

Superior Court of California
COUNTY OF ALAMEDA



Morris Jacobson, Presiding Judge

Chad Finke, Executive Officer

René C. Davidson Courthouse

1225 Fallon Street

Oakland, California 94612

 @AlamedaSuperior

www.alameda.courts.ca.gov

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 2, 2016

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA: Effective January 3, 2017, all clerk's offices in the Superior Court of Alameda County will close at 2:30 p.m., with dropbox service available from 2:30 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. at all filing locations.

*** PUBLIC NOTICE ***

PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 68106

NOTICE OF REDUCTION IN CLERK'S OFFICE HOURS

For several years during the Recession, California's trial courts were subject to severe budget reductions. But while the State's economy has improved in recent years, only a small percentage of that funding has been restored. Further, certain courts—including the Superior Court of Alameda County (Court)—have been deemed to be "donor" courts, which means that large portions of the Court's ongoing funding and any "new" monies restored to the courts through the budget process are actually diverted to other courts that have been deemed to be more under-resourced.

In light of these factors, the Court began Fiscal Year 2016-2017 with a budget deficit of over \$5,000,000. The Court has engaged in ongoing efforts to balance the budget by reducing costs. The many cost-saving solutions implemented by the Court include—but are not limited to—the following:

- Eliminating a number of vacant staff positions;
- Instituting a "hard freeze" of no less than 12 months on filling other positions;
- Instituting a "soft freeze" on all other positions, meaning that any vacant position will be kept vacant for no fewer than 90 days after it opens up;
- Reducing the use of outside contractors and consultants;
- Eliminating the use of overtime or comp time for staff except in certain very narrow instances;
- Utilizing the entire 1% fund balance reserve that the Court is permitted to carry from year to year, thus eliminating any funding "safety net" for this year;
- Reducing expenditures on office supplies;

(continued)

- Reducing printing costs by switching to a postcard format for jury summonses;
- Deferring plans to move a juvenile courtroom from Oakland to San Leandro; and
- Offering staff the ability to participate in a Voluntary Time-Off Program (VTOP), which will necessitate closing most of the courthouses in Alameda County from December 23, 2016, through January 2, 2017.

One significant effect of a number of the above money-saving solutions is that the Court will be operating with a significantly reduced workforce for the foreseeable future. In order to operate at this level and continue to provide critical services to the public, the Court will be required to reduce the operating hours of the clerk's offices in all case types, as detailed below. While the Court regrets the impact of the reduced hours on the public's access to justice, this represents the Court's most viable option for addressing the dire economic circumstances imposed upon it and all other similarly situated "donor courts."

As required under Government Code section 68106, the details of the upcoming reduction in clerk's office hours are as follows:

- Beginning on January 3, 2017, and continuing indefinitely thereafter, the clerk's office hours in all Court locations and for all case types except for Traffic will be from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. In Traffic, the clerk's office hours will be from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- As required under rule 2.210 of the California Rules of Court, drop boxes will be available at each clerk's office location for filings made between 2:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. Filings deposited in any drop box after 4:00 p.m. will be deemed to have been deposited on the next court day, per rule 2.210(c) of the California Rules of Court.
- The cutoff time for submitting a filing by fax under the Court's "Premium Fax Filing" service will be reduced to 4:00 p.m., not 4:30 p.m. as is the case currently. (More information about Fax Filing can be found on the Court's web site at <http://www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/Pages.aspx/Fax-Filing>.)
- Telephone hours in all clerk's offices except for Traffic will be reduced to 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Telephone hours for Traffic clerk's offices—as well as the Jury Services Office—will remain as is, i.e., 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- The public can follow the Court on Twitter [@AlamedaSuperior](https://twitter.com/AlamedaSuperior) for additional up-to-date information regarding the Court.
- The public may provide public comment on these planned reductions in hours in writing, either (a) by mail, directed to Executive Office, 1225 Fallon Street, Room 209, Oakland, CA 94612, ATTN: PRO; or (b) via email at pcomments@alameda.courts.ca.gov.