

Superior Court of California County of San Diego



Code of Conduct & Dress for Courthouse Visitors

The business of the Superior Court is serious and consequences of actions taken in the courtroom can profoundly affect a person's future. It is the Court's expectation that all persons will be treated with respect and dignity. Visitors to the court are expected to behave and dress in an appropriate manner.

APPROPRIATE COURTHOUSE DRESS

- Clothing must be neat and clean.
- Casual wear such as:
 - baggy clothing,
 - tank tops
 - shorts and short skirts or dresses
 - hooded pull over sweatshirts
 - flip-flopsare not appropriate, and the Court may disallow visitors so dressed.

EXPECTED BEHAVIOR IN THE COURTHOUSE

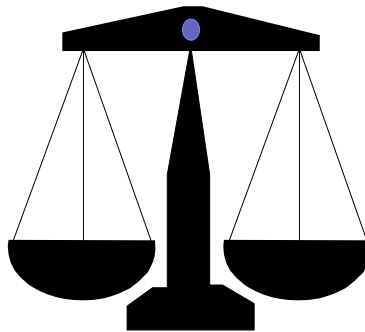
1. If you are part of a group, please walk in pairs on the right side of the hallways so other users of the courthouse have room to pass in the same hallway.
2. Walk quietly and talk softly throughout the courthouse. Loud discussions can be disruptive to trials in session.
3. Please respect all property and furnishings within the courthouse, and dispose of all trash in appropriate containers.
4. When entering courtrooms please sit in the first available seat and refrain from taking while court is in session. Do not leave the courtroom while testimony is being heard or when the judge is speaking.

COURTROOM ETIQUETTE

- No food, drinks, gum or anything that rattles
- No cameras, tape recorders or MP3 players
- Turn off cell phones and pagers
- No text messaging while in courtrooms
- Remove all hats or sunglasses

Thank you for your attention to this Courthouse Code of Conduct and Dress.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY YOUR VISIT TO THE SUPERIOR COURT AND THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SEE YOUR JUDICIAL SYSTEM IN OPERATION.



COURTHOUSE TOUR VOCABULARY LIST

This vocabulary list provides terms that will be useful on your courthouse tour.

Court	An agency of the judicial branch of government, consisting of one or more judicial officers, which has the authority to decide upon cases, controversies in law, and disputed matters of fact brought before it
Arrest	Taking an adult or juvenile into physical custody by authority of law
Bail	The guarantee of money necessary to set a person free from jail until he or she is to appear at a specific place and time before the court
Fine	The sum of money paid as punishment
Case Types:	
Civil cases	Involve disputes between people. Examples include contract disputes, divorce actions and child custody matters
Criminal cases	Involve the breaking of laws. Criminal cases are classified as felonies, misdemeanors or infractions
Felony	A criminal offense punishable by death, or by incarceration in a prison facility. Examples are murder, rape and robbery
Misdemeanor	The breaking of a criminal law that is not as serious as a felony, and therefore is punishable by no more than one year in the county jail. Examples are petty theft and most drunk driving cases
Infraction	A violation of state statute or local ordinance punishable by a fine or other penalty but not by incarceration. Examples are vehicle equipment violations and dog off a leash
People:	
Judge	An elected or appointed individual empowered by the law to hear and determine the disposition of a legal issue
Lawyer	A person licensed to give advice about laws or to act for another in a court of law
Prosecutor	The lawyer who represents the government's (the people's) side of a case against an accused person
Defense Counsel	The lawyer who represents the accused person in a criminal case
Common Hearings:	
Arraignment	The accused in a criminal case is brought to court, informed of the charge(s) and his or her rights, and is asked to plead either guilty or not guilty
Preliminary Hearing	If a defendant pleads not guilty at arraignment on a felony matter, a preliminary hearing is held to determine whether there are reasonable grounds to hold the accused for a trial
Trial	The hearing and determination of issues of fact and law, in accordance with prescribed legal procedures in order to reach a disposition. There are court trials heard/decided by a judge, and jury trials heard/decided by a panel of citizens (usually 12)