

VOLUME 75 | NUMBER 1

JANUARY
2025

RIVERSIDE LAWYER



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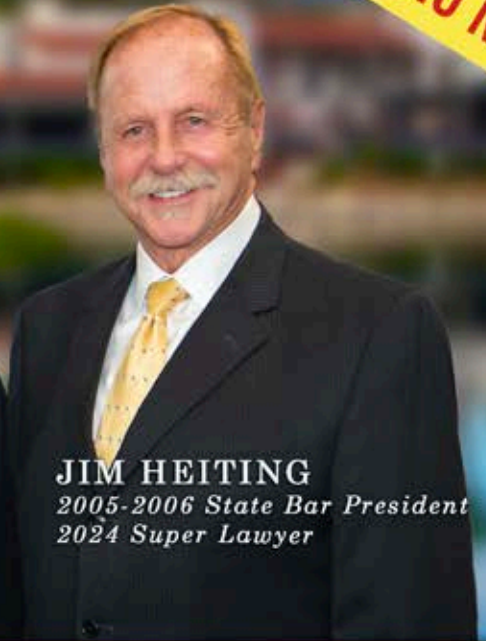
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RIVERSIDE LAWYER

MAGAZINE

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PRESIDENT'S Message

by Mark A. Easter



Welcome 2025

Needless to say, my year serving as RCBA president has not gone as I expected or planned. At the time of my writing this column I am, thankfully, four days away from finally going home, after 5 months in several hospitals and rehabilitation facilities, after complex surgery to fix the effects (basically, the displacement of my internal organs) caused by a rare and extreme case of a herniated diaphragm. Going home will have its own set of challenges, but at least I will be onto the next “phase” of my recovery. I really appreciate each of you who have kept me in your thoughts and



prayers; it means a lot to me and was a real encouragement.

In December, we had another successful season of the RCBA Elves program. Many thanks to those of you who served as money elves, shopping elves, wrapping elves, and/or delivery elves.

The night of January 23 will be the installation dinner for the RCBA and Barristers' Officers for 2024-2025 (postponed to January from September). The dinner will be held at the Mission Inn, beginning at 5:30 pm. I encourage all of you to attend.

January also brings the start of the Riverside County High School Mock Trial program. Attorney scorers are a vital part of the competition. Please consider signing up to score, if you have not already done so. Rounds 1 through 4 will be held on January 21, January 28, February 4, and February 8. Please contact the RCBA for information on how to sign-up.

On behalf of the staff and board members of RCBA, I want to wish each of you a healthy, peaceful, and prosperous 2025.

Mark A. Easter is the president of the RCBA, a partner at Best Best & Krieger LLC, and has been residing and practicing law in Riverside since 1989.

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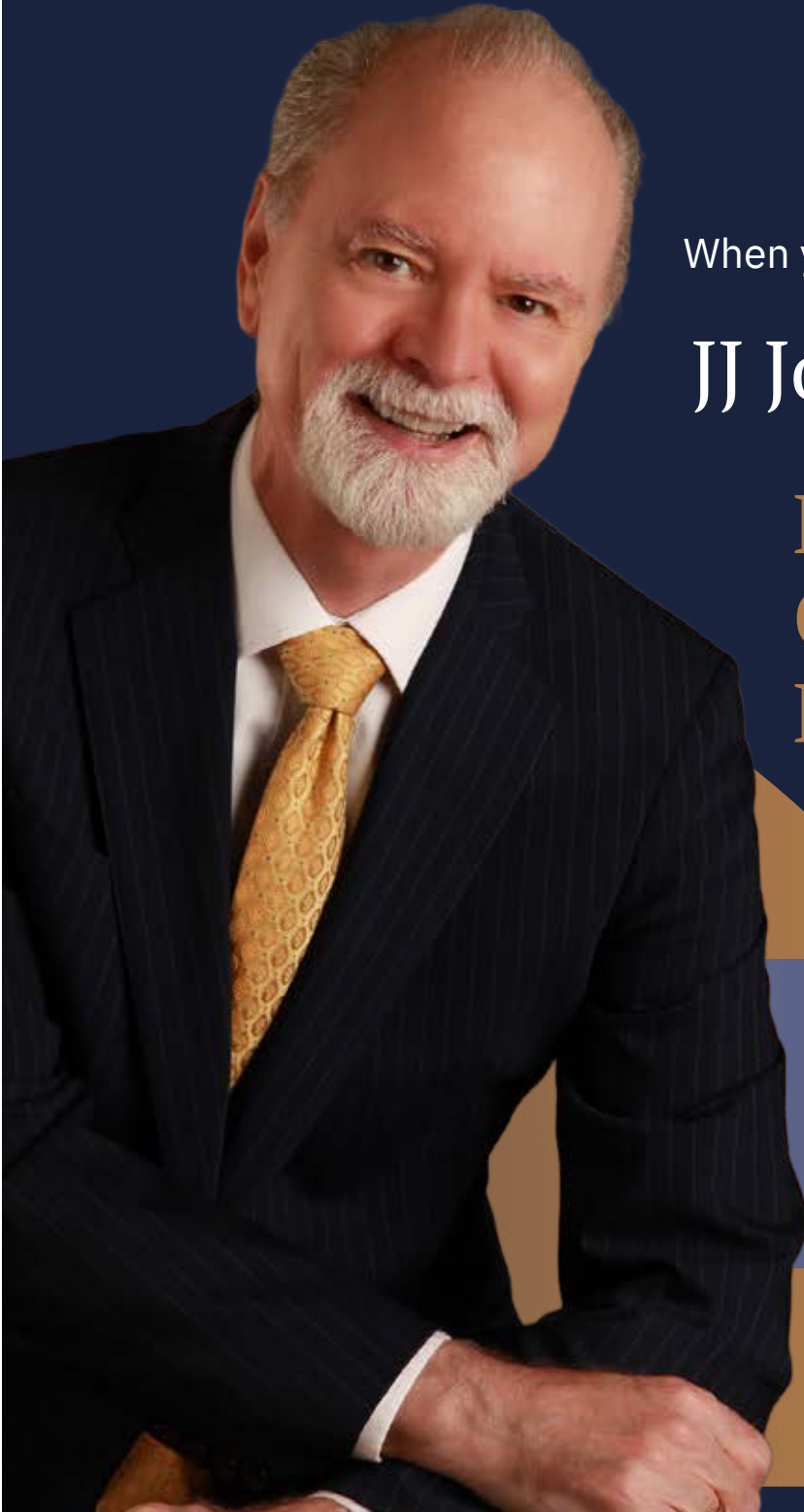
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*Honoring President Mark A. Easter,
the Officers of the RCBA and
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BARRISTERS

President's Message

by Summer M. DeVore



Before we look ahead at 2025, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on what Barristers accomplished in 2024. In my first article as Barristers President, I mentioned the Barristers Triad—educational opportunities, social events, and ways to volunteer. I am happy to say that Barristers achieved all three goals in the last 3 months of 2024.

Social Events. Barristers has continued to host monthly happy hours, including the most recent happy hour on December 11, 2024 with many Barristers wearing festival holiday sweaters.



Volunteering in the Community. On December 11, 2024 before the happy hour, the Barristers gathered to wrap gifts for the RCBA Elves Program. Additionally, members of the Barristers Board volunteered to speak on a panel to aspiring law students and members of Phi Alpha Delta at University of California, Riverside on November 20, 2024.



Education Opportunities. On December 10, 2024, Barristers partnered with JAMS to provide our members with a free CLE on civility presented by Hon. Jackson Lucky (Ret.) and Hon. Elia V. Pirozzi (Ret.).

Barristers will be keeping the good times rolling into 2025! Our goal is to offer a wide range of events and opportunities, so there is something for everyone. Accordingly, our events for the next two months range from our monthly social happy hours, to volunteering as mock trial scoring attorneys, to a day of fun at the happiest place on earth, Disneyland. We truly hope something sparks your interest and you will consider joining us!

Join us at our upcoming events in 2025!

