



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Redwood City, CA

DATE: April 25, 2016

San Mateo Superior Court Expands Interpreter Services in Civil Cases

REDWOOD CITY– Civil litigants in some cases before the San Mateo Superior Court now have access to interpreter services at no cost as part of the Court's two-phase expansion of services.

Effective April 11, 2016, the Court implemented Phase One of the process to expand the case types for which interpreters are available. State law authorizes the court to provide interpreters to civil litigants who do not proficiently speak or understand the English language at no cost to the parties, regardless of income. State law also requires that interpreters be provided in accordance with a specified order of priority until sufficient funds are appropriated to provide an interpreter for all civil litigants.

Prior to this expansion, the Court provided interpreters for litigants involved in criminal, traffic, and certain juvenile, family law domestic violence and child support cases. The first phase of expansion adds interpreter services for the following additional case types, as resources are available:

- Proceedings where a protective order is sought in family law domestic violence cases, elder or dependent adult physical abuse and neglect cases, or civil harassment cases
- Actions or proceedings relating to unlawful detainer (landlord/tenant)
- Actions and proceedings to terminate parental rights
- Actions and proceedings relating to conservatorship or guardianship, including the appointment or termination of a probate guardian or conservator

Parties involved in these case types may request an interpreter through the court clerk's office, courtroom clerks, Interpreter Services Department, or online. Requests should be made as far as possible in advance of the hearing date, but at least two weeks before the hearing. Completed request forms may be submitted in person or online through the Court's website at www.sanmateocourt.org.

If an interpreter is not available at the time of the hearing, the Court may continue the case until an interpreter can be assigned. Interpreters will be assigned using the specified order of priority, with criminal, traffic and juvenile matters taking precedence.

In 2017, the San Mateo Superior Court plans to implement Phase 2 of the expansion plan with the goal of providing interpreters in all other case types.

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