

**DIVISION IV  
PROBATE**

**CHAPTER 1  
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**Rule 4.1.1**

**Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/1991; Rev. 7/1/1995; Rev. 1/1/2000; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2013; Del. 1/1/2022)

**Rule 4.1.2**

**Probate Court Information**

Matters governed by the Probate Code are to be filed in the Probate Division.

**A. Venue.** The East, North, and South County Divisions are included in the Central Division for purposes of all Probate cases.

**B. Filing Location.** Probate documents may be filed in the Central Division located at 1100 Union Street, San Diego, California 92101. There is also a drop-box available in the North County Division located at 325 S. Melrose Dr., Vista, California 92081.

**C. Mandatory E-Filing.** Filings submitted by attorneys or represented parties must be submitted through one of the court's approved electronic filing service providers ("EFSPs"), with limited exceptions for certain documents. E-Filing is also encouraged but not mandated for self-represented litigants. Parties who wish to e-file must comply with the Electronic Filing Requirements posted on the court's website.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/2000; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 1/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**Rule 4.1.3**

**Viewing Records in the Probate Business Office**

Cases may be reviewed in the business office in accordance with the California Rules of Court [2.400\(a\)](#) and the following:

**A.** Cellular Phone Use is Prohibited Within the Lobby

**B.** Viewing Imaged Cases

**1.** Use of the Register of Actions Kiosk (ROAK) will be limited to 20 minutes if there are other members of the public waiting to use the terminal.

**2.** If paying for copies printed from the kiosk with cash or check, the payment must be processed with the cashier to complete the transaction.

**C.** Viewing Non-Imaged Cases

**1.** Any person requesting to view a file is required to submit a valid government-issued photo identification card.

**2.** Files must be requested by case number, using form SDSC ADM-11.

**3.** If files or copies of wills are requested that are stored at the court's offsite storage facility, the offsite storage retrieval fee will be assessed per file or document requested. Refer to the court's Fee Schedule ([SDSC Form #ADM-001](#)) for the current fee amount.

**4.** A certified or informational copy of the death certificate must be submitted when requesting copies of a will, and the name on the death certificate must match the name on the will.

**5.** If copies are requested from non-imaged files, a maximum of 20 pages will be copied on the date of request. If the copy request exceeds 20 pages, the customer will be required to complete and submit form SDSC ADM-004 [Court Records Request] with payment at the time of request.

**D.** Requests for Certified or Exemplified Copies.

**1.** Requests for more than five certified copies or exemplified copies must be accompanied by a Request for Copies (Probate) ([SDSC Form #PR-189](#)) and will be completed in the order that it is received.

**2.** Payment must be submitted at the time of the request for copies.

**3.** If submitted in person or by mail, a self-addressed, stamped, envelope must accompany the request for copies.

4. If submitted via E-Filing, certified copies may be returned via the Electronic Filing Service Provider (EFSP) or by U.S. mail. Exemplified copies will be returned by U.S. mail. Copies returned by U.S. mail will be assessed an additional fee for the envelope and postage.  
(Adopted 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.1.4**

##### **Sanctions**

A. If any counsel, a party represented by counsel, or a party in pro per, fails to comply with any of the requirements of Division IV of these rules, without good cause or substantial justification, the court, on motion of a party or on its own motion, after notice and hearing, may strike all or any part of any pleadings of that party; or dismiss the action or proceeding or any part thereof; or enter a judgment by default against that party; or impose other penalties of a lesser nature or as otherwise provided by law; and may order that party or their counsel to pay to the moving party the reasonable expenses in making the motion, including reasonable attorney fees.

B. If a failure to comply with the rules in Division IV is the responsibility of counsel and not of the party, any penalty must be imposed on counsel and must not adversely affect the party's cause of action or defense thereto.

(Adopted 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2012; Renum. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2025)

## **CHAPTER 2**

**[Reserved for future use.]**

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **FILING REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Rule 4.3.1**

##### **Format Requirements and Copies**

A. The caption of each document should clearly set forth the filer's intent (e.g. Petition, Objection, Declaration, etc.) as the probate clerk is not required to read the body of the document or prayer.

B. A petition captioned as "amended" will supersede the former petition and will be set for hearing in due course. The original petition, if set for hearing more than four court days from the date of filing the amended petition, will be taken off calendar unless letters of Special Administration, Temporary Guardianship or Temporary Conservatorship will be expiring before the hearing date on the amended petition. If the underlying petition was taken off-calendar, the amended petition must be filed within 90 days of the previously scheduled hearing date. (Refer to SDLR 4.4.4B). No fee is charged for an amended petition.

