

Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness

Annual Agenda¹—2024

Approved by the Executive and Planning Committee: March 14, 2024

I. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Chair:	Hon. Victor A. Rodriguez, Cochair, Associate Justice of the Court of Appeal, First Appellate District, Division Three Hon. Kevin C. Brazile, Cochair, Judge of the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles
Lead Staff:	Ms. Cristina Resendiz-Johnson, Attorney, Center for Families, Children & the Courts
Committee's Charge/Membership: Rule 10.55 of the California Rules of Court states the charge of the Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness (PAF), which is to make recommendations for improving access to the judicial system, fairness in the state courts, diversity in the judicial branch, and court services for self-represented parties. The committee also makes recommendations to the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) Advisory Committee, proposals for the education and training of judicial officers and court staff. Rule 10.55(c) sets forth the membership position of the committee. PAF has 30 members. The current committee roster is available on the committee's web page.	
Subcommittees/Working Groups²: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Judicial Diversity Toolkit Working Group: Review and consider ideas and recommendations in collaboration with members of the State Bar's Council on Access and Fairness (COAF) for future updates to design and content to the Pathways to Judicial Diversity website; lead efforts on disseminating information statewide through collaboration with justice partners.2. Ad Hoc Legislation Working Group: Review and receive updates on legislation from Judicial Council Governmental Affairs in the areas of access and fairness affecting the judicial branch.3. Ad Hoc Racial Justice Working Group: The working group will gather information on branchwide efforts in racial justice and bias, work with stakeholders in promoting those activities, and consider recommendations on racial justice within the branch for the committee.	

¹ The annual agenda outlines the work a committee will focus on in the coming year and identifies areas of collaboration with other advisory bodies and the Judicial Council staff resources.

² California Rules of Court, [rule 10.30 \(c\)](#) allows an advisory body to form subgroups, composed entirely of current members of the advisory body, to carry out the body's duties, subject to available resources, with the approval of its oversight committee.

4. Standing Language Access Subcommittee: Advise and present recommendations to PAF regarding the Language Access Plan (LAP) and its overarching goal of ensuring access to justice for all court users, especially court users with limited English proficiency; as appropriate, make recommendations to PAF in the areas of technology, education, and translation; as well as recommendations on legislative and rule of court proposals to enhance language access services throughout the judicial branch.

Meetings Planned for 2024³ (Advisory body and all subcommittees and working groups)

Date/Time/Location or Teleconference:

Regular bi-monthly teleconference meetings on third Thursdays, 12:15–1:15 p.m., beginning February 2024.

Check here if exception to policy is granted by Executive Office or rule of court.

³ Refer to [Operating Standards for Judicial Council Advisory Bodies](#) for governance on in-person meetings.

II. COMMITTEE PROJECTS

#	New or One-Time Projects ⁴	
1.	Project Title: Develop Training for Court Staff on Appropriate Use of Machine Translation Tools (Implementation Project)	Priority⁵ 1 Strategic Plan Goal⁶ IV
<p>Project Summary⁷: The Language Access Subcommittee will partner with Judicial Council staff from the Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC) and Information Technology (IT) to develop training for court staff, including self-help center staff, on the appropriate use of machine translation tools within the courthouse. Training will ensure that machine translation tools are used appropriately for different situations and maintain meaningful and accurate communication between litigants and the court. Training will also highlight situations where an in-person or telephonic interpreter may be needed to ensure that legal rights and remedies are maintained and to avoid misunderstandings in communication.</p> <p>Status/Timeline: December 2024.</p> <p>Fiscal Impact/Resources: CFCC and IT staff. Contractor services may also be used with funding from existing Language Access Services program resources.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</i></p> <p>Internal/External Stakeholders: Training development will include input from court stakeholders (e.g., self-help center staff and court Language Access Representatives).</p> <p>AC Collaboration: PAF Language Access Subcommittee and Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC).</p>		

⁴ All proposed projects for the year must be included on the Annual Agenda. If a project implements policy or is a program, identify it as *implementation* or a *program* in the project description and attach the Judicial Council authorization/assignment or prior approved Annual Agenda to this Annual Agenda.