- Barristers "Happy Hour" Mixer: Friday, January 31, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.. Location to be determined.
- Scoring Attorneys for Mock Trial (followed by lunch): Saturday, February 8, 2025 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Robert Presley Hall of Justice. For more details and to register, please visit: <https://Barristers2025MockTrialScoring.eventbrite.com>
- Barristers "Happy Hour" Mixer: Friday, February 21, 2025—Mark your calendars.

If you have an idea for Barristers or are interested in joining a Barristers committee (CLE, social, or community outreach) for the 2024-2025 term, I encourage you to contact me or any of the other Board members. I can be reached at (951) 783-9470 or summer.devore@streamkim.com.

Stay up to date by following us!

For additional information about our upcoming events and updates, please visit Barristers:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RCBABarristers/>

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Barristers Board Spotlight: Amanda K. Perez, 2024-2025 Member-at-Large

Amanda is an associate attorney at Reid & Hellyer, APC, where her main area of practice is business litigation. This is her first year serving on the Barristers Board as a member-at-large. She is also a member of the San Diego Inn of Court, and the Federalist Society. In her spare time, she enjoys watching College gymnastics competitions, walking her dog, Alfalfa, and staying apprised of constitutional law issues. She was a competitive gymnast from the age of 4 to 21 and was the Western National Uneven Bar Champion at the age of 17. Amanda was a national competitor all the way to college, where she was a part of the Sacramento State Women's Gymnastics team for three years.

Summer M. DeVore is an attorney with Stream Kim Hicks Wrage & Alfaro, PC in downtown Riverside where she specializes in business litigation. She is also a member of the Leo A. Deegan Inn of Court. Summer can be reached at summer.devore@streamkim.com.

California Civil Discovery Act 2024: Initial Disclosures

by Boyd Jensen

The purpose of this article is to brief practitioners about the new changes to the California Civil Discovery Act pertaining to civil actions, filed in California civil courts after January 1, 2024, pertaining to "initial disclosures." These changes mirror long standing Federal discovery methods. For context, Discovery Rules in Federal Courts generally, and those specific to the Central District will be briefly summarized, and concluding with observations pertaining to corporate/business clients, as opposed to individuals.

Federal Rules of Civil Procedure: Discovery

- A. *Initial Disclosures.* Federal Rule 26(a)(1), refers to "initial disclosures" exchanged "within 14 days" after the parties Rule 26(f) conference, or a different time set by stipulation or court order. The required disclosures (Rule 26(a)(1)(A)) include: (1) identity and contact information of witnesses or other individual likely to have discoverable information, unless solely for impeachment; (2) documents, electronically stored information, and tangible things used to support allegations, unless solely for impeachment; (3) the nature and extent of all damages; and (4) insurance agreements, under which an insurance business may be liable to satisfy all or part of a possible judgment in the action or to indemnify or reimburse for payments made to satisfy the judgment.
- B. *Supplemental Disclosures.* A party is also under a continuing duty to supplement its initial disclosures "if the party learns that in some material respect the disclosure or response is incomplete or incorrect, and if the (Rule 26(e)(1)(A)).
- C. *Sanctions.* A Federal court has authority under Rule 37 to impose sanctions for a variety of discovery abuses (Rule 37(b)(3) including failing to provide or supplement initial disclosures (Rule 37(c)). The rule provides that "[i]f a party fails to provide information or identify a witness as required by Rule 26(a) or (e), the party is not allowed to use that information or witness to supply evidence on a motion, at a hearing, or at a trial, unless the failure was substantially justified or harmless." (Rule 37(c)(1)).

Federal Central District Rules of Civil Procedure: Discovery

Federal district judges often have standing orders, specific to civil cases, which govern discovery, which may address initial disclosures. Central District Local rules mir-

ror Federal Rules e.g. Rule 26 with Local Rule (L.R.) 26-1 through L.R. 3.5, though not dealing *specifically* with "initial disclosures," yet important to all discovery including that, which would qualify for disclosure and the manner in which it is documented.

California Rules of Civil Procedure (CCP) 2024: Discovery

Changes to California's Civil Discovery Act for cases filed after January 1, 2024, are closely aligned with the federal initial disclosure requirements. California increased the amount of monetary sanctions for discovery abuses, yet giving courts more latitude in refusing to award sanctions. The statute does exempt persons without an attorney.

- A. *Initial Disclosures.* Pursuant to CCP § 2016.090(a), civil cases filed after January 1, 2024, subject to exceptions; for example, unlawful detainer matters, may now demand initial disclosures. Once a demand is served by any party, all other parties have 60 days to respond. Verified initial disclosures must include:
 - (1) the identities and contact information of persons likely to have discoverable information, along with the subjects of that information, that the disclosing party may use to support its claims or defenses or that is relevant;
 - (2) a description of all documents that the disclosing party may use to support its claims or defenses or that is relevant; and
 - (3) any insurance policy contracts or provisions that may provide for indemnity or reimbursement for payments made to satisfy any judgment.
- B. *Supplemental Disclosures.* CCP § 2016.090(a) provides the option to demand supplemental disclosures twice before the initial trial setting, and once after the initial trial date is set. Upon good cause, the court may also order one additional supplemental demand. There is no continuing obligation to supplement absent a demand.
- C. *Sanctions.* CCP § 2023.050 of the Civil Discovery Act was amended to increase the sanctions courts may award for discovery abuse, from \$250 to \$1,000, in addition to current sanctions awarding attorneys' fees. However, it allows courts the discretion, in excusing the sanction, upon written find-

ings that the party subject to sanctions, acted with "substantial justification" or "circumstances make the imposition of the sanction unjust." Finally, and of great interest, as it varies substantially from Federal Rules, protections for unrepresented parties, include a rebuttable presumption that an unrepresented natural person acted in good faith at the time of sanctionable conduct, only to be overcome by clear and convincing evidence.

Practitioner Perspective

As a practitioner of civil law, and primarily within state courts of California, albeit occasionally in Utah and Wyoming, (where they almost always follow federal practice discovery rules), I prefer the option of initial disclosures, either based upon federal rules, or the amended California codification. However, I have seen some challenges depending upon the client. I have found that representing businesses provides multiple individuals, with perhaps broader knowledge of relevant facts or increased resources, than will generally be obtained in an initial client conference or even follow up phone calls. Representing an individual, unaccustomed to legal jargon and disclosure methods, without the aid of corporate officers or employees, may require greater effort to ensure nothing relevant is unintentionally overlooked.

It is a privilege to practice law, and in working with individuals, morals and right and wrong always seem to come

in to play. That is natural, but sometimes it produces bias, which impedes the ability of a non-lawyer, to transparently look at potential witnesses and documents – both favorably or otherwise. Prospective clients have already made an assessment that they are right, and what they believe supports that assessment. That is a valuable place to start, but may overlook important *relevant/discoverable* facts, both favorable and otherwise, which litigation attorneys are skilled to recognize.

Boyd Jensen is a member of the RCBA Publications Committee, an Advocate Member of the American Board of Trial Attorneys, and has been rated AV Preeminent for over 35 years.



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Changes in the New Year – Motions for Summary Judgment

by Andrew G. Saghian and Kate A. Peters

Assembly Bill (“AB”) No. 2049 Modifies The Summary Judgment Statute To Provide Revised Filing Deadlines, Limit Multiple Filings, and Restrict The Contents Of Reply Briefs

On July 15, 2024, the Governor signed into law AB 2049, which makes certain changes to Code of Civil Procedure section 437c. AB 2049 is the first structural change to California’s summary judgment law since the early 2000s. This bill changes the filing deadlines, the number of motions parties may file, and the permissibility of introducing new evidence. This article briefly analyzes AB 2049’s changes, as well as potential implications for civil litigators going forward.

Deadlines and Requirements Before AB 2049. The statute previously required a party to file for summary judgment at least 75 days before the hearing on the motion, all opposition papers to be filed at least 14 days before the hearing, and any reply, on behalf of the moving party, to be filed at least 5 days before the hearing.