C. The probate business office will assign a "Register of Actions" number (ROA) at the time the petition is set for hearing.

D. The court will conform only one copy of each original submitted for filing. If conformed copies are to be returned by mail or messenger, a stamped, self-addressed envelope or messenger slip must be included.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/2000; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2023; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.3.2**

##### **Electronic Filing (E-Filing)**

##### **A. E-Filing Requirements**

1. All documents electronically filed must be submitted in a PDF format and must also be in a text searchable format, i.e., Optical Character Recognition (OCR).

2. Each electronically filed pleading must be submitted in a single PDF. Combined pleadings filed pursuant to California Rules of Court, [rule 3.1112\(c\)](#) must also be filed in a single PDF. Multiple PDF documents are not to be filed in connection with a single pleading.

3. When submitting an original will to the business office for a Petition for Probate that was previously e-Filed, the submitting party must include the probate case number on the stiff backing.

4. Pleadings that contain more than one exhibit/attachment/tab must include electronic bookmarks with links to the first page of each exhibit/attachment/tab and titles that identify the exhibit/attachment/tab number or letter and briefly describe the exhibit/attachment/tab. Additionally, the court encourages the use of electronic bookmarks in electronic documents for each heading, subheading, and document components, such as table of contents, points and authorities, declarations, and proofs of service.

5. If submitting a proposed order, an e-mail address for the submitting attorney or party must be notated in the form/pleading header for a conformed copy to be returned.

6. Any document that is filed on a day that the court is closed or after 11:59 p.m. shall be deemed to have been filed on the next court business day.

7. Notwithstanding California Rules of Court, [rule 2.257\(c\)\(1\)](#), Letters that are electronically filed must contain a signature of the appointed individual(s) in the affirmation section of the applicable form.

**B. Documents Ineligible for E-Filing**

1. Original Wills and Codicils
2. Bonds
3. Lodged Documents

**C. Consent to Electronic Service**

1. In uncontested Probate proceedings, electronic service of documents is governed by Probate Code section 1215(c). All parties who wish to consent to electronic service must file a Consent to Electronic Service and Notice of Electronic Service Address ([JC Form #EFS-005-CV](#)) with the court and serve a copy on all parties who have appeared in the action. Any party who wishes to withdraw consent to electronic service must file a Withdrawal of Consent to Electronic Service ([JC Form #EFS-006](#)) with the court and serve a copy on all parties who have appeared in the action.
2. In contested Probate proceedings, electronic service of documents is governed by Code of Civil Procedure section 1010.6. Self-represented litigants who wish to consent to electronic service must file a Consent to Electronic Service and Notice of Electronic Service Address ([JC Form #EFS-005-CV](#)) with the court and serve a copy on all parties who have appeared in the action. A self-represented litigant who wishes to withdraw consent to electronic service must file a Withdrawal of Consent to Electronic Service ([JC Form #EFS-006](#)) with the court and serve a copy on all parties who have appeared in the action. Express consent is not required for represented parties in contested matters.
3. In both uncontested and contested Probate proceedings, a Consent to Electronic Service and Notice of Electronic Service Address ([JC Form #EFS-005-CV](#)) is required for electronic service of notice of an ex parte application on a self-represented litigant.

(Adopted 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2023; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2025; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**Rule 4.3.3**

**Filing Documents for Calendared Matters**

A. The case number, hearing date, time, department, and ROA number of the petition, motion, or application are required on documents filed in connection with matters already set for hearing, and must appear on the first page of the document, below the caption.

B. The paper filings that are imaged and stored electronically will be physically stored by the court for 30 days after filing, after which time they will be shredded and recycled, except for original wills and bonds which will be physically retained by the court for the period required by law. The paper filings that are imaged and stored temporarily are not accessible to the public, including the party and/or attorney who submitted the imaged document.

C. Prayers within a petition must be drafted so that their general effect may be determined without reference to separate paragraphs within the petition, including, but not limited to, attachments/exhibits, supplements, or other later filed documents. If documents are filed that alter the original prayer, the document shall include a comprehensive prayer. If the documents substantially alter the original prayer, an amended petition should be filed.

