

LACBA Commends Los Angeles Superior Court's General Order to Address Court Reporter Crisis

The Los Angeles County Bar Association released the following statement regarding the Superior Court of Los Angeles County's General Order 2024-GEN-011-00.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, September 10, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Los Angeles County Bar Association released the following statement regarding the Superior Court of Los Angeles County's [General Order](#) 2024-GEN-011-00, which will enable a significant number of litigants to access an electronic recording of the proceedings when a court reporter is not available.

"The [Los Angeles County Bar Association \(LACBA\)](#)* commends the decisive action by Los Angeles Superior Court leaders in issuing the General Order on September 5 to ensure that litigants are treated equally and have access to a verbatim record of trial court proceedings, by permitting electronic recording and transcription of the proceedings in certain circumstances where a court-employed, certified shorthand reporter (CSR) is unavailable. The General Order enables Court staff, when requested by a judicial officer after the judicial officer makes certain findings, to operate electronic recording equipment in family law, probate and unlimited civil proceedings when certain factors are met, including when fundamental rights are at stake. The existence of a verbatim record is critical to a litigant's ability to seek relief both on appeal and before the trial court.

The action taken by Court leadership is necessary. The Los Angeles Superior Court and other trial court systems across the state have been sounding an alarm as they face a constitutional crisis due to a shortage of court reporters. To date, California legislators have not successfully responded to calls by the legal community to amend a law, Government Code section 69957, that precludes the electronic recording of trial court proceedings in certain types of cases, namely unlimited civil, family law, and probate cases, while permitting electronic recording of such proceedings in other cases, specifically, limited civil, misdemeanor criminal and infraction proceedings.

On its face and under the current dire circumstances, the existing law discriminates against litigants who cannot afford or otherwise secure a court reporter, by precluding the option to use electronic recording of proceedings to make a verbatim record of trial court proceedings. Not having a record hurts a litigant's chance of achieving success on appeal as well as securing relief

before the trial court. Despite this, California legislators recently shelved a bill, Senate Bill 662 (Rubio), that proposed common sense and much needed amendments to existing law to permit electronic recording of proceedings in civil, family law, and probate cases where a CSR is unavailable. Without a legislative solution, the Court took necessary action to equalize protection of the law and protect the public.

LACBA leaders and members have been part of the discussions with the courts and other stake holders for years in an attempt to find a solution to a problem that significantly impedes access to justice for the most vulnerable members of the public. LACBA was also a strong supporter of Senate Bill 662. It is from this perspective that LACBA recognizes the dire circumstances before the courts and commends and offers its full support for the General Order.

To ensure access to justice and equal treatment of all litigants, the Los Angeles Superior Court has taken the right approach in crafting a procedure that ensures the availability of a verbatim record of trial court proceedings in certain proceedings where a court-employed CSR is unavailable and fundamental rights are at stake.”

About LACBA

LACBA was founded in 1878 and is one of the largest voluntary metropolitan bar associations in the country. LACBA serves legal professionals through its many sections, committees, networking events, live and on-demand CLE programs, and pro bono opportunities. Each year, LACBA members provide millions in pro bono services for community members in need.

*Disclaimer: This statement was authorized by the private sector attorneys serving on LACBA Executive Committee and Board. Judicial officers and employees of Local, State, or Federal Government who serve on the Executive Committee or Board did not participate in the decision to issue this statement. LACBA's Executive Committee and Board issues this statement in its name only and not on behalf of LACBA as a whole, or any other LACBA Section or Committee thereof.

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