



April 5, 2020

Judicial Council of California
455 Golden Gate Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94102
Judicialcouncil@jud.ca.gov

Dear Esteemed Council Members,

On behalf of The Los Angeles County Court Reporters Association, I submit this letter to you on behalf of nearly 425 official court reporters employed by Los Angeles Superior Court.

We submit this letter to you to express our concern in response to the Judicial Council of California's proposed Emergency Rules in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic to be addressed in its business meeting of April 6, 2020, particularly, Emergency Rule 3, Use of Technology for Remote Appearances.

With regard to this temporary implementation of remote appearances, as has already been experienced in several of our Children's Dependency courtrooms here in Los Angeles, LACCRA strongly recommends the current practice of having the judge, clerk, and court reporter in the courtroom during proceedings. This allows the court reporter to easily communicate with the judge as necessary such as when a speaker is inaudible or other issues arise with the record. This process should also include the ability for the court reporter to view the remote attendees in order to better facilitate the record-keeping.

As the Judicial Council does its best to make space for the local courts to temporarily implement technology in order to leverage their ability to resolve work, LACCRA would encourage the Council to include caution and mindfulness guidance as part of the implementation of any technology used to provide a safekeeping of the record in those courts deemed essential and open to the public.

We echo some of the Council's sentiments from its March 28, 2020, meeting in that "the use of technology has been a lifesaver to deal with the emergency but can't be a replacement for our core processes as we move forward in the long-term." This is particularly true in those situations when electronic recording has been used in place of a live, certified stenographer, present in the courtroom in order to work with the bench officer and other courtroom staff to guard the record.

In this crucial and stressful time, it can be argued it is even more important to ensure your courtroom staff have the tools and support needed to not only meet their employment obligations but also their obligations as licensees by the State of California to guard and protect the record.



We strongly urge the Chief Justice and Council members to not forego accuracy and true access to the justice system for what may initially seem like a quick or easy fix to the needs at hand. Now is not the time for even the temporary implementation of technologies that have consistently shown themselves to be poor and unreliable replacements for the trained and licensed stenographers.

Thank you for your consideration and acceptance of our comments and concerns. LACCRA and its membership are committed to working with our local court as they have done for many decades, upholding their statutory duties of acting as guardians of the record.

Sincerely,

Diana Van Dyke, CA CSR 10795
Los Angeles Superior Court Official Court Reporter
LACCRA President