The statute theoretically allowed parties to file numerous summary judgment motions, permitting attorneys to use piecemeal motion practice. Such a strategy allowed litigants to address individual elements or causes of action as new evidence emerged.

Additionally, before AB 2049, the summary judgment statute did not specifically prohibit including new evidence on reply. However, even in the absence of an explicit restriction, courts consistently adhered to the general principle that a party seeking summary judgment may not rely on new evidence on a reply that was not part of the original motion or the opposing party’s response.

Changes Under AB 2049. All parties will now have 6 additional calendar days to file their briefs. The moving party is now required to file the notice of motion and all supporting papers at least 81 days before the hearing (plus time for service), all opposition papers must be filed 20 days before the hearing, and the reply brief must be filed 11 days before the hearing.

AB 2049 also makes substantive changes consistent with existing legal principles.

Specifically, AB 2049 prohibits any party from filing multiple motions for summary judgment against an adverse party, unless they first obtain permission from the court. Although this amendment may restrict certain filing strategies, filing a subsequent motion is not precluded upon a showing of good cause, such as where new evidence, not reasonably available at the time of the initial filing, is discovered.

Finally, AB 2049 expressly restricts the content of the movant’s reply brief. AB 2049 expressly prohibits the introduction of new evidence or material facts in a reply brief that were not included in the initial motion or opposition, a principle long recognized in summary judgment practice.

AB 2049’s Implications. The filing deadline extensions are expected to have little, if any, impact on litigants’ day-to-day activities. After all, the filing deadlines are only extended by about a week, and they apply across the board to everyone. With that being said, these changes provide courts with more time to process, review, and analyze the parties’ evidence and substantive arguments.

The requirement for court approval and a showing of good cause for filing multiple summary judgment motions may prove more impactful to litigants than the filing deadline changes. This change may affect the approach attorneys take in seeking summary judgment, perhaps waiting to file until most pretrial discovery is completed.

Lastly, AB 2049’s express restriction on the contents of the movant’s reply brief codifies the general rule against new evidence in reply briefs, and, therefore, it is unlikely to have great substantive impact. Still, there may be some discussion on whether parties are permitted to address the opposing side’s arguments, provided they refrain from introducing new evidence or raising additional points.

Andrew G. Saghian, chair of the RCBA Civil Litigation Section, is a litigation associate in Best Best & Krieger’s Municipal practice group. He assists clients with navigating all aspects and stages of litigation at both the trial and appellate levels.

Kate A. Peters is an associate attorney in Best Best & Krieger’s Municipal practice group.



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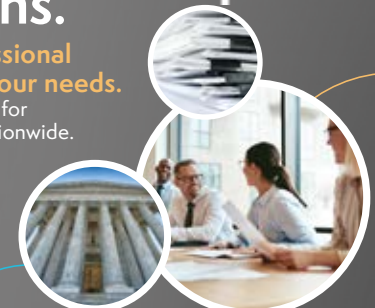


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Harmonizing Adult Incapacitated Child Support and Government Benefits: California's Family Code Section 3910

by Michelanne Hrubic

On January 1, 2025, California will implement a significant change in how our family courts can structure support payments for incapacitated adult children. Assembly Bill 2397, signed into law by Governor Newsom on June 26, 2024, amends California Family Code section 3910, to address a longstanding conflict between court-ordered support and government benefits. The amendment empowers courts to direct support payments into special needs trusts, enabling incapacitated adult children to maximize their available resources by maintaining both parental support and government aid without penalty.

Pursuant to California Family Code section 3910, both parents must support their incapacitated children of whatever age who cannot earn a living. It is worth noting that the obligation of both parents to support their adult incapacitated child remains regardless of the adult child's receipt of government aid. This obligation continues indefinitely for adult children who are incapacitated from earning a living and lack sufficient means for self-support. A common misconception that I have encountered is that government aid relieves parents of their support obligations. This incorrect belief effectively shifts the entire financial burden to public resources, forcing taxpayers to shoulder costs that should be shared by both parents. This outcome contradicts public policy by making the disabled adult unnecessarily dependent on government assistance when parental resources are available.

The primary requirement pursuant to section 3910 for ongoing support is that the disability must have manifested before the age of majority. This timing effectively precludes these individuals from receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), making other forms of support necessary. It must be proven that the adult child has a mental or physical disability that impacts their life to the extent that they cannot earn a living. The court must make a factual determination of such. In fact, if the adult child receives SSI it provides a strong argument to the court to make that finding for the sheer fact that the Social Security Administration uses extensive criteria to determine an individual's eligibility for SSI based on the extent their disability impacts their life.

Previously, court-ordered support payments had the potential to create an unintended penalty for recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI). SSI, unlike Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), is means-tested and available to low-income individuals whose disabilities prevent them from earning a living. Under federal law, SSI counts two-thirds of child support payments as income, potentially reducing benefits significantly for those who receive court-ordered support.

A court-ordered adult child support payment affects SSI benefits in specific ways. For example, if an incapacitated adult child receives \$1,000 per month in support payments, SSI considers \$666.77 of this amount as countable income. In California, the maximum SSI benefit is approximately \$1,200 per month, but this amount is reduced by countable income. Therefore, receiving court-ordered support payments created the result in a lower total monthly SSI award.

In the Spring of 2024, I witnessed firsthand how section 3910 previously created unintended hardships for families. After successfully obtaining a support order for my client's adult incapacitated son who was receiving SSI, what should have been a victory became bittersweet. While the court-ordered support was meant to improve her son's quality of life, the Social Security Administration reduced his SSI benefits to account for this new "income." This reduction effectively diminished the intended benefit of the support order, highlighting a significant flaw in the system - despite the support being specifically for the adult child's care, it was treated as his countable income that reduced essential government benefits. This case exemplified why the amendment to Section 3910 was necessary.

The amendment to section 3910 by way of Assembly Bill 2397 addresses this issue by allowing courts to direct support payments into special needs trusts established under California Probate Code section 3604. This arrangement offers several benefits because the assets in a special needs trust do not affect a beneficiary's SSI eligibility. Further, recipients can maintain both government aid and court-ordered support. The trust structure preserves the access to any other fed-

eral welfare programs that the person may be eligible to receive.

The California legislature clearly intended to ensure that adult children with significant impairments can benefit from both government aid and court-ordered support without penalty. This amendment aligns California law with federal assumptions about special needs trust usage for support payments while ensuring that parents fulfill their legal obligations to support their incapacitated adult children rather than shifting the burden entirely to public resources.

It is worth noting that we should advise our family law clients to work with an estate planning attorney that specializes in special needs trusts as there are different types of special needs trusts in existence. In addition, as family law practitioners we should work in conjunction with that attorney to provide the family court a declaration wherein counsel states the recipient trust meets both federal and state requirements.

The 2024 amendment to Family Code section 3910 marks a significant shift in California family law, bridging the longstanding gap between parental support obligations and government benefits. By authorizing courts to direct support payments into a special needs trust, the legislature has created a sophisticated

mechanism that serves multiple necessary purposes: preserving essential government benefits, enforcing parental support obligations, and maximizing available resources for incapacitated adult children's care. The Family Code as amended reflects California's understanding that supporting vulnerable residents requires both private family responsibility and public assistance working in tandem, not in opposition.

For us as family law practitioners, the amendment provides a practical tool to craft support arrangements that achieve their fundamental purpose - enhancing the quality of life for incapacitated adult children who require ongoing care. We should develop relationships with estate planning attorneys who possess sophistication with special needs trusts. With a collaborative approach we can help ensure this legislative advancement fulfills its promise of providing comprehensive financial security for one of California's most vulnerable populations.

Michellanne Hrubic is the co-chair of the Riverside County Bar Association's Family Law Section, a board member of the Leo A. Deegan Inn of Court, and sole practitioner at the Law Offices of Michellanne Hrubic. Her practice is devoted exclusively to family law.



