

INTRODUCTION

The Superior Court of California, County of Alameda, is dedicated to delivering quality services to court customers. Each person involved in the administration of justice strives to treat litigants fairly. There are times, however, when those who use the legal system may not necessarily agree or understand the way the case is handled or the action of court personnel, and may question the fairness of the decision. This brochure is intended to provide a "road map" to those litigants who have questions about the court's process and possible avenues of recourse. The following is a guide to various agencies which are ready, willing and able to help.

1. ATTORNEY SERVICES

QUESTION: I have a complaint about an attorney. What can I do?

ANSWER: Complaints about attorneys should be directed to:

Alameda County Bar Association
70 Washington Street, Suite 200
Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 302-ACBA (2222)

or

State Bar of California
1149 South Hill Street
Los Angeles, CA 90015-2299
Attn: Intake Unit
(800) 843-9053

QUESTION: I do not have funds to pay an attorney. What can I do?

ANSWER: Please contact the Volunteer Legal Services Office at the Alameda County Bar Association at (510) 302-2222 Option #3.

2. COURT SERVICES

QUESTION: I have a complaint about how a judicial officer treated me. I think he or she used improper courtroom decorum, improper influence, or some other improper or illegal behavior including off-the-bench conduct. What can I do?

ANSWER: If you wish to make a complaint about a judge, you may contact:

Commission on Judicial Performance
455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 14400
San Francisco, CA 94102-3660
Phone: (415) 557-1200
Fax: (415) 557-1266

This Commission is an independent state agency that handles complaints about California judges for judicial misconduct or wrongdoing. They publish a brochure that describes their role and what constitutes judicial misconduct. You may obtain a copy by contacting the Commission directly.

If the behavior involves a commissioner or an attorney serving as a pro tem judge of the court, you may contact, in writing, the:

Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, County of Alameda
1225 Fallon Street, Rm. 209
Oakland, CA 94612

Supervising Judge
Rene C. Davidson Crthouse,
Admin. & Post Office Bldg.
1225 Fallon Street, Rm. 209
Oakland, CA 94612

Supervising Judge
George E. McDonald Hall of Justice
2233 Shoreline Drive
Alameda, CA 94501

Supervising Judge
Berkeley Courthouse
2120 Martin Luther King Jr. Way
Berkeley, CA 94704

Supervising Judge
Fremont Hall of Justice
39439 Paseo Padre Pkwy
Fremont, CA 94538

Presiding Judge – Juvenile Court
Superior Court of California
County of Alameda
2500 Fairmont Drive, Ste 3013
San Leandro, CA 94578

Supervising Judge
Gale/Schenone Hall of Justice
5672 Stoneridge Drive
Pleasanton, CA 94588

Supervising Judge
WWM Cthouse
661 Washington Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Supervising Judge
Hayward Hall of Justice
24405 Amador Street
Hayward, CA 94544

QUESTION: I think a judge was biased against me. What can I do?

ANSWER: If the complaint involves an allegation of judicial officer bias because of sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, gender, religion or age, you may contact the:

Commission on Judicial Performance
455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 14400
San Francisco, CA 94102-3660
Phone: (415) 557-1200
Fax: (415) 557-1266

or

Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California, County of Alameda
1225 Fallon Street, Room 209
Oakland, CA 94612

Supervising Judge
Rene C. Davidson Crthouse,
Admin. & Post Office Bldg.
1225 Fallon Street, Rm. 209
Oakland, CA 94612

Supervising Judge
George E. McDonald Hall of Justice
2233 Shoreline Drive
Alameda, CA 94501

Supervising Judge
Berkeley Courthouse
2120 Martin Luther King Jr. Way
Berkeley, CA 94704

Supervising Judge
Fremont Hall of Justice
39439 Paseo Padre Pkwy.
Fremont, CA 94538

Presiding Judge – Juvenile Court
Superior Court of California
County of Alameda
2500 Fairmont Drive, Ste 3013
San Leandro, CA 94578

Supervising Judge
Gale/Schenone Hall of Justice
5672 Stoneridge Drive
Pleasanton, CA 94588

Supervising Judge
WWM Cthouse
661 Washington Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Supervising Judge
Hayward Hall of Justice
24405 Amador Street
Hayward, CA 94544

The Superior Court also has an informal and confidential process to review such allegations.

QUESTION: I have a complaint regarding the disposition of my case or the ruling in my case. What can I do?

ANSWER: Contact your attorney immediately or contact the Alameda County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service at (510) 302-2222 Option #3. An attorney may provide advice

concerning possible appeal of your case to a higher court. You should act quickly as there are time limits on your right to obtain a review of the decision or your right to appeal.

QUESTION: I have a complaint about an employee of the court. What can I do?

ANSWER: All complaints about court personnel (clerks, attendants and others), excluding those in Family Court Services, should be directed to the following:

Executive Officer
Superior Court of California,
County of Alameda
1225 Fallon Street, Room 209
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 891-6012

Court Services Manager
Juvenile Court
Probation Center
2500 Fairmont Drive, Ste 3013
San Leandro, CA 94578
(510) 618-1100

Operations Director
George E. McDonald Hall of
Justice, Alameda
2233 Shoreline Drive
Alameda, CA 94501
(510) 627-4700

Trial Court Administrator
Gale/Schenone Hall of
Justice, Pleasanton
5672 Stoneridge Drive
Pleasanton, CA 94588
(925) 227-6700

Court Service Manager
Berkeley Courthouse
2120 Martin Luther King Jr. Way
Berkeley, CA 94704
(510) 647-4400