⁵ For non-rules and forms projects, select priority level 1 (must be done) or 2 (should be done). For rules and forms proposals, select one of the following priority levels: 1(a) Urgently needed to conform to or accurately reflect the law; 1(b) Council or an internal committee has directed the committee to consider new or amended rules and forms; 1(c) Change is urgently needed to remedy a problem that is causing significant cost or inconvenience to the courts or the public; 1(d) Proposal is otherwise urgent and necessary, such as a proposal that would mitigate exposure to immediate or severe financial or legal risk. 2(a) Useful, but not necessary, to implement changes in law; 2(b) Responsive to identified concerns or problems; 2(c) Helpful in otherwise advancing Judicial Council goals and objectives.

⁶ Indicate which goal number of [The Strategic Plan for California's Judicial Branch](#) the project most closely aligns.

⁷ A key objective is a strategic aim, purpose, or “end of action” to be achieved for the coming year.

#	Ongoing Projects and Activities⁴	
1.	Project Title: Public Outreach for the Online California Courts Self-Help Guide (Implementation Project)	Priority⁵ 1
<p data-bbox="176 310 1251 342">Project Summary: The PAF Language Access Subcommittee will do the following:</p> <p data-bbox="176 386 1934 492">The Language Access Subcommittee will continue to work with Judicial Council staff to gather ideas and strategies and conduct public outreach to help ensure that multilingual resources, including new remote materials, on the Self-Help Guide are reaching Limited English Proficient (LEP) communities.</p> <p data-bbox="176 532 1955 675">These materials include assistance for self-represented litigants, including infographics, flyers, brochures, videos, and public service announcements. They will provide information to help LEP court users understand if they need an interpreter, how to request an interpreter for court, and basic information about court processes (e.g., preparing for small claims trial, serving legal papers, and understanding fee waivers).</p> <p data-bbox="176 716 1944 784">The online California Courts Self-Help Guide will have multilingual materials through the new language drop-down menu. The languages will include: Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Farsi, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.</p> <p data-bbox="176 824 1010 857">This task was included on the committee’s prior Annual Agenda.</p> <p data-bbox="176 906 1913 974">Status/Timeline: By December 30, 2024. This project was not able to be completed in 2023 due to unforeseen delays with required web improvements and has been moved to 2024.</p> <p data-bbox="176 1023 1892 1091">Fiscal Impact/Resources: Center for Families, Children & Courts (CFCC), Public Affairs, and Information Technology (Webcontent) staff.</p> <p data-bbox="176 1107 1902 1175"><input type="checkbox"/> <i>This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</i></p> <p data-bbox="176 1224 1451 1256">Internal/External Stakeholders: Trial courts, public including LEP court users and justice partners.</p> <p data-bbox="176 1305 919 1338">AC Collaboration: PAF Language Access Subcommittee.</p>		

#	Ongoing Projects and Activities⁴	
2.	<i>Project Title: Diversity in The Branch (Implementation Project)</i>	<i>Priority⁵ 1</i>
<p data-bbox="174 305 772 342"><i>Project Summary:</i> PAF will do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="226 386 1919 456">a) Continue to update the <i>Pathways to Judicial Diversity</i> toolkit based on feedback received from users. Conduct presentations and continue the rollout of the toolkit statewide in collaboration with justice partners, provided sufficient resources are available. <li data-bbox="226 461 1902 531">b) Continue to serve as a subject matter resource with justice partners and stakeholders on initiatives for increasing diversity in the judicial branch. <li data-bbox="226 548 1829 618">c) Continue to collaborate with CJER staff on improving and expanding educational resources in areas under PAF’s purview and expertise related to diversity, inclusion, and fairness. <li data-bbox="226 639 1818 976">d) Work on implementation of the recommendations from the 2021 Judicial Diversity Summit that were approved by the Judicial Council on December 2, 2022. On March 3, 2023, the Executive and Planning Committee referred the following recommendations to PAF and its Judicial Council staff for consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="321 764 1808 802">a. Summit recommendation 1, <i>Increase Education and Resources on Judicial Appointments and Elections Process</i>; <li data-bbox="321 818 1850 888">b. Summit recommendation 3, <i>Strengthen Efforts to Mentor Judicial Officers on the Bench as a Crucial Component of Their Continued Professional Development and Advancement</i>; and <li data-bbox="321 904 1751 976">c. Summit recommendation 4, <i>Strengthen and Coordinate Judicial Outreach to Connect with Diverse Younger Generations</i>. <p data-bbox="174 1013 1010 1050">This task was included on the committee’s prior Annual Agenda.</p> <p data-bbox="174 1088 527 1125"><i>Status/Timeline:</i> Ongoing.</p> <p data-bbox="174 1162 1163 1200"><i>Fiscal Impact/Resources:</i> CFCC, IT, Governmental Affairs, and CJER staff.</p> <p data-bbox="174 1205 1902 1274"><input type="checkbox"/> <i>This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</i></p> <p data-bbox="174 1317 1829 1354"><i>Internal/External Stakeholders:</i> California Judges Association, California Lawyers Association, and California ChangeLawyers.</p> <p data-bbox="174 1391 1835 1463"><i>AC Collaboration:</i> Judicial Diversity Toolkit Working Group, Executive and Planning Committee, Legislation Committee, CJER Advisory Committee, and Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee (TCPJAC).</p>		