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New Year – New Laws for Employers and Employees in 2025

by Michelle Wolfe

With the new year comes new labor and employment laws. The California legislature focused on strengthening existing laws to expand workers' rights. While the statutes enacted are less numerous than in previous years, California employers should be aware that starting in January, the laws enacted will result in important changes. Below is a summary of some of the notable new laws, and unless otherwise noted, all take effect on January 1, 2025.

Increased Wages/Minimum Wage

If it had not been narrowly rejected by voters, Proposition 32 would have increased the state minimum wage to \$18.00 an hour for large and medium-sized employers and \$17.00 an hour for employers with 25 or fewer employees.

Nonetheless, the minimum wage will increase to \$16.50 an hour. This means the test to qualify for the primary exemptions will increase from \$66,560 per year (\$1,280 per week) in 2024 to a salary of at least \$68,640 annually or \$5,720 monthly. In addition, many cities and local governments around California have enacted their own minimum wage ordinances, which exceed the state minimum wage requirements. (San Francisco: \$17.50 per hour; Pasadena and West Hollywood: \$19.65 per hour, San Diego: \$17.25). However, local minimum wage requirements do not affect the salary threshold for exempt employees. As always, to qualify as exempt, employees must also satisfy the strict duties test.

Additionally, specific industries have increased the hourly wage. For example, as of last year, certain fast-food workers must be paid \$20.00 per hour due to a change in the law. The California Fast Food Council can raise the minimum wage at any time, effective January 1, 2025.

In October, the state law kicked in, requiring certain healthcare employees to be paid a minimum of \$23.00 an hour through June 30, 2025, which will then increase to \$24.00 an hour. The minimum wage will increase another dollar per hour on July 1, 2026.

Moreover, the Computer Professionals' salary exemption will increase from \$115,763.55 annually and \$55.58 per hour in 2024 to \$118,657.43 annually and \$56.97 per hour, with a minimum monthly salary of \$9,888.13.

Licensed physicians and surgeons, including dentist salary exemption, will increase from \$101.22 to \$103.75 per hour.

Sick Leave Expansion

AB 2123 extends the use of sick days to assist any family member who is a victim of certain types of violent

incidents or threats of violence. It is no longer limited to direct victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. In addition, agricultural employers must now allow employees to use paid sick leave to avoid smoke, heat, or flooding conditions created by situations declared a local or state emergency.

Paid Family Leave

AB 2123 eliminates California employers' ability to require their employees to use up two weeks of accrued vacation time before they start receiving Paid Family Leave benefits under the EDD's paid family leave program.

Captive Audience Meetings Banned

Under the "California Worker Freedom for Employer Intimidation Act," employers are prohibited from discharging, discriminating, or retaliating against employees who refuse to attend any employer-sponsored meeting related to religious, political, or matters related to the decision to support or not support labor unions. This Act does not apply to religious institutions, political organizations, education institutions, or any employer required to discuss these matters by law. There are significant penalties for requiring attendance at such meetings.

Restrictions on Drivers' Licenses for Job Openings

California employers cannot require or tell job applicants that a driver's license will be required for a job. SB 1100 prohibits employers from including statements in job advertisements, job applications, or other employment staffing materials requiring applicants to possess a driver's license unless the employer can demonstrate that it (1) reasonably suspects driving to be one of the job functions of the positions and (2) reasonably believes that using an alternative form of transportation (biking, public transportation, etc.) that does not require a driver's license would not be comparable in travel time or cost to the employer.

Anti-Discrimination Law Expansion

California adopted the concept of intersectionality into its anti-discrimination law. Specifically, SB 1137 clarifies that the California Fair Employment and Housing Act ("FEHA"), among other laws, prohibits discrimination not just based on individual protected traits but also based on the intersectionality of two or more protected traits. In particular, the amended law clarifies that the protected characteristics enumerated in the statute include a combination of those characteristics. The Legislature defines intersectionality as "an analytical framework that sets forth that

different forms of inequality operate together, exacerbate each other, and can result in amplified forms of prejudice and harm." Further, the Legislature recognized:

"[W]here two or more bases for discrimination or harassment exist, they cannot be neatly reduced to distinct components. The attempt to bisect a person's identity at the combination of multiple protected characteristics often distorts or ignores the particular nature of their experiences. When a person claims multiple bases for discrimination or harassment, it may be necessary to determine whether the discrimination or harassment occurred on the basis of a combination of those factors, not just based on any one protected characteristic by itself."

AB 1815 also amends the definition of "race" in the California Government and Education Codes anti-discrimination provisions. Under the amendments, race includes "traits associated with race, including but not limited to hair texture and protective hairstyles." Under the new law, "protective hairstyles" include "braids, locs, and twists."

Freelance Worker Protection Act

The "Freelance Worker Protection Act" protects individual independent contractors in the private sector who are paid at least \$250 for their professional services for contracts entered after January 2025. The law requires workers to be paid on, or before, the date in the contract and not later than 30 days after completion of services if payment timing is not stated in the contract. SB 988 expands protections for freelance workers and requires hiring organization to provide a written contract containing, at minimum, the name and address of the hiring organization and freelance worker, an itemized list of all services that will be provided, the date of pay, and the date by which the freelance worker will provide a list of services rendered under the contract.

Crime Victim Leave Expansion

AB 2499 expands the list of reasons employees are permitted to take protective leave, including assisting family members who are victims of specified crimes. The law also allows paid sick leave for this purpose. The definition of "victim" has been expanded to include a victim of a "Qualifying act of violence" regardless of whether anyone is arrested for, prosecuted for, or convicted of committing any crime, including domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking involving bodily injury or death, use of a weapon, or use or threat of deadly force. This law requires employers to provide written notice to (1) new hires, (2) all employees annually, (3) at any time upon request, and (4) any time the employer becomes newly aware that an employee or an employee's family member is a victim.

Social Compliance Audits

Businesses conducting voluntary, nongovernmental social compliance studies will be required to post the audit results on their website. Such audits include, but are not

limited to, evaluating whether the organization complies with wage and hour laws and health and safety regulations.

Changes in Posted Notices

California law requires employers to post notices informing employees of their rights under workers' compensation laws. Under AB 1870, employers will need to obtain an updated workers' compensation poster that, in addition to existing requirements, informs employees that they may consult with a licensed attorney to advise them of their rights under workers' compensation laws.

Similarly, California law requires employers to display a list of employees' rights and responsibilities under the state's whistleblower laws. AB 2299 required the California Labor Commissioner to develop a model notice that complies with existing requirements. It can be found on their website at <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/whistleblowersnotice.pdf>. This new posting law does not, however, add to or change the existing law on the protection of whistleblowers in the workplace.

Conclusion

This article does not address all new California laws that impact employers or employees; rather, it summarizes those believed to be the most significant in terms of scope and impact on individuals or employees with business operations in California. Employers with employees in California should review their personnel policies, employee handbooks, and training to comply with these new laws.

Michelle M. Wolfe is Senior Counsel at the Sloat Law Group, APC in Palm Desert. Her practice focuses on representing employers and management on labor and employment matters in litigation and in providing workplace solutions.



The poster features a large graphic of a scale of justice with the words "SEEKING JUSTICE" written across it. In the top right corner is the logo for the Civil Rights Institute, Inland Southern California. The main text reads: "A PANEL DISCUSSION of Police Misconduct Cases". Below this, the date and time are listed: "January 21 6 PM-7:30 PM" and "Doors Open 5:30". The location is "3933 Mission Inn Avenue, Ste 102 Riverside, CA 92501". The moderator is identified as "Moderator: Andrew I Roth, civil rights and police misconduct lawyer, retired." Three panelists are shown with circular headshots: "Dale Galipo, Law Office of Dale K. Galipo, winner of 60 jury trials, veteran of many police misconduct trials"; "Brian Dunn, lawyer, managing attorney, The Cochran Firm, Los Angeles"; and a third individual whose name is partially obscured.

Life Lessons for Lawyers: Old Sayings to Inspire Your Practice in the New Year

by Jeremiah Raxter

As the New Year begins, attorneys across all areas of practice reflect on how to improve their approach to the law, their relationships with clients, and their overall effectiveness. While the legal profession often revolves around precision, strategy, and case law, timeless life lessons and age-old sayings can provide a fresh perspective.