D. Supplements or Amendments to Petitions must not be submitted on the same local or judicial council form that was initially filed. The Supplement or Amendment should be on pleading paper or the Response to Probate Notes ([PR-177](#)).

E. In order to be considered at the calendared hearing, documents filed after the calendared petition must be filed no later than four court days prior to the hearing. Any document filed after the deadline will be considered late and may not be reflected in the probate notes. Documents E-Filed on the same date of the hearing may not be processed in time for the hearing. Late filings will only be considered at the court's discretion.

**F.** When the court authorizes a petition to be set for hearing on a particular date, unless otherwise ordered by the court, the petition must be filed no later than five court days prior to the authorized date. Any petition filed after the deadline will be set in due course according to the court's availability. If e-filing, the filing party must include a comment to the clerk identifying the order that authorized the petition to be set on a particular date.

**G. Lodgments**

**1.** Lodgments will not be accepted unless specifically authorized by statute, rule, or court order. If submitting a lodgment, the applicable statute, rule, or court order must be clearly identified in the caption of the lodgment (e.g. California Rules of Court, [Rule 2.551](#)).

**2.** If allowed by statute, rule, or court order, the following items must accompany lodged materials: (1) a notice of lodgment, which includes a numbered listing of all of the items lodged; (2) the numbered exhibits, with a copy of the notice of lodgment and Lodged Documents coversheet ([ADM-378](#)) (preferably printed on pink paper) on top; and (3) a means of return.

**3.** Notices of lodgments submitted through e-filing, must not have the lodged documents attached. A copy of the e-filed notice of lodgment must be submitted to the probate business office with the numbered exhibits attached, a Lodged Documents coversheet ([ADM-378](#)) (preferably printed on pink paper) on top; and a means of return. The e-filing Transaction ID # must be noted in the upper right-hand corner of the coversheet.

**4.** Lodged materials will be returned to the tendering party after the resolution of the calendared matter, unless the party requests their destruction or the party fails to provide a means of return. All lodgments must be accompanied either by a self-addressed, stamped envelope or an attorney service pick-up slip. Following the return of the lodged documents by the court, the tendering party should retain them until the applicable appeal period has expired.

**5.** This rule does not apply to original wills or codicils. Submission of original wills or codicils is governed under rule 4.3.9.

**H.** Accounting schedules must be attached to the Petition. Originals of financial statements, closing escrow statements, and bill statements for a residential or long-term care facility must be submitted using the Financial Statement Coversheet ([PR-121](#)) or the Confidential Financial Statement Coversheet ([PR-121C](#)).

**I. Form of Exhibits**

**1.** When a pleading with supporting exhibits is electronically filed (e-Filed), the exhibits shall be attached to the document, regardless of the number of pages. An index of exhibits must be included, each exhibit must be separated by a page bearing the exhibit designation, and bookmarking of exhibits is required.

**2.** When a pleading with supporting exhibits is filed in paper format, the exhibits shall be attached to the document, regardless of the number of pages. An index of exhibits must be included, and each exhibit must be separated by a sheet of paper bearing the exhibit designation.

**J.** A copy of the Trust and any amendments must be submitted for filing with all trust cases. The copy of the Trust and/or amendments must be submitted with a coversheet, separately from the petition. Trust Coversheet ([PR-167](#)) may be used for this purpose. The coversheet may indicate that the Trust and any amendments are confidential, which will cause the documents to be retained at a security level that is not available to the general public. Any subsequently filed petitions must reference the ROA number and date of filing of the copy of the Trust and any amendments.

**K.** All petitions must set forth the statutory authority under which they are brought.

**L.** All petitions, objections and responses must set forth the filing party's name, address and their relation to the subject of the petition (decedent, trustor, beneficiary, minor, proposed conservatee, etc.), on the first page.

**M.** Any hand-written documents submitted to be construed or approved must include a typed copy of the document.

**N.** A copy of any relevant powers of attorney must be submitted for filing. The copy of the power of attorney must be submitted with a coversheet. Power of Attorney Coversheet ([PR-190](#)) may be used for this purpose. The coversheet may indicate that the power of attorney is confidential, which will cause the documents to be retained at a security level that is not available to the general public.

**O.** A filing deadline in relation to a hearing date shall be determined by counting backward from the hearing date, excluding the day of the hearing (e.g., if the deadline is four court days before the hearing and the hearing is on a Wednesday, the documents must be filed by the preceding Thursday).

