

# Glenn County Superior Court

## Public Information Policy

### Background

The policy of the Glenn County Superior Court is to assist the public and the news media in understanding the functions of the judicial process, including:

- To educate and inform the public about the role and function of the court and the legal system;
- To establish a communications structure to inform the public about court related developments;
- To ensure fair, complete and accurate reporting on the courts;
- To assist news media representative to carry out their responsibilities to inform the public, and
- To accommodate media coverage with the least disruption to court proceedings.

### Policy

The policy of the Glenn County Superior Court is to provide information on a timely basis and to assure access to proceedings the public has a right to attend. Court documents are not covered by the California Public Records Act or the Federal Freedom of Information Act, but the court's policy is to ensure access to all records that are not confidential

The following items are confidential by statute and may not be copied or shown to the public:

1. Juvenile Court records (Welfare & Institution Code § 827);
2. Adoption proceeding records (Family Code § 9200);
3. Termination of parental rights proceedings records (Family Code § 7805);
4. Probation reports except:
  - a. During 60 days from the date judgment is pronounced or probation is granted, whichever occurs first,
  - b. The parties or their attorneys of record, and
  - c. By court order (Penal Code § 1203.05);

5. Grand Jury proceedings records before indictment (Penal Code § 938.1(b) (defense has a 10 day period to get copies of transcripts before it goes public);
6. Sealed records (Penal Code § 851.8, 1203.45);
7. Medical records and reports made pursuant to a court order (Evidence Code § 1017);
8. Subpoenaed records and expert reports until they are introduced as evidence, unless the parties stipulate to view them (Evidence Code §1560(d));
9. Search warrants and affidavits until the return of service is filed, or 10 days after issuance, whichever occurs first. (Penal Code § 1534(a));
10. Arrest reports (April 10, 1992, Los Angeles County Counsel opinion, Penal Code § 1054.2).
11. Jury identification information order sealed by the Court (Code of Civil Procedure § 237);
12. Reports concerning mentally disordered prisoners (Penal Code § 4011.6);
13. Criminal history information (Penal Code § 11105, 13300 et seq.);
14. Access to Court's computer system, data base or computerized records except a printed docket (August 9, 1989, Los Angeles County Counsel opinion);
15. Social Security numbers (Government Code §68107);
16. Informa pauperis applications (California Rules of Court, Rule 985(h));
17. Records and documents in attachment cases when a request is made (Code of Civil Procedure § 482.050);
18. Criminal exhibits without a court order available only to attorney of record;
19. Paternity cases except judgment;
20. Personnel Records.
21. Statement of Assets Form (Penal Code §1202.4)

22. Pre-sentencing Diagnostic reports (Penal Code §1203.03) available only to defendant, defense counsel, the probation officer, the district attorney, and the Department of Corrections.
23. Victim impact statements (Penal Code § 1191.15 (b)(c)) until imposition of sentence and judgment except by court, the probation department, and counsel up to two days before the imposition of sentence.
24. Child Custody evaluation reports (Family Code §3111) available only to court, parties and counsel.
25. Family conciliation court records (Family Code § 1818 (b)) available to court only.
26. Uniform Parentage Act documents
27. Support enforcement and child abduction records
28. Income tax returns in support cases
29. Confidential Counseling Statements
30. Confidential Guardian Screening Form (GC 212.) This mandatory Judicial Council form is confidential. (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 7.1001(c).)
31. Confidential Conservator Screening Forms (GC 314 & GC 312). These mandatory Judicial Council forms are confidential. (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 7.1050(c).)
32. Reports regarding proposed conservators or guardianship available only to those persons specified by statute or granted access by a judge. (Probate Code § 1826 and Probate Code §§1513, subd. (d)& 1826, subd. (n).)

Exceptions to Court policy can only be granted upon order of the Court. Persons requesting access to confidential records are to be advised that they may petition the court and request a court order for access to confidential records.

### **Responding to Public Inquiry**

When a responding to public inquiry from any source, including the media, employees should remember to:

- Discuss only areas and functions in which they have expertise and are sure of their facts;
- Refrain from interpretation;
- Refrain from giving opinions.

Official spokespersons for the Court are the Presiding Judge, the Executive Officer, or their designees.

When an inquiry involves more than an employee knows or factual data that is available to the public, calls should be directed to the Executive Officer. Requestors to film or videotape court proceedings should be given a California Rules of Court, Rule 980 Form, to petition the Court to conduct electronic recording in the courtroom (copy attached) and order therein

Requestors to film or videotape in court facilities for newsgathering purposes should be given a Media Videotaping/Filming Request (copy attached).

Media wanting to film or photograph in non-public areas, e.g. employee work areas not located in public areas such as filing and records counter areas, must obtain permission of the Court Executive Officer.

Requestors to film or videotape in court facilities for commercial purposes, e.g. movies, television shows, and commercials, should be referred to the Court Executive Officer.

### **Copying Costs**

In accordance with local court policy, 50 cents a page will be charged for photocopying documents for the public, which includes the media.