1. "Measure twice, cut once."

For years, I thought my father made this up just to torment me when I tried to remember a number and was halfway through cutting the board. Turns out, it's a real saying from carpentry that emphasizes the importance of preparation and accuracy. In law—and in life—preparation is everything. Whether drafting contracts, preparing for trial, or filing motions, double-checking your work can prevent costly (and occasionally mortifying) mistakes. Attorneys can apply this lesson by implementing a review process, seeking peer feedback, and never rushing through crucial details.

2. "Don't put all your eggs in one basket."

I love a good farming adage. Diversity is as essential in legal practice as it is in investments. Lawyers in private practice should avoid relying too heavily on a single client, case type, or practice area. Changes in law, societal developments, or industry shifts can impact certain legal specialties, so broadening your skillset and client base is key to long-term stability. This also applies to all lawyers as this principle encourages lawyers to explore multiple strategies in their cases. Having a backup plan or alternative argument can be the difference between success and failure.

3. "You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar."

It's funny that some lawyers have to be reminded that it's completely acceptable to be civil. This old saying underscores the value of kindness and diplomacy. While the legal profession often involves adversarial situations, a respectful and cooperative demeanor can yield better results for your clients and morale. Building positive relationships with opposing counsel, judges, and clients can make negotiations smoother and open doors to creative solutions. Remember, civility is not a weakness but rather a strength that can enhance your reputation and effectiveness.

4. "It's not what you know; it's who you know."

Like most professions, the legal world thrives on relationships—and sometimes a little luck. I'm fortunate to work in Riverside County, where you practice with the same attorneys, court staff, judicial officers, regularly. It's a small world, so networking with colleagues, joining bar associations, and staying on good terms with opposing counsel and with former clients can lead to opportunities, referrals, and the occasional last-minute miracle. Sure, your legal smarts are essential, but let's face it: a well-timed introduction or the goodwill of a colleague can open doors that even the fanciest law school diploma never could. So, shake some hands, grab a coffee, and never underestimate the power of being likable.

5. "Rome wasn't built in a day."

Along with preparedness - patience and perseverance are essential in the legal profession. Cases can drag on for months or even years and building a solid reputation or a thriving practice takes time. This adage reminds lawyers to stay committed to long-term goals, even when immediate results are not visible. Celebrate small victories along the way, and trust that consistent effort will yield results over time.

6. "Don't burn your bridges."

The legal world can be surprisingly small, especially within niche practice areas or local jurisdictions. How you treat others today can impact your reputation and opportunities in the future. Whether it's a former employer, an opposing counsel, or a difficult client, leave relationships on good terms whenever possible. You never know when a past connection might resurface.

7. "You can't pour from an empty cup."

Self-care is essential for maintaining professional performance and fosters civility. Lawyers, don't forget, your staff often face high stress and demanding workloads, but neglecting personal well-being can lead to burnout. Take this lesson to heart by setting boundaries, taking breaks, and prioritizing your (and your staff's) mental and physical health. A healthier office will be better equipped to serve clients effectively.

8. "Make hay while the sun shines."

Back to another farming adage. This one reminds lawyers to seize opportunities while the conditions are favorable. Whether it's filing motions promptly or taking

advantage of favorable settlements, timing can be everything. Stay proactive and don't let valuable chances slip by.

9. "You reap what you sow."

This classic saying underscores the value of hard work and integrity. The effort you put into your cases, relationships, and professional growth will yield corresponding results. By consistently sowing seeds of diligence, honesty, and care, you'll build a thriving practice.

10. "Don't count your chickens before they hatch."

In the legal profession, confidence is great—until it isn't. Never assume a case outcome, settlement, or agreement is in the bag until the ink is dry and the judge has signed off. Being overly optimistic can leave you with egg on your face, and worse, it can disappoint your clients. Manage expectations like you manage deadlines: care-

fully, deliberately, and with a slight over-preparation for disaster.

11. "Know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em."

As the great Kenny Rogers said, "Know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em." In my opinion, one of the attorney's most important jobs is to give the client an honest, unemotional, analysis of their situation. Attorneys must assess when to pursue litigation aggressively and when to advise clients to cut their losses and settle. Good judgment and the ability to weigh risks versus rewards are critical skills that every lawyer should continuously refine.

Jeremiah Raxter is the principal attorney at Raxter Law, P.A. and is the Chair of the RCBA Estate Planning/Probate/Elder Law Section.



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The Props – Perspective of a Deputy Public Defender

by Juanita E. Mantz

In 2016, the California legislature passed Proposition 47, which reclassified all petty thefts as misdemeanors regardless of prior theft convictions. Prior to Proposition 47, a petty theft could be charged as a felony resulting in a prison sentence of up to three years if they had the requisite petty theft priors on their record.

This law also resulted in many people being charged with third strikes and receiving life sentences for crimes as minor as stealing a piece of pizza. (The Three Strikes law was later amended to mandate that the life sentence third strike must be a serious or violent felony).

In California, Proposition 36 just passed making petty theft a felony again if one has the requisite prior convictions. This means that someone can go to prison for stealing food or clothing.

This was the rationale used by the drafters of the law that I pulled from the voter guide at calmatters.org:

Since then, prosecutors, police and big box retailers have blamed the law for an increase in property crimes and homelessness. Prop. 36 is their attempt to unwind Prop. 47.

During the pandemic, the rate of shoplifting and commercial burglaries skyrocketed, especially in Los Angeles, Alameda, San Mateo and Sacramento counties. Statewide, the Public Policy Institute of California found that reported shoplifting of merchandise worth up to \$950 soared 28% over the past five years. That's the highest observed level since 2000.

Combining shoplifting with commercial burglaries, the institute's researchers found that total reported thefts were 18% higher than in 2019."¹

The law undoing Proposition 47 passed by a landslide (by 68.6 percent). But what the supporters did not tell people is that petty theft is often coupled with poverty and homelessness. The solution is not jail, but services. Feed people. House them. Give them recovery options.

Let me tell you about a client I had. (Details have been changed to protect anonymity.) This was more than a decade ago when petty theft with priors could be charged as a felony. My client had stolen a soda and candy and then shoes on two different occasions. He had a strike prior and multiple theft priors. He was borderline IQ, was living on the streets, and had addiction issues. He was high when he stole the items, but juries do not like voluntary intoxication defenses which defeats the intent requirement for theft, so we lost at trial. The judge refused to give him probation and sentenced him to multiple years as the strike doubled his sentence. She disregarded the fact that his mother abandoned him, along with his low IQ.

The day the judge handed down his sentence was the day I decided I couldn't do general felony trials any longer. It was

too heartbreaking. I wanted out and swiftly transitioned into mental health law and started finding clients programming to avoid prison.

And ironically enough, after the passage of Proposition 47 in 2016, my client was resentenced and released from prison early, and he was killed at a gas station by someone robbing the store. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time. I always think back and ask myself what if we had been able to get him probation and a program back then. Would he still be alive? Would his sister still have her brother?

Laws are an accurate reflection of who we are as a society. If laws are punitive and retributive, then that is who we are as a society. If corporate profit is more important than people's lives and freedom, then what does that say about our values as a nation?

I know it's a cliché, but we will reap what we sow. We will create a world where some people are thrown away to the wolves if this continues.

All of the people I represent are poor. They must fall below the poverty line for us to be appointed to represent them. Many are mentally ill and have been victimized and have a long history of trauma. People act as if crime is unrelated to environment. I'm sorry if you have stock in 7-11, Wal-Mart or CVS, but if people are stealing food, there's a simple reason. They're hungry,

We are all props in a broken system. I play a lawyer, the prosecutor is the charger, the judge is the decision-maker, and my client is at the mercy of this system. And do I really have much power if a prosecutor can charge my client with a felony for stealing food? There will be little I can do about it. Yes, I can move to reduce the case to a misdemeanor based on the low level conduct, but there are no guarantees and most felony clients, especially mine, are incarcerated unless they can post bail.