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1996; Rev. 1/1/2000; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. &

Renum. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2023; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.3.4**

##### **Use of Judicial Council Forms**

The latest version of applicable printed forms of petitions, orders and other documents approved by the Judicial Council must be used in all cases, unless otherwise permitted or directed by the court. If a form is inadequate for a given circumstance, an addendum may be attached to the form. When no applicable form has been so approved, counsel must draft their own documents following the requirements for pleading format.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2022)

#### **Rule 4.3.5**

##### **Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Renum. 1/1/2015; Del. 1/1/2022)

#### **Rule 4.3.6**

##### **Complete Address in Petition or Report**

**A.** Where a petition or report is required to include an address, a full and complete number, street, city, state and zip code for the person's place of business or place of residence must be set forth. Where the mailing address is a different address, it must also be included.

**B.** If a Post Office Box is the only known address, a statement of due diligence as to the efforts made to obtain a person's physical address must accompany the petition or report.

**C.** Where a petition requests relief, authority or approval related to real property, the complete address, Assessor Parcel Number (APN), and legal description must be set forth in the prayer. (See rule 4.17.9.)

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Renum. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2018)

#### **Rule 4.3.7**

##### **Multiple Wards, Conservatees, or Trusts**

**A.** Where several proposed wards share the same parent, a Petition for Appointment of Guardian of Minor ([GC-210/210P](#)) must be filed under one case number and include all of the minors.

**B.** Where a married couple is to be conserved, a separate Petition for Appointment of Probate Conservator ([GC-310](#)) for each may be filed under the same case number if all of the assets of the estate are community property. If both petitions are approved, a separate Order Appointing Probate Conservator ([GC-340](#)) and Letters of Conservatorship ([GC-350](#)) must be submitted for each conservatee. In all other cases, the conserved spouses must have separate case numbers.

**C.** Where a petition is in relation to a subtrust, the petition should be filed under the specific name of the subtrust and receive a new case number, if applicable.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2012; Renum. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2023)

#### **Rule 4.3.8**

##### **Declinations, Resignations and Consents to Serve**

**A.** It is insufficient merely to allege that the person or entity named in the decedent's will or trust as executor, successor trustee, guardian or conservator is not qualified, declines to act, or resigns. A written declination to act or resignation, signed by such person or entity, must be filed with the court. If the entity is no longer in business, the petitioner should file the declination of its successor entity, if any.

**B.** If a petition for appointment of one or more personal representatives, successor trustee, guardian or conservator is filed and any of the proposed individuals is not a petitioner, then a consent to act, signed by each such non-petitioning appointee must be filed with the court. If a consent to act cannot be obtained, the petition must state facts regarding both the efforts to obtain consent and the results of those efforts.

(Adopted 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2022)

**Rule 4.3.9**

**Submission of Wills**

The court requests that all wills and other testamentary documents submitted for deposit/filing be attached to a stiff backing or manuscript cover, the right-side margin of which contains the document's caption (title) which must be fully visible.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2022)

**Rule 4.3.10**

**Consolidation and Notice of Related Case/Petition**

**A.** Whenever it appears that two or more petitions have been filed in separate case numbers, and in reference to the same decedent, trust, conservatee or minor, the court will, on its own motion, consolidate all of the matters.

**B.** California Rules of Court, [rule 3.300](#), respecting the requirements for Notice of Related Case, and San Diego Superior Court Rule 1.4.6, respecting the requirement of scheduling an ex parte hearing in supervising civil department, apply to all petitions or applications filed with the Probate Division of the Court.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**Rule 4.3.11**

**Petitions Relating to Real and Personal Property**

**A.** Copies of Deeds. Where the petition affects title to real property such as, Spousal Property Petition, Petition to Determine Succession to Primary Residence in California, and Probate Code section 850 petitions, a copy of the deed(s) by which the decedent acquired title must be attached to the petition.

**B.** Ownership Documents. Where the petition affects title or change of title to personal property such as, Spousal Property Petition and Probate Code section 850 petitions, a copy of the supporting document(s) which show decedent's ownership must be attached to the petition.

**C.** Encumbrances. Where the petition affects title or change of title to real or personal property, such as Spousal Property Petition, Petition to Determine Succession to Primary Residence in California, and Probate Code section 850 petitions, the petition shall include a statement listing all encumbrances (such as, but not limited to, liens, mortgages, and third-party claims) to the subject property.

