



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF MONTEREY

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Monterey County Superior Court Joint Committee on the Elimination of Bias

Charter & Mission

The Monterey County Superior Court, in collaboration with the Monterey County Bar Association and the Monterey County Women Lawyers Association, has established the Monterey County Superior Court Joint Committee on the Elimination of Bias.

Mission: Understanding that as human beings we have biases that affect our actions, the Monterey County Superior Court Joint Committee on the Elimination of Bias is committed to working within our legal community to help identify and eliminate actions that prevent us from achieving a fair and impartial court environment. The purpose of this Committee is to assist in maintaining courtrooms free of bias and the appearance of bias through sponsoring educational programs and training, and promoting open communication.

Committee Membership

Committee members shall be selected every 2 years and shall serve 2 year terms. The committee shall be composed of representative members of the court community including judicial officers, lawyers, court administrators, Self Help staff, law students and others representing governmental or community organizations involved in diversity, equity and inclusion. Committee members should be representatives and individuals who interact with the court and reflect the diverse and various needs and viewpoints of court users.

Minimum membership: The committee shall have a minimum of 7 members as follows:

- 2 judicial officers;
- 1 lawyer from the Monterey County Bar Association, Board of Directors;
- 1 lawyer from the Monterey County Women Lawyers Association, Board of Directors;
- 1 lawyer from the District Attorney's office;
- 1 lawyer from the Public Defender's office;
- 1 individual representing a community organization involved in diversity, equity and inclusion.

The maximum number of committee members shall not exceed 20. It is expected that there will be a cross section of attorneys and representatives of community organizations who regularly interact with the court. Membership is not limited to one term of two years. Selection of those individuals serving on this Committee or to fill a vacancy will be made by a group of three individuals as follows:

Presiding Judge of the Superior Court or designee
President, Monterey County Bar Association or designee
President, Monterey County Women Lawyers Association or designee

Administrative Support

Admin support will be provided by the Executive Office of the Monterey County Superior Court.

Meetings/Events: Type and Frequency

The committee shall meet at least quarterly and shall not be subject to formal rules related to quorum or procedure. It shall be the goal of the committee to sponsor or co-sponsor (subject to available funding) at least one educational and topically relevant program annually that shall be free of charge to all attendees.

Committee Role Related to Education

The committee shall collaborate with the Monterey County Bar Association and the Monterey County Women Lawyers Associations to sponsor or support educational programs designed to eliminate unconscious or explicit bias within the court and legal communities. Educational programs may include educating on bias based upon age, ancestry, color, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, medical condition, military or veteran status, national origin, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and any other classification protected by federal or state law.

Roles and Responsibilities

Committee Chair or Co-Chair (shall be a Judicial Officer)

1. Provides leadership to the committee.
2. Conducts the committee meetings.
3. Maintains order at the meetings.
4. Reviews and approves the meeting agenda.
5. Reviews and approves the meeting summary.
6. Sets the meeting timelines.
7. Determines the meeting schedule.
8. Guides the activities of the committee in support of the committee charter.

All Committee Members

1. Attend committee meetings.
2. Participate in making suggestions and in planning of educational programs and/or other activities.

3. Provide information and collect feedback from the public on court user experiences related to the Mission of the Committee.
4. Serve on subcommittees as needed.
5. Disseminate relevant information to their respective organizations, constituencies and the public.

Admin Support

1. Attend committee meetings.
2. Prepare the meeting summary for review by Chair or Co-Chairs.
3. Distribute the meeting agenda and materials.

Ad hoc Subcommittees

Ad hoc subcommittees may be used for the below and shall be dissolved when the assignment is completed.

1. Identifying and planning educational opportunities .
2. Identifying circumstances and proposing actions to achieve a fair and impartial court environment.
3. Other purposes as determined by the Committee Chair or Co-Chair.