



Court Reporters at the Hayward Hall of Justice

The Superior Court of California, County of Alameda has continued to provide court reporters for essential hearings in family law cases despite a critical and growing labor shortage throughout California.

Unfortunately, as outlined in General Directive 2026-25, it is very unlikely that official court reporters will be available in family law departments and so the court is encouraging all parties to secure private court reporters to provide a verbatim transcript of a hearing.

Electronic recordings of hearings are possible if the hearing meets the criteria outlined in the Court's [General Directive 2026-24](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the Court making this change now?

[The court reporter labor shortage](#) has been a critical issue in California for several years and is not improving. Our Court was fortunate to be able to continue to have a stable team of reporters, but that dynamic is changing as more reporters retire and finding replacements becomes more difficult. Despite our hiring efforts and our court reporter apprenticeship program, we now have a critical shortage of court reporters. We must move the reporters who used to be dedicated to family law to our courtrooms that handle criminal and juvenile cases.

What is the Court doing to attract more Court reporters?

The Court is using all means at our disposal to attract new court reporters, including grant funding, hiring bonuses, and creating internship programs to attract more people to the field.

What should I do if I want a reporter to prepare a verbatim transcript of an upcoming hearing?

To be certain of a verbatim transcript, providing a private court reporter is necessary (with the exceptions of Departments 502, 508, and 509, where we hope to continue to have official reporters available for some further period of time). The Court cannot guarantee that an official court reporter will be available to create a verbatim transcript of your family law hearing. The Court cannot guarantee that findings will be made to grant the use of electronic recording, though reaching a stipulation to permit the use of the Court's official recording device would be helpful. Please review our General Directive 2026-24, which allows for electronic recording to see if your hearing would qualify.

What if I cannot afford and/or find a private court reporter?

[General Directive 2026-24](#) allows a judicial officer to permit electronic recording using the Court's official recording device when the Court finds that "the party requesting a verbatim record has been unable to secure the presence of a private court reporter to report the proceeding because such a reporter was not reasonable available or, in a non-criminal case, because that party has a reasonable inability to pay for a private reporter."

What departments are impacted?

All departments at the Hayward Hall of Justice may be impacted by the court reporter shortage, including family law and general civil departments. In the near future, the probate departments at the Berkeley Courthouse are likely to also be impacted. Child support departments (508 and 509) and the domestic violence/restraining order department (502) may continue to have official court reporter coverage for some period of time. Continued availability will depend on factors beyond the Court's control, including the needs of the criminal and juvenile departments in other courthouses and court reporter hiring and retirements.

What happens if I retain a private reporter but it turns out an official reporter is available and working in my courtroom?

The official reporter would create the verbatim transcript of the proceedings. Some overlap in court reporter coverage is possible in the short term while the Court undertakes the re-deployment process. We anticipate continuing to have official reporters in departments 502, 508, and 509 for some further period of time. You may want to contact the clerk in these departments in advance of the hearing to determine whether they are aware of anticipated unavailability of the assigned official reporter. As has been the case in all family law departments for several years, unavailability of a reporter cannot always be anticipated (for example, due to illness or pressing needs in the criminal departments).