**D.** Petitions must include an allegation concerning the designation of a Pay-on-Death (POD) beneficiary for alleged financial accounts.

(Adopted 1/1/2026)

**CHAPTER 4**  
**SETTINGS, ASSIGNMENTS AND CONTINUANCES**

**Rule 4.4.1**

**Calendar Settings of Probate Matters**

All petitions which require a hearing will, upon being filed with the court, be set by the clerk on the next available court calendar day, unless a later date is requested by petitioner at the time of filing.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1995; Rev. 1/1/2000; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2022)

**Rule 4.4.2**

**Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2019; Del. 1/1/2022)

**Rule 4.4.3**

**Continuances of Hearings on Petitions in Uncontested Matters**

**A.** Any request for a continuance before the time of the hearing, must be made by or with the permission of petitioner if self-represented, or by petitioner's counsel. If requested by a non-petitioning party, consent from the petitioner must be provided.

**B.** A first and second continuance of more than two weeks may be obtained by contacting the Probate Examiner. After two continuances have been granted, further continuances must be approved by the court.

**C.** A continuance of two weeks or less will be granted only for good cause and will require judicial approval.

**D.** Probate Examiners have authority to continue the hearing date on uncontested matters. However, Probate Examiners do not have authority to grant requests for continuance that are made later than four court days prior to the hearing, or that are set forth in subsection 1 below. Counsel or self-represented litigants who have obtained a continuance in an uncontested matter must inform all parties entitled to notice of the continuance at the earliest possible date, so as to avoid unnecessary appearances, inconvenience and expense.

**1.** Matters Examiners CANNOT Continue

- a.** Any petition where a Citation or Summons has been issued;
- b.** Any petition that may be contested due to the nature of the relief sought (e.g. Petition for Removal of Trustee);
- c.** Any matter specially set by the court (e.g. MSC, CMC, TRC & Trial);
- d.** Sale of Real Property;
- e.** Petition for Appointment of Conservator;
- f.** Petition for Appointment of Guardian;
- g.** Petition for Order re: Guardianship Visitation;
- h.** Petition for Termination of Guardianship;
- i.** Order to Show Cause;
- j.** Motion;
- k.** Review Hearing;

- l.** Any other petition the court determines may adversely affect involved parties, if continued.

**E.** A preapproved matter will be continued if an objection is made at the time of hearing and counsel for the preapproved matter is not present. Counsel will be notified of the continuance.

**F.** For contested matters, counsel seeking a continuance must obtain the advance agreement of all parties who have appeared in the matter prior to making a continuance request.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/1996; Rev. 1/1/2000; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev & Renum. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2025)

#### **Rule 4.4.4**

##### **Requests to Take Matters Off-Calendar and Resetting Matters**

**A.** Probate Examiners have authority to take certain hearings off-calendar, if uncontested. A written request to take a matter off-calendar must be filed four court days prior to the hearing, with the exception of Ex Parte Petitions, which can be taken off-calendar up to the day of the hearing, by contacting the Examiner. For all matters, counsel or the self-represented litigant seeking to have the matter taken off calendar, must inform all parties entitled to notice that the matter has been taken off-calendar so as to avoid unnecessary appearances, inconvenience and expense. Matters the Probate Examiner cannot take off- calendar, whether uncontested or not, are set forth in subsection 1.

**1.** Matters Examiners CANNOT Take Off-Calendar:

- a.** Any petition where a Citation or Summons has been issued;
- b.** Any petition that may be contested due to the nature of the relief sought (e.g. Petition for Removal of Trustee);
- c.** Any matter specially set by the court (e.g. MSC, CMC, TRC & Trial);
- d.** Any petition where the court has appointed an Attorney or Guardian ad Litem;
- e.** Status Report (May be taken off-calendar if an Accounting or Waiver of Accounting is filed);
- f.** Accounting/Waiver of Accounting;
- g.** Petition for Appointment of Guardian;
- h.** Petition for Appointment of Conservator;
- i.** Order to Show Cause;
- j.** Motion;
- k.** Review Hearing (May be taken off-calendar, if required document filed);



I. Any other petition the court determines may adversely affect involved parties, if taken off calendar.

B. A petition that has been taken off-calendar may be reset for hearing only upon the written, signed and verified request of the petitioner filed with the court no later than 90 days from the hearing date previously taken off calendar. Unless otherwise ordered by the court, the verified request must demonstrate that all defects, with the exception of notice, have been cured. In the absence of such a timely request, the matter will be deemed dismissed without prejudice. Proof of proper notice of the new hearing date must be provided in accordance with applicable provisions of law.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/2000; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.4.5**

##### **Remote Appearances**

A. A party or witness who intends to appear remotely must provide notice to the court and all parties or persons entitled to receive notice of the proceedings prior to the commencement of the proceedings. By appearing remotely, a party or witness is deemed to have given notice of intent to appear remotely and to consent to the remote appearance of any other party or witness.

