

# Superior Court of California, County of Lassen

## Privately Retained Official Court Reporters Pro Tempore

Effective December 1, 2021, this policy regarding PRIVATELY RETAINED COURT REPORTERS is applicable to all Civil, Family, Probate, and other case types where an official court reporter is not provided, except as noted below.

### POLICY OF THE LASSEN SUPERIOR COURT

#### TITLE: PRIVATELY RETAINED COURT REPORTERS

**PURPOSE:** A party has the right to arrange, at the party's own expense, for the services of a court reporter if the services of an official court reporter are not available for a proceeding. (Government Code Section 68086 and California Rules of Court, rule 2.956). This document established the policy for a party arranging for a privately retained court reporter when an official court reporter is not available and established requirements for qualifying as an official reporter pro tempore.

**APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY:** This policy applies to hearings and trials in the Civil, Family, and Probate Divisions in unlimited civil matters, limited civil matters to the extent not electronically recorded, and probate matters. Court reporters will be provided by the Court in all mandated proceedings, including in the following cases: criminal – felony; juvenile dependency; juvenile delinquency; and family law matters where an official court reporter is mandated, such as requests to withdraw consent to an adoption, child testimony in chambers, and petitions to free a minor from parental care and control.

#### POLICY:

1. If the services of an official court reporter are not available for a proceeding, a party may privately arrange for court reporter services at the party's own expense, pursuant to Government Code Section 68086 and California Rule of Court, rule 2.956.
2. A party must make arrangements for a Privately Retained Court Reporter in advance of the proceeding if the party wishes the proceedings to be reported. Parties retaining a reporter must file a *Request for Appointment of Official Reporter Pro Tempore* with the court at least 5 days prior to the hearing unless the Court orders otherwise. If the judicial officer has not received the Request in time to approve it before the hearing, the Court has the discretion to deny the request.
  - A. When a party arranges for a reporter, the reporter must be appointed as an official reporter pro tempore before the hearing begins. Every reporter must

complete and sign sections 1, 2, and 3 of the *Request for Appointment of Official Reporter Pro Tempore*.

- B. The Judicial Officer must sign the order appointing the reporter as an official reporter pro tempore, using the *Request for Appointment of Official Reporter Pro Tempore*, before the reporter may report the proceeding.
3. By signing the *Request for Appointment of Official Reporter Pro Tempore*, the reporter agrees to the following:
- A. The reporter has a valid, current California Certified Shorthand Reporter License and is in good standing with the Court Reporters Board of California.
  - B. The reporter is not a current full-time employee of the court and appointment as an Official Reporter Pro Tempore will not interfere with the reporter's obligations as a court employee.
  - C. The reporter will provide current contact information with the court.
  - D. All fees for reporting services, including appearance, transcript, and real-time fees, are the responsibility of the party or parties who arranged for the reporter services and may not be charged to the court.
  - E. The reporter will comply with statutes and rules applicable to official reporters pro tempore, including the duty to timely prepare transcripts, including those for appeals, in the proper form.
  - F. The reporter will demonstrate the highest standards of ethics and impartiality in the performance of his/her duties.
  - G. The reporter will comply with the court's requirements regarding uploading electronic archiving of notes within 48 hours of the date of the proceedings except in extenuating circumstances and is approved in advance by the Operations Supervisor or make other arrangements if the only notes are in paper form.
  - H. The reporter will follow directions from the court and will be subject to the jurisdiction of the court to the same extent as an official reporter.
  - I. The reporter will be available for read-back of notes taken during a jury trial within 30 minutes of the court's request.

- J. If providing real-time reporting or other litigation support services, the reporter is responsible for providing and connecting the necessary equipment.

#### 4. Additional Information for Parties and Reporters

##### A. Only One Official Record

There can be only one official record of court proceedings, and only a reporter appointed by the court may report a court proceeding. (Code of Civil Procedure Section 273; Government Code Sections 70043 and 70044; *Redwing v. Moncravie* (1934) 138 Cal. App. 432,434.) Only one reporter will be allowed to report a court proceeding at any given time. If the parties cannot agree on a reporter, the judicial officer will make the selection. The transcript may not be modified except on court order.

##### B. Payment for Official Reporter Pro Tempore Services

The party arranging for an official reporter pro tempore is responsible for paying the reporter's fees, although the parties may arrange to share the fees at terms the parties negotiate. (California Rules of Court, rule 2.956(c).) All fees must be paid directly to the court reporter.

##### C. Transcripts

- 1) The judicial officer may order any party who arranges for the transcription of proceedings by the official reporter pro tempore to lodge a copy of the transcript with the court. (Code of Civil Procedure Section 128(a).)
- 2) Transcripts produced by an official reporter pro tempore will be treated, for court purposes, identically to transcripts prepared by official reporters. Reporting notes of an official reporter pro tempore are official records of the court. (Government Code Section 69955(a).) The notes of an official reporter pro tempore, when transcribed and certified, are prima facie evidence of the testimony and proceedings. (Code of Civil Procedure Section 273(a).)
- 3) Certified transcripts are admissible as evidence to the extent otherwise permitted by law. Transcripts prepared by a privately retained certified shorthand reporter appointed by the court as an official reporter pro tempore are admissible as evidence to the extent otherwise permitted by law. (Code of Civil Procedure Section 273(a).)

5. The *Request for Appointment of Official Reporter Pro Tempore* is available as a form attached to the Local Rules at [www.lassencourt.ca.gov](http://www.lassencourt.ca.gov).
6. This policy shall be posted on the court's website [www.lassencourt.ca.gov](http://www.lassencourt.ca.gov).