Questions are swirling in my head: How can I continue this work? Why is this system so harsh? Am I helping to perpetuate an unjust system? Look I get it. Laws are needed and necessary. People think lawlessness is rampant. But what is truly rampant in my humble opinion, is a blatant disregard for our fellow humans. As a deputy public defender, what I see on a day to day basis is that people need help. These are people who are struggling, homeless, and all alone.

Adrift in this land we call the USA.

Juanita E. Mantz is a deputy public defender in Riverside specializing in Penal Code section 1368 and mental health law. She has two award winning creative nonfiction books, Tales of an Inland Empire Girl and Portrait of a Deputy Public Defender or how I became a punk rock lawyer, along with a podcast where she interviews writers on writing. These views are hers and hers alone as an individual and a writer.



¹ See <https://calmatters.org/california-voter-guide-2024/propositions/prop-36-crime-penalties/>.



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The E. Aurora Hughes Meritorious Award for Service 2013: A Tribute to Associate Justice Thomas E. Hollenhorst

by Presiding Justice Manuel A. Ramirez

This article in the January *Riverside Lawyer* is a tribute to my former colleague, Associate Justice Thomas E. Hollenhorst, who passed away January 14, 2024. Justice Hollenhorst was one of the longest serving members of our Court of Appeal having served almost 29 years, from August 26, 1988, to August 1, 2017. He was a beloved colleague and we miss him very much. As Oliver Wendell Holmes reminds us, "Continuity with the past is a necessity, not a duty.

(The following is taken from remarks delivered by Presiding Justice Manuel A. Ramirez at the Annual Installation Dinner of the Riverside County Bar Association ~ September 19, 2013)

When Jackie Carey-Wilson asked me to introduce my colleague and our friend, Associate Justice Thomas E. Hollenhorst, as this year's recipient of the E. Aurora Hughes Meritorious Award for Service, my first thought was, how wonderful and appropriate that Justice Hollenhorst should be recognized in this way.

My second thought was what exactly is the E. Aurora Hughes Meritorious Award for Service?

It's not that I hadn't heard of it; of course, I had. But, with this being only the third year the award has been given, I wasn't as familiar with it, as, perhaps, I should have been.

I did know, of course, that this was an award established in 2011, in honor of quite an amazing woman. Aurora Hughes lost her battle that year to ALS, or, as we know, Lou Gehrig's disease and she was given this award that year, posthumously.

I knew Aurora professionally, having met her many times through Bar activities, and like everyone else, I held her in the highest esteem and in the highest regard. If the other recipients of the award given in her name, are expected to measure up to her standards and her commitment to this community and to our Bar Association, then you will have your work cut out for you in finding those deserving to receive the E. Aurora Hughes Meritorious Award for Service.

But you did a good job this year. In fact, you did a great job! Tom Hollenhorst graduated from San Jose State in 1968 and received his Juris Doctorate from Hastings School of Law in 1971. The following year, he started work-



Justice Thomas E. Hollenhorst

ing for the Riverside County District Attorney as a Deputy District Attorney.

He became an Assistant District Attorney in 1977, and he was the Acting District Attorney in 1981. Shortly thereafter, Governor Jerry Brown appointed him to the Riverside Municipal Court, and, in 1986, Governor George Deukmejian elevated him to the Riverside Superior Court. Then, in 1988, Governor Deukmejian appointed Judge Hollenhorst to the Fourth District Court of Appeal, Division Two, as an Associate Justice.

Now, 25 years later, in the modern era of our Court of Appeal, Justice Hollenhorst is the longest sitting Associate Justice to ever serve here in Division Two.

Like Aurora Hughes, Justice Hollenhorst's career has been so much more than just the work of being a lawyer, and in his case, being a judge, as well.

As we all know, Justice Hollenhorst has a passion for education at all levels of our profession. For example, Justice Hollenhorst is the former chair of the Center for Judicial Education and Research's Governing Committee. Justice Hollenhorst has also been a member of the American Bar Association, the Appellate Judges' Seminar Series Planning Committee. He has also been a judicial advisory board member of the University of Kansas Law and Organizational Economics Center. And, along the way, Justice Hollenhorst has been either a chair or a member of numerous CJER planning committees, as well as a faculty member for many CJER programs and institutes.

Justice Hollenhorst is also known throughout California and the nation for his work on judicial ethics, with judges statewide and nationally seeking his advice and his opinions on ethical matters. To put this into its perspective, I would estimate he's given opinions on ethical matters numbering in the thousands – remarkable, would be an understatement given his demanding schedule and heavy caseload over the many years of his career!

Perhaps more telling, however, is that over the past 25 years Justice Hollenhorst has brought somewhere between 120 and 140 undergraduate and graduate students into his chambers as appellate externs, mentoring them during their time at the court and beyond. In fact, some of those externs, like Judges John Lewis and Kira Klatchko, to name a couple, all highly successful judges and attorneys, who, we can only hope, will carry on his tra-

dition of encouraging students so that each generation of young lawyers is better, and richer, in knowledge for having been nurtured by the previous generation.

And finally, let us not forget that Justice Hollenhorst has, for the past many years, judged the final championship round of Mock Trial competitions.

And, so, just as Aurora Hughes had diverse and unusual interests — sport shooting, hunting, and writing, to name just a few — so too, the same can be said of Justice Hollenhorst's interests which also range far and wide. You know that movie, *Planes, Trains, and Automobiles*. Well, for him it would be *Planes, Boats, and Motorcycles*.

For example, there have been many afternoons when a line of colleagues and staff would form behind Justice Hollenhorst's car in the parking lot at our Court of Appeal, and he would dispense packages of freshly caught tuna or some other deep-sea delight on a first-come, first-served basis. He loves fishing — one of his many loves.

Also, like Aurora, the thing that rounds Tom out and makes his life its most complete is his family.

His wife of some 42 years, Beth, and his sons and their wives, Tim and Norine, Peter and Christa; and most particularly, his beloved grandchildren, Madison, Jacob, Sean, and Sarah, are all just the joys and the delights of his life. And, I might add, Tom is also known as a passionate dog-lover!

On a personal note, when I mentioned to Tom that I had been given the honor of introducing him tonight and talking about his accomplishments, he shrugged. It was readily apparent to me that he was a little uncomfortable with the attention, and he said, "Manuel, I'm just a plow horse," to which I replied, "Well, Tom, even a plow horse gets some rest and a fresh bucket of oats from time to time." What do you suppose his response was? He shook his head and said, "No, not this plow horse."

I couldn't get that image out of my mind, so I did a little digging. Do you know that, back in the old days when a farmer went to auction to get a plow horse, he knew just what he was looking for.

He walked right by all the pretty, sleek, and sassy horses, the ones that caught everyone's attention and everyone's eye because they were so flashy or so energetic, prancing around as if to say, "Hey there, farmer, look at me!"

The farmer, however, was looking for the horse with broad shoulders so it could pull a heavy load. The farmer was also looking for the one with a steady eye so it wouldn't be distracted by every little thing that fluttered by. The farmer was looking for the one with a sure gait so it wouldn't stumble when the path proved difficult. In the end, the farmer was looking for the horse he knew could get the job done — getting the job done, that's what the farmer thought was important! That's the perfect description of tonight's recipient: Justice Hollenhorst is the one who can get the job done, and he continues to get the job done, and he does the job with passion and dedication.

Over the past 25 years on our Court of Appeal, despite serving on numerous committees, despite mentoring externs every year, despite serving his community, despite being fully involved with his family and his hobbies, Justice Hollenhorst has authored something in the range of four thousand appellate court opinions. Both impressive and unique. In 1989-1990, Justice Hollenhorst served as Acting Presiding Justice at a time when there were two vacant seats on our Court of Appeal — only three justices were sitting on our Court at that time. Justice Hollenhorst volunteered to oversee the work of the attorneys in the vacant chambers, in addition to his own staff.