B. A party who opposes the use of remote technology at an evidentiary hearing or trial may oppose either: (1) orally on the record prior to the commencement of the proceedings; or (2) in writing by filing and serving the Judicial Council form “Opposition to Remote Proceedings at Evidentiary Hearing or Trial” ([Form #RA-015](#)) prior to the commencement of the proceedings. Failure to timely oppose the use of remote technology will be considered consent to proceed remotely.

C. A party or witness who intends to appear remotely must refer to the court’s website ([www.sdcourt.ca.gov](http://www.sdcourt.ca.gov)) for the most up-to-date information regarding remote appearances.

Information on the options for appearing remotely or in person, the potential technological or audibility issues that could arise when using remote technology, and the process to alert the judicial officer of technology or audibility issues may be found on the court’s website.

(Adopted 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2023)

## **CHAPTER 5 NOTICES**

#### **Rule 4.5.1**

##### **General**

A. All notices must include the complete caption of the pleading.

B. All applications, petitions, objections, and/or responses, including those submitted ex parte, must allege the names, addresses (and telephone numbers for ex parte notices), of all persons entitled to notice, including minors and their age, and persons who have submitted Requests for Special Notice, so that the court may determine the adequacy of notice given.

(Adopted 1/1/2012; Renum. & Moved on 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2023, Rev. 1/1/2025)

#### **Rule 4.5.2**

##### **Additional Notice Requirements**

A. Under the provisions of the Probate Code, the court may require additional notice in any matter.

B. Ordinarily, such notice will be required whenever it appears that the interests of any person or entity may be adversely affected by the determination of the issues raised by the pleadings, such as when the status of property is to be determined, substantial fees for extraordinary services are requested, or granting the petition would reduce the taxes or other revenue that would otherwise be paid to a public entity, or will result in a public entity paying benefits that would not otherwise be owed.

C. Additional notice must include the full caption, as well as the time and place of hearing. The court may require a summary of the matters to be determined, or it may require a copy of the petition to be served with the notice.

D. The probate clerk will prepare and post the notice as required pursuant to Probate Code section 10308, subdivision (c). The clerk is not responsible for publications or mailings.



**E.** Unless nominated by a person with higher priority than the Public Administrator, notice to the Public Administrator is required in all decedent's estate appointment proceedings for Letters of Administration when the proposed personal representative is a creditor, is not related to the decedent, or is a non-resident of the United States.

**F.** Parties filing a new action must serve on all parties a copy of the "Notice of Case Assignment" with the petition or other case initiating pleading. A copy of this notice will be provided to the filing party by the court clerk when case originating filings are processed.

**G.** If specific information or language is required to be included in a notice, that specific information or language must be included in any waiver of that notice. This includes, but is not limited to, waivers of notice in Probate Code sections 850 and 859 proceedings, which must include the applicable notice language set forth in Probate Code section 851(c), and waivers of notice regarding a report of status of administration made under Probate Code section 12200, which must include the applicable notice language set forth in Probate Code section 12201(b).

**H.** When matters are continued by the court prior to the scheduled hearing date, the petitioner/moving party must serve notice of the new hearing date and time to all parties entitled to notice, pursuant to the applicable Probate Code sections and [California Rules of Court](#) for the moving document.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2025)

### **Rule 4.5.3**

#### **Proof of Service**

**A.** It is not sufficient in proofs of service by mail to declare that notice, etc., was mailed to the persons listed in the petition. Pursuant to Probate Code section 1260 and Code of Civil Procedure section 1013, subdivision (a), the court requires the proof of service to set forth the names and addresses of the persons as they appear on the envelopes.