#	Ongoing Projects and Activities⁴	
3.	<i>Project Title: Ad Hoc Racial Justice Working Group (Implementation Project)</i>	<i>Priority⁵ 1</i>
	<i>Strategic Plan Goal⁶ I</i>	
<p><i>Project Summary:</i> PAF will do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue to review and provide updates regarding the branch’s efforts to address racial bias and fairness. The working group will gather information on branch wide efforts in racial justice and bias, work with stakeholders in promoting those activities, and consider recommendations on racial justice within the branch to the committee. b) Promote and inform trial court judicial officers and staff statewide on the new <i>Racial Justice Toolkit</i> , an online hub for educational and training resources to assist local courts with increasing access and fairness in the area of racial justice. The toolkit will be continuously updated based on user feedback and ongoing developments in the areas of racial justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion. <p>This task was included on the committee’s prior Annual Agenda. Item <i>b</i> was updated to include new details.</p> <p><i>Status/Timeline:</i> Ongoing.</p> <p><i>Fiscal Impact/Resources:</i> CFCC, CJER, Criminal Justice Services (CJS), and IT staff.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>The project includes allocations or distributions of funds to the courts, which have been reviewed and approved by Budget Service.</i></p> <p><i>Internal/External Stakeholders:</i> Trial courts.</p> <p><i>AC Collaboration:</i> This item may include collaboration with various Judicial Council advisory bodies, including, but not limited to: Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee, Court Executives Advisory Committee (CEAC), Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee (CJCAC), Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC), (Criminal Law Advisory Committee (CLAC), Civil and Small Claims Advisory Committee (CSCAC), TCPJAC, ITAC, and Judicial Branch Ethics, and Fairness Curriculum Committee.</p>		
4.	<i>Project Title: Language Access Signage and Technology Grants, Cycle 6 (Implementation Project)</i>	<i>Priority⁵ 1</i>
	<i>Strategic Plan Goal⁶ I</i>	
<p><i>Project Summary⁷:</i> The PAF Language Access Subcommittee will do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) In coordination with the Judicial Council Executive Office, PAF Language Access Subcommittee, Information Technology Advisory Committee, and Technology Committee, the Center for Families, Children & the Courts Language Access Services 		

#	Ongoing Projects and Activities⁴	
	<p>Program will disburse ongoing monies (\$2.35 million each year) from the 2018 Budget Act as grants to trial courts for language access signage and technology initiatives on an annual basis. The grant program commenced in September 2019, following council approval.</p> <p>b) For fiscal year 2024–25, the grant cycle (Cycle 6) will commence in spring/summer 2024. Council staff will continue to develop annual reports on the grant program.</p> <p>This grant project was approved on the committee’s 2020 annual agenda. and will result in recommendations to the Judicial Council. Item b was updated to include new details.</p> <p>Status/Timeline: Ongoing.</p> <p>Fiscal Impact/Resources: CFCC, Branch Accounting and Procurement, and IT staff, ongoing monies from 2018 Budget Act.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</i></p> <p>Internal/External Stakeholders: Information Technology; trial courts and public, including LEP court users.</p> <p>AC Collaboration: PAF Language Access Subcommittee, and ITAC.</p>	
5.	Project Title: Collaborate and Provide Subject Matter Expertise (Implementation Project)	Priority⁵ 1
<p>Strategic Plan Goal⁶ I</p> <p>Project Summary: PAF will do the following:</p> <p>Serve as lead/subject matter resource for issues under the committee’s charge to avoid duplication of efforts and contribute to development of recommendations for council action.</p> <p>Serve as subject matter resource for other stakeholders on subjects under the committee’s charge to increase efficiency and avoid duplication of services within the branch.</p> <p>Provide education and technical assistance to the court self-help centers; make recommendations to the Judicial Council, as needed, regarding reports to the legislature on self-help services, requests for funding for self-help, and updates to the Guidelines for the Operation of Self-Help Centers in California Trial Courts as provided by California Rules of Court, rule 10.960 (e).</p>		