He was supervising, some eight to ten attorneys for that year, and he authored an incredible 315 opinions — in one year! That's a record for our court, and I'm pretty sure it's a record for any justice in any Court of Appeal in the State of California, or any other Court of Appeal, for that matter — rest assured that each and every opinion was thoroughly read and reviewed by him.

At a time when our court was buried under what seemed to be an insurmountable backlog, Justice Hollenhorst, assisted by Justice Howard Dabney, devised what is now our tentative opinion program. It's the only tentative opinion program in the State of California, and probably the entire country, and we get nothing but great feedback about the tentative opinion program from you, the people we serve. You have Justice Hollenhorst to thank for the creation of that remarkable and innovative program.

Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

Over Justice Hollenhorst's 25 years on our bench, he has made a remarkable personal and professional life, and he has made a remarkable personal and professional life because he has given to our profession and to our community so uniquely of himself.

I want to give you another quote, one I think is perhaps even more eloquent, if that is possible, than Mr. Churchill's, because it is a quote from Justice Hollenhorst himself from the occasion of our recent celebration of his 25th anniversary on our Court of Appeal. I think it perfectly reflects the heart and the mind of this hardworking, dedicated, great, decent, humble, and wonderful man. He said, and I quote, "The thing is to leave something behind in all our work. If it's all about me, what's left? Serve as an example. Do your work, but help others at the same time. Then, and only then, will there be something left."

By recognizing Justice Hollenhorst with this award, you honor the memory, the legacy, and the spirit of E. Aurora Hughes — she would be so very proud, and so thrilled, to know that Justice Hollenhorst is being recognized for his many years of service to our Bar Association, our community, and our Administration of Justice System. Tonight, in spirit, she joins us in honoring Justice Hollenhorst.

Manuel A. Ramirez is the Presiding Justice of the Court of Appeal, Fourth District, Division Two.



Opposing Counsel: Sheela Stark

by Betty Fracisco

Sheela Stark — Modern Day Warrior

Sheela Stark is a respected attorney known for her compassionate yet straightforward approach, as well as her unwavering commitment to honesty and integrity in her legal practice. With a strong focus on helping those who advocate for others, her areas of expertise include special needs law, conservatorships, guardianships, probate administration, trust administration, estate planning, elder law, personal injury, and nurse workers' compensation and litigation in all of the above areas.

Born in Redondo Beach and raised in Rancho Cucamonga, Sheela grew up in a large family with significant challenges. Despite facing difficult circumstances at home, she developed resilience and a strong sense of responsibility from an early age. As the oldest of several siblings, Sheela was tasked with caregiving, particularly for her younger sibling with special needs. This experience shaped her passion for supporting individuals and families facing similar challenges. Sheela started working at the age of fourteen as a model in Los Angeles and though she found success, her grandmother pushed her to pursue her education and made her promise to earn her doctorate.

Sheela pursued higher education with dedication, by attending Chaffey College and UC Riverside with a major in English literature. During her school years, she worked as a special needs therapist for children, including those diagnosed with autism, cerebral palsy, and various intellectual disabilities. This experience, combined with her desire to help others, inspired her to attend law school at Glendale University College of Law, where she excelled academically. She passed the Bar Exam in 2013 and soon started her own practice in Rancho Cucamonga, specializing in legal services for families with special needs.

In the early years of her legal career, Sheela focused on criminal defense and personal injury law, but her passion for probate law eventually led her to concentrate on this area. Over the years, she has become a leading advocate for families navigating complex legal challenges related to estate planning, guardianships, conservatorships, and other probate matters.

Sheela has also dedicated a significant portion of her time to educating and mentoring future legal professionals. She has served on advisory committees for local community colleges, taught legal seminars, and worked



Sheela Stark

as an adjunct professor, teaching paralegal and pre-law students. Her commitment to helping others extends beyond her legal practice; Sheela is an active volunteer and advocate for individuals with disabilities and has served on the boards of various nonprofit organizations.

Sheela's dedication to her community is also reflected in her pro bono work. She offers free legal services to families with special needs individuals and provides discounted legal fees for veterans. Additionally, Sheela supports various charitable organizations that assist underserved communities.

In 2022, after repeated requests to join the political realm, Sheela was a candidate for the California State Assembly, District 50. Although she gained valuable experience and raised significant support, Sheela ultimately decided that her passion lies in her legal career and in supporting her clients and community.

In 2024, Sheela expanded her practice by acquiring the firms of several prominent local attorneys, further establishing her as a trusted figure in the Inland Empire. She now leads one of the largest female-owned legal practices in the region, with a dedicated team of employees.

Sheela is a firm believer in the importance of faith and family. Along with her husband of 24 years, whom she agreed to marry on their first date, she prioritizes their Christian values, which guide both their personal and professional lives. She is a homeschool mom for her two children, an 11-year-old son and 8-year-old daughter. Their family is a part of a huge homeschool community mainly consisting of professionals such as politicians, lawyers, doctors, and actors who have committed to raising their children together in faith and with similar values.

In her free time, Sheela enjoys cooking, baking, target shooting, racing cars, and spending time outdoors, particularly hiking and camping.

Throughout her life, Sheela has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to her clients, her family, and her community. Her personal journey, marked by challenges and triumphs, reflects her strength, resilience, and dedication to making a difference in the lives of others. She truly embodies the spirit of a modern-day warrior.

Betty Fracisco is an attorney at Garrett & Jensen in Riverside, a member of the RCBA Publications Committee and a longtime member of the Board of Governors of California Women Lawyers.



D.W. Duke, CEO of a California-based legal firm, and Nigerian scholar Taiwo Fagbohung have released *Because I'm Black: The Story of Jesse Washington*.

by Press Release Distribution Service

This gripping historical novel reexamines systemic injustice through the harrowing story of Jesse Washington, offering insights that resonate with today's conversations on race and equity.

A Legal Perspective on a Historical Injustice

At the heart of the book is the true story of Jesse Washington, a Black teenager in 1916 Texas, accused of a crime amidst a backdrop of deep racial prejudice. Jesse's rushed trial and horrific public lynching underscore the failures of the justice system in addressing racial inequities.

D.W. Duke's legal expertise brings a distinctive perspective to the story, framing Jesse's case as not only a personal tragedy but also a reflection of broader systemic failures. The novel explores whether Jesse was truly guilty of the crime or a victim of racial bias and judicial neglect.

In a joint statement, Duke and Fagbohung shared their motivation for telling this story:

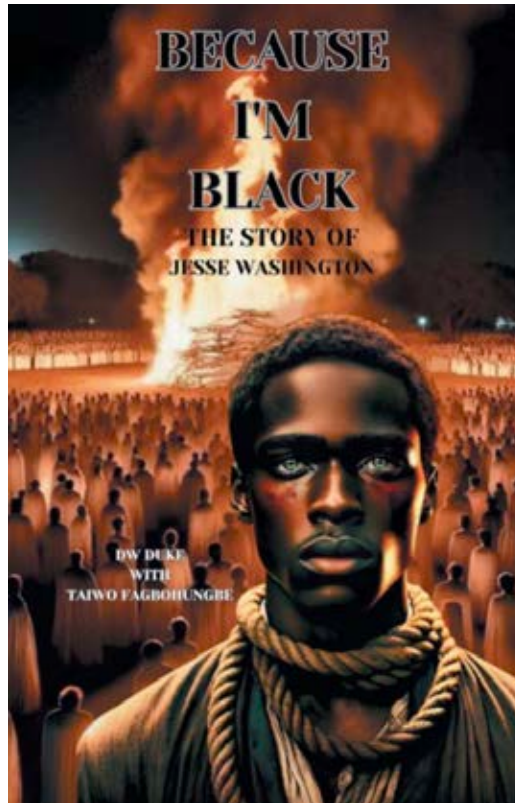
"We believe that addressing painful truths about historical injustices is key to understanding systemic racism today and building a fairer future."

A Timely Collaboration Bridging Continents

The partnership between Duke and Fagbohung exemplifies the power of cross-cultural dialogue in tackling universal challenges.

