

NEWS RELEASE

Superior Court of California

County of Alameda

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Court Mandates Furloughs to Close Budget Gap

Staff to take one of two Fridays a month as unpaid time off to help balance \$4.3 million budget shortfall.

Oakland, Calif. – September 6, 2024 – The Superior Court of Alameda County began mandatory furloughs for court staff today as one of many cost cutting efforts necessary to balance a budget that was cut by \$4.3 million due to California’s budget deficit.

Almost every employee will have to take one day a month as unpaid time off as part of the Court’s Mandatory Time Off Program (MTO). Time off will typically be split between two Fridays each month to help keep the Court operating as smoothly as possible.

However, with almost half the staff gone during at least two Fridays each month, customers using the Court are asked to have patience and be aware of limited staffing.

“We felt that we had only two options, either reduce our workforce through layoffs or ask our dedicated staff to sacrifice one day of pay per month,” said Presiding Judge Thomas Nixon. “During these difficult times, we chose to keep all of our staff employed.”

The Court designed the program to ensure all courtrooms will remain open and the business of the court can continue with as small a disruption as possible.

“All departments will remain open during furlough days, and we will do everything in our power to avoid disruption of normal operations,” Nixon said. “Parties and counsel are advised to contact the relevant departments if they have questions about their case.”

In addition to furloughs, the Court has instituted a hiring freeze for new positions and a soft freeze on existing positions. The soft freeze prevents the hiring of a replacement for 90 days after an existing employee leaves their position.

The approved California State Budget for fiscal year 2024-25 reduced the budget for all state courts by \$97 million. As a result of those cuts, the Superior Court of Alameda County had its yearly budget reduced by \$4.3 million.

2024 Court Furlough Days

- September 6 or 20
- October 4 or 18
- November 8 or 27 (Wednesday before Thanksgiving holiday)
- December 26 (Thursday after Christmas) or 31 (Tuesday before New Year's Day)

In addition, Court staff had the option to take an additional four days of leave without pay during the week of Christmas (December 23 – 27). More than 100 staff volunteered to take that time off.

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