**B.** Proofs of service alleging electronic service must set forth the ROA# and/or the date valid consent to receive electronic service was filed.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2026)

### **Rule 4.5.4**

#### **Notice Re Letters of Special Administration**

A petition for letters of special administration will not be granted without notice to the surviving spouse, the person nominated as executor and any other person who, in the discretion of the court, appears to be equitably entitled to notice.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Renum. 1/1/2014)

### **Rule 4.5.5**

#### **Notice to Persons Requesting Special Notice**

Notice must be given to or waived by any person requesting special notice, whether or not the matter is one for which special notice was specifically requested.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2014)

### **Rule 4.5.6**

#### **Notices to Trust Beneficiaries**

If a personal representative is also the sole named trustee of a testamentary or non-testamentary trust, and the estate or any part thereof is to be distributed to the trustee of the trust, then notice must be sent to the beneficiaries of the trust. In addition, the names and addresses of the beneficiaries must be listed in the petition.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2014)

### **Rule 4.5.7**

#### **Notice to Creditors**

**A.** In an interim or final accounting, the personal representative must describe the compliance with Probate Code section 9050 and *Tulsa Professional Collection Services, Inc. v. Pope* (1988) 485 U.S. 478. (See SDLR 4.15.3.)

**B.** When the accounting is waived and the estate is insolvent, notice must be given as provided in Probate Code section 1220 to each creditor who has filed a claim that is allowed or approved but is unpaid in whole or in part.

**C.** When a petition to terminate proceedings is filed pursuant to Probate Code section 12251, notice must be given as provided in Probate Code section 1220 to each creditor who has filed a claim in the estate.

(Adopted 1/1/2012; Former Rules 4.5.6 & 4.5.7 moved to 4.5.1 on 1/1/2014; Formerly Rule 4.12.1 – Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.5.8**

##### **Compliance With Notice – Medi-Cal and California Victim Compensation and Franchise Tax Board**

Before the court will authorize distribution from a decedent's estate, there must be a showing of compliance with the notice requirements of Probate Code section 9202.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1995; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Renum. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.5.9**

##### **Notice to Prior Representative or Counsel or Attorney Firm**

If there has been a change of personal representative or a substitution of counsel, or a change in attorney firms, notice of hearing must be given to such prior representative or counsel or firm of any petition in which fees or commissions are requested by the present personal representative or counsel unless:

**A.** A waiver of notice executed by the prior personal representative or counsel or firm is on file; or

**B.** A written agreement on the allocation of fees and/or commissions is on file or included in the petition; or

**C.** The file and the petition demonstrate that the fees and/or commissions of the prior personal representative or counsel have been provided for and allowed by the court.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2014)

#### **Rule 4.5.10**

##### **Conservatorship Notices**

**A.** Notice must be given to a former conservatee or the personal representative of a deceased conservatee upon the settlement of the final account.

**B.** In circumstances where the conservatee does not have a spouse or domestic partner, or such person is incapacitated, notice must be given to all relatives within the second degree.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2009; Renum. 1/1/2013)

## **CHAPTER 6 CALENDAR NOTES AND HEARINGS**

#### **Rule 4.6.1**

##### **Availability of Probate Examiner's Notes and Clearing of Defects**

**A.** Probate examiner's notes are available to counsel and self-represented parties to determine if any defects in pleadings or procedure have been noted by the examiner.

**B.** The notes are available on the San Diego Superior Court website, <https://www.sdcourt.ca.gov>. When the examiner receives and reviews additional pleadings and updates the notes, the new notes will be posted to the website. Additional pleadings must be timely filed in order to be reviewed by the examiner.

**C.** Persons who do not have access to the internet may request that the notes be mailed by attaching a completed [SDSC PR-114](#), "Mail Option Form" to the petition, with a self-addressed, stamped envelope or a messenger slip. The form, which contains additional instructions for use, is available in the Probate Business Office.

**D.** After checking the notes, counsel and self-represented parties are encouraged to contact the assigned Probate Examiner if clarification is needed regarding the defects. Examiners may be contacted by email or phone. Instructions and hours for contacting examiners can be found on the court's website at <http://www.sdcourt.ca.gov>.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/2000; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2025)

**Rule 4.6.2**

**Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1995; Rev. 1/1/2000; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2021; Del. 1/1/2025)

**Rule 4.6.3**

**Appearances**

**A.** An appearance is required on all matters not preapproved, even if no defects appear on the Examiner's Notes.

**B.** No appearance is necessary if the matter has been continued by the Probate Examiners.

**C.** If a continuance request will be made at the hearing, all counsel must appear, unless all counsel have agreed in advance to the continuance and have designated one counsel to appear and make the request. (Adopted 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2025)