- **D.W. Duke**, a California trial attorney and CEO, has a long-standing career in civil rights advocacy. His legal acumen shapes the novel's detailed exploration of legal injustices.
- **Taiwo Fagbohungbe**, a scholar of the Atlantic Slave Trade and Black American history, brings a global perspective to the story. His academic background enriches the book's historical and cultural authenticity.

This collaboration highlights the role of literature in fostering understanding and inclusion across borders.



Connecting History to Contemporary Issues

Because I'm Black is not just a historical recount—it is a call to action. By revisiting the 1916 tragedy, the authors encourage readers to reflect on how systemic oppression has shaped modern societies.

The novel's release comes at a pivotal time, as conversations about racial equity, social justice, and accountability continue to dominate global discourse. Its themes resonate with educators, activists, and readers seeking meaningful stories that inspire change.

A New Frontier for Advocacy

Through his work as CEO of a legal firm, D.W. Duke extends his advocacy for justice beyond the courtroom. The publication of *Because I'm Black* underscores his firm's commitment to amplify-

ing stories that confront inequality and promote understanding.

"This book is not just about history; it's about the present and the future. By revisiting Jesse Washington's story, we hope to inspire reflection and action toward systemic change," Duke said.

Availability

Because I'm Black: The Story of Jesse Washington is now available through major retailers, including Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

D.W. Duke is a California trial attorney, author, and CEO of a legal firm. A graduate of the University of Michigan and Washington University School of Law, Duke has dedicated his career to civil rights advocacy. He is also the author of eight books and holds a fifth-degree black belt conferred by World Taekwondo in Seoul, Korea. Duke can be reached at duke@duke-law.org

Taiwo Fagbohungbe is a Nigerian writer and scholar with expertise in the Atlantic Slave Trade and Black American history. He holds degrees in English Studies and International Relations and is pursuing a Master of Arts at Arizona State University. His work emphasizes cultural depth and historical accuracy.



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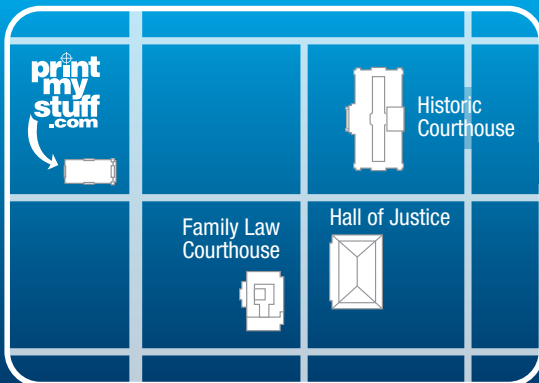
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Part-Time Bookkeeper Position

RCBA is looking for a part-time bookkeeper. Contact Charlene at 951-682-1015 or charlene@riversidecountybar.com.

Office Space – RCBA Building

4129 Main Street, Riverside. Next to Family Law Court, across the street from Hall of Justice and Historic Courthouse. Office suites available. Contact Charlene Nelson at the RCBA, (951) 682-1015 or rcba@riversidecountybar.com.

Conference Rooms Available

Conference rooms, small offices and the Gabbert Gallery meeting room at the RCBA building are available for rent on a half-day or full-day basis. Please call for pricing information, and reserve rooms in advance, by contacting Charlene or Lisa at the RCBA office, (951) 682-1015 or rcba@riversidecountybar.com.



The following persons have applied for membership in the Riverside County Bar Association. If there are no objections, they will become members effective January 30, 2025.

Laura E. Isais Ayon – Walker Law Group, Rancho Cucamonga

Kirk R. Brennan – Office of the County Counsel, Murrieta

Michael Todd Crowley – Singleton Smith Law Offices, Murrieta

Jesse D. Galvan, IV (A) – Galvan Homes, Riverside

Mary Lee – Mary Lee APC, Palm Desert

Paresh B. Makan – Office of the County Counsel, Riverside

Lincoln C. Mitchell – Office of the County Counsel, Riverside

Randylee C. Pacheco (S) – Law Offices of Leah Larkin, Redlands

Charles W. Roby – Office of the County Counsel, Indio

Ralph Anthony Rocha – Law Office of Christopher Hernandez, Riverside

Crystal M. Rodriguez – Rosenstein & Associates, Temecula

Nadin Said – Office of the City Attorney, Riverside

Brandon G. Smith – Office of the District Attorney, Riverside

Liqing Lee Sun – Riv Co Dept of Child Support Services, Riverside

Nicholas J. Tomic – Office of the City Attorney, Riverside

Christina Ucci (A) – Law Office of Kyle A. Patrick, Riverside

(A) – Affiliate Member

(S) – Law Student Member



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CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 13** Roundtable with Judge Hopp
12:15, Zoom
MCLE
- 15** Estate Planning, Probate & Elder Law Section Meeting
Noon, RCBA Gabbert Gallery
Topic: "Communicating with Minor Clients"
Speakers: Jack Osborn and Andrew Beechko
MCLE
- 16** Juvenile Law Section Meeting
12:15, Zoom
Topic: "Education Law Overview for Juvenile Court Partners"
Speakers: Robert Rancourt, Tatiana Klunchoo and Janate Valenzuela
MCLE
- 21** Mock Trial – Round 1 – Regionals
6:00 PM
Riverside Hall of Justice, Southwest Justice Center, Larson Justice Center

23 Installation of Officers Dinner
Social Hour – 5:30 PM
Dinner – 6:30 PM
Mission Inn, Riverside

28 Mock Trial – Round 2
6:00 PM
Riverside Hall of Justice

FEBRUARY

21 General Membership Meeting
Noon, RCBA Gabbert Gallery
Speaker: Presiding Judge Jacqueline Jackson
Topic: State of the Riverside Superior Court

Events Subject To Change

For the latest calendar information please visit the RCBA's website at riversidecountybar.com

MISSION STATEMENT

Established in 1894

The Riverside County Bar Association, established in 1894 to foster social interaction between the bench and bar, is a professional organization that provides continuing education and offers an arena to resolve various problems that face the justice system and attorneys practicing in Riverside County.

RCBA Statement

The mission of the Riverside County Bar Association is: To serve our members, our communities, and our legal system.

Membership Benefits

Involvement in a variety of legal entities: Lawyer Referral Service (LRS), Riverside Legal Aid, Fee Arbitration, Dispute Resolution Service (DRS), Barristers, Leo A. Deegan Inn of Court, Mock Trial, State Bar Conference of Delegates, Bridging the Gap, the RCBA - Riverside Superior Court New Attorney Academy and the Riverside Bar Foundation.

Membership meetings monthly (except July and August) with keynote speakers, and participation in the many committees and sections.

Eleven issues of *Riverside Lawyer* published each year to update you on State Bar matters, ABA issues, local court rules, open forum for communication, and timely business matters.

Social gatherings throughout the year: Installation of RCBA and Barristers Officers dinner, Law Day activities, Good Citizenship Award ceremony for Riverside County high schools, Reading Day and other special activities, Continuing Legal Education brown bag lunches and section workshops. RCBA is a certified provider for MCLE programs.

The *Riverside Lawyer* is published 11 times per year by the Riverside County Bar Association (RCBA) and is distributed to RCBA members, Riverside County judges and administrative officers of the court, community leaders and others interested in the advancement of law and justice. Advertising and announcements are due by the 6th day of the month preceding publications (e.g., October 6 for the November issue). Articles are due no later than 45 days preceding publication. All articles are subject to editing. RCBA members receive a subscription automatically. Annual subscriptions are \$30.00 and single copies are \$3.50.

Submission of articles and photographs to *Riverside Lawyer* will be deemed to be authorization and license by the author to publish the material in the *Riverside Lawyer*. The material printed in the *Riverside Lawyer* does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the RCBA, the editorial staff, the Publication Committee, or other columnists. Legal issues are not discussed for the purpose of answering specific questions. Independent research of all issues is strongly encouraged.



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