



CONSUMER ATTORNEYS OF CALIFORNIA

Seeking Justice for All

San Mateo is latest county to feel court budget axe

Five courtroom closures, layoffs will affect consumers

SACRAMENTO (Feb. 1, 2013) – In another blow to California consumers and businesses who rely on access to justice, the Superior Court of San Mateo County has announced upcoming layoffs and court closures as the result of inadequate court funding.

Presiding Judge Robert Foiles Thursday [announced](#) the court would eliminate five court commissioner positions and up to 21 staff jobs, close five courtrooms and suspend most services in the South San Francisco and San Mateo branches. The cuts will take effect as early as July unless the State of California is able to restore funding to the judicial branch.

These moves are in addition to earlier actions that saw the San Mateo County court cut its workforce by more than 30 percent, reduce hours of operation for the clerk's office and telephone queries, and consolidate a number of services to one location for the county. Further reductions in public counter and phone hours were already scheduled to go in place this month.

The situation in San Mateo County, where the courts serve the needs not only of citizens but also the northern edge of Silicon Valley, resembles many across the state during California's ongoing court budget crisis. General fund revenue for the courts has declined by more than 30 percent over the past five years, a reduction of more than \$1.1 billion.

“Reductions in services such as the ones announced in San Mateo County are simply unacceptable,” said Consumer Attorneys of California President Brian Kabateck. “Our organization will continue to work hard to restore adequate court funding so that California's consumers and businesses, including those in Silicon Valley, can have access to the courts for their essential legal protections. These cuts affect the elderly abused in nursing homes, women in abusive relationships, children in difficult family situations. We cannot deny justice to those in need.”

Consumer Attorneys of California is a professional organization of plaintiffs' attorneys representing consumers seeking accountability against wrongdoers in cases involving personal injury, product liability, environmental degradation and other causes.

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