Operations Director
WWM Courthouse
661 Washington Street
Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 627-4700

Trial Court Administrator
Fremont Hall of Justice
39439 Paseo Padre Parkway
Fremont, CA 94538
(510) 818-7500

Trial Court Administrator
Hayward Hall of Justice
24405 Amador Street
Hayward, CA 94544
(510) 690-2700

Complaints concerning Family Court Services Personnel (i.e., mediators or evaluators) should be directed in accordance with the following:

■ Mediation

The complainant may register the complaint verbally or in writing with the supervising counselor of the office in which services were provided. The Supervisor will conduct an investigation, which may include consultation with the staff, with the other party, or with the attorneys. Within 30 days, the Supervisor will respond. Possible responses include, adding a second counselor, changing counselors, or taking no action. The complainant may appeal the Supervisor's action to the Chief of Family and Children's Services Bureau. The Chief may request that the complaint be put into writing. The Chief will respond to the complaint within 30 days. The complainant may appeal the action of the Chief in writing to the judge of the appropriate Family Law Department. The Judge will rule on the complaint within 15 days.

■ Evaluation

Parties may raise objections to a specific evaluator during the selection process. Parties may object to the conclusions of the report when the report is submitted to the Court and may bring other appropriate expert testimony to object to the conclusions. The evaluator is considered the Court's witness and functions

at the request and under the guidance of the Court. The Court will determine whether a new evaluator is appointed and may consult with other professionals in the course of evaluating the evaluator.

If a party feels that an unprofessional or inappropriate act has occurred on the part of the evaluator during the course of the evaluation, he or she should bring that to the attention of the Court by writing a letter to the Court or through filing a motion. The Court, in assessing the complaint, may ask Family Court Services to evaluate the complaint and report back to the Court.

If the evaluator is a Family Court Services Counselor, complaints may be filed with the Supervising Counselor through the grievance procedure set out above for Mediation.

■ **Complaints Concerning Mediators in the Dependency Mediation Program**

The Complainant may register the complaint verbally or in writing with the supervising coordinator of the program located at 400 Broadway in Oakland. The supervisor will conduct an investigation of the issues which may include consultation with the staff member, with other parties to the case, or with attorneys. Within 30 days the supervisor will respond.

Possible responses include, adding a second mediator, changing mediators, or taking no action. The complainant may appeal the Supervisor's action to the Chief of the Family and Children's Services Bureau located at 1221 Oak Street, Room 260 in Oakland. The Chief may request the complaint to be put into writing. The Bureau Chief will look in to the matter using all or some of the steps mentioned above, and will respond to the complaint within 30 days.

The complainant may appeal the action of the Bureau Chief in writing to the Presiding Juvenile Court Judge, and the Judge will rule on the complaint within 15 days.

3. SHERIFF'S/BAILIFF'S SERVICES

QUESTION: I have a complaint about a bailiff/marshal. What can I do?

ANSWER: Complaints about Sheriff/Marshal personnel should be directed to:

Onsite Sheriff's Supervisor
Alameda County Sheriff's Office
(Each Court Location) or
Call (510) 208-9800

4. WAIVER OF FILING FEES

QUESTION: I cannot afford to pay the Court's filing fees. Who do I contact?

ANSWER: A request to waive filing fees is called an *In Forma Pauperis* Application. Please contact the clerk of the Superior Court where your case is assigned.

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF ALAMEDA**

COURT LOCATIONS

RENÉ C. DAVIDSON ALAMEDA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

1225 Fallon Street, Oakland (510) 891-6000

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BLDG.,

1221 Oak St., Oakland (510) 891-6000

U.S. POST OFFICE BUILDING

201-13th Street, Oakland (510) 891-6000

COUNTY PROBATION CENTER

400 Broadway, Oakland (510) 272-1200

WILEY W. MANUEL COURTHOUSE

661 Washington Street, Oakland (510) 627-4700

JOHN GEORGE PSYCHIATRIC PAVILION

2060 Fairmont Drive, San Leandro (510) 481-4141

COUNTY JUVENILE HALL

2500 Fairmont Drive, San Leandro (510) 618-1100

HAYWARD HALL OF JUSTICE

24405 Amador Street, Hayward (510) 690-2700

GALE/SCHENONE HALL OF JUSTICE

5672 Stoneridge Drive, Pleasanton (925) 227-6700

GEORGE E. McDONALD HALL OF JUSTICE

2233 Shoreline Drive, Alameda (510) 627-4700

BERKELEY COURTHOUSE

2120 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley (510) 647-4400

FREMONT HALL OF JUSTICE

39439 Paseo Padre Pkwy., Fremont (510) 818-7500

WINTON AVENUE BUILDING

224 W. Winton Avenue, Hayward (510) 670-6350



INTERNET ADDRESS:

www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/courts/

CALIFORNIA COURTS ONLINE SELF-HELP CENTER:

www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/pressroom/



"Striving For Excellence In All We Do"

The Court shall fairly and efficiently resolve disputes arising under the law and shall apply the law consistently, impartially, and independently to protect the rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitutions of California and the United States. The employees of the Court shall strive for service excellence and through their dedication and professionalism, implement the policies and procedures established by the judiciary and legislature. The judges and employees are committed to ensuring equal access to court services and enhancing public confidence in the court system.

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF ALAMEDA**

YOU HAVE COMPLAINTS?

HERE ARE SOME ANSWERS!

An Informational Brochure
Published by the
Superior Court of California,
County of Alameda



This informational brochure provides answers to questions frequently asked by parties having matters being considered in the Superior Court of California, County of Alameda.