Ongoing Projects and Activities⁴

Continue collaborations with the TAC, CLAC, and other relevant Judicial Council advisory bodies and staff on recommendations to improve access and fairness in traffic court. These collaborations started in 2017 when the Rules Committee chair directed PAF to collaborate with TAC and CLAC on recommendations to improve access and fairness in traffic court. This resulted in liaison relationships between the three committees as well as successful collaborations on several rules and forms, including the “Ability to Pay” rules and forms which went into effect in April 2018. PAF will continue to collaborate with and provide subject-matter expertise to CLAC and TAC as appropriate.

Provide technical assistance to JusticeCorps program on evaluation of members’ career paths and promote program’s efforts to increase diversity in the legal system and enhance civics education.

Post-Pandemic Initiative - Outreach on Remote Services including the SRL portal.

Post-Pandemic Initiative - Explore partnerships with community-based organizations to assist with remote proceedings.

This task was included on the committee’s prior Annual Agenda.

Status/Timeline: Ongoing.

Fiscal Impact/Resources: CFCC, Governmental Affairs, IT, and CJS staff.

This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.

Internal/External Stakeholders: None.

AC Collaboration: This item may include collaboration with various Judicial Council advisory bodies, including, but not limited to: Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee, TCPJAC, CEAC, CJCAC, TAC, CLAC, CSCAC, ITAC; and Judicial Branch Ethics, and Fairness Curriculum Committee.

#	Ongoing Projects and Activities ⁴	
6.	Project Title: Improving Access and Fairness through Technology (Implementation Project)	Priority⁵ 1
	Strategic Plan Goal⁶ I	
<p>Project Summary: PAF will do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continue coordinating with the Judicial Council’s ITAC on the development of the online California Courts Self-Help Guide. (See The Critical Role of the State Judiciary in Increasing Access for Self-Represented Litigants: Self-Help Access 360); b) Coordinate with the Judicial Council’s ITAC on development of a new reporting portal to assist courts in complying with Civil Code section 54.8 regarding assisted listening devices; c) Discuss and explore with ITAC other intersections between access, fairness, and technology; and d) Explore how to encourage the use of technologies that benefit court users with disabilities. This project does not result in recommendations to the Judicial Council and was approved on the committee’s 2016 annual agenda. <p>Status/Timeline: Ongoing.</p> <p>Fiscal Impact/Resources: CFCC and IT staff.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</p> <p>Internal/External Stakeholders: None.</p> <p>AC Collaboration: ITAC.</p>		

III. LIST OF 2023 PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#	Project Highlights and Achievements
1.	<p>Diversity in the Branch: PAF collaborated with the California Lawyers Association (CLA) and California Judges Association (CJA) to hold various informative panels on increasing judicial diversity throughout the state where the latest data on judicial demographics was shared. One such panel was titled, “<i>Pathways to Justice: Increasing Judicial Diversity</i>” and was held at CLA’s annual meeting in San Diego, CA. Status: Presentations of toolkit and judicial diversity data will be ongoing.</p>
2.	<p>Collaborate and Provide Subject Matter Expertise: Staff continued to provide weekly statewide training to Self-Help Center staff on a wide variety of subject matters such as family law updates, form changes, and remote proceedings’ customer service. Status: Ongoing.</p>
3.	<p>Language Access Signage and Technology Grants, Cycle 5: This project was completed. A report with grant recommendations for Cycle 5 was approved by the council in September 2023. Status: Completed.</p>