction

## Footnotes:

1. The current name on the building is likely to remain the same after the project is completed.
2. Standard name is designated pending formal designation by the court.
3. In some cases, the name of the courthouses and the exterior building signage may differ.