**Rule 4.6.4**

**Official Court Reporters and Reporters Pro Tempore**

The court official policy of availability of official court reporters in probate proceedings is set forth in the Court's Policy Regarding Normal Availability and Unavailability of Official Court Reporters ([form SDSC #ADM-317](#)), which is available on the Court's website, [www.sdcourt.ca.gov](http://www.sdcourt.ca.gov), and Division I, Rule 1.2.3. (Adopted 1/1/2020)

**CHAPTER 7  
ORDERS AND BONDS**

**Rule 4.7.1**

**Submission of Orders and Letters**

**A.** In guardianship, conservatorship and decedent's estate appointment hearings, the petitioner must prepare and submit the applicable mandatory Judicial Council order for appointment and letters as follows:

**1.** E-Filed. The proposed order should be submitted at least 4 court days in advance of the hearing. Letters may be submitted together with the order in advance of the hearing. Letters submitted on their own, in advance of the hearing, will be returned unprocessed. A request for certified copies may only be submitted after the hearing date has passed.

**2.** Non-E-Filed. Self-represented litigants may submit their order and letters in paper form at least 4 court days in advance of the hearing or after the hearing. Letters submitted on their own, in advance of the hearing, will be returned unprocessed. A self-addressed, stamped envelope must accompany the order and letters.

**B.** In non-appointment hearings and non-contested matters, the minute order shall constitute the order of the court unless:

- 1.** The Judicial Council has mandated the use of a particular form for such order;
- 2.** A formal order is submitted at least 4 court days in advance of the hearing; or
- 3.** The court's minute order indicates that a formal written order is to be prepared.

**C.** In all contested matters, unless otherwise ordered by the court, counsel for the prevailing party must prepare and submit a formal order, using a procedure analogous to the procedure for motions as set forth in [rule 3.1312](#) of the California Rules of Court.

**D.** In cases where the minute order constitutes the order of the court and Court Appointed Attorney or Guardian Ad Litem fees have been granted, counsel may submit a formal written order for payment of those fees. (Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2023; Rev. 1/1/2025; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.7.2**

##### **Material to be Included in Probate Orders and Prayers for Relief**

**A.** All orders or decrees in probate matters must be complete in themselves, in that they must set forth all matters actually passed on by the court, the relief granted, descriptions of property and/or amounts of money affected with the same particularity required of judgments in general civil matters. The introductory paragraph must include the title and ROA number of the petition, date/time of hearing, department number, and judge's name.

**B.** Probate orders must be drawn so that the court's orders may be determined without reference to the petition on which they are based.

**C.** At least two lines of text must be included on the page containing the judge's signature.

**D.** While in orders settling accounts it is proper to use general language approving the account, the report, and the acts reflected therein, it is not sufficient in any order to recite merely that the petition as presented is granted.

**E.** Orders settling accounts must set forth the beginning and ending account period.

**F.** All orders for distribution must contain the following:

**1.** A list of the assets on hand;

**2.** The beneficiaries under the will or, in the event of intestacy, the heirs at law and their specific relationship to the decedent. The applicable terms of any assignment of interest, agreement for distribution, or decree determining interest must be fully set forth;

**3.** The person or persons entitled to distribution of the assets. The applicable terms of distribution of any assignment of interest, agreement for distribution, or decree determining interest in an estate must be fully set forth;

**4.** A distribution schedule describing each asset and setting forth charges against distributive shares with sufficient clarity to enable each distributee to determine the net distribution;

**5.** A provision setting forth the persons to whom any later discovered property is to be distributed; and the appropriate fraction, percentage or specific dollar amount they are to receive;

**6.** The fees and commissions allowed by the court;

**7.** The following statement is acceptable as a finding of assets on hand: "The court finds that the assets described in the order of distribution comprise the entire estate on hand for distribution";

**8.** The order should not include language that the fiduciary is discharged and the bond exonerated. This can be ordered only upon the filing of proper receipts and the Ex Parte Petition and Order for Final Discharge. It is acceptable to include language that the fiduciary may be discharged and bond exonerated upon the filing of proper receipts and the Ex Parte Petition and Order for Final Discharge.

**G.** The order should **not** include language that all acts taken by the representative are approved or for such other relief as the court deems proper. It is acceptable to include language that all acts reported in this petition are approved.

**H.** All orders for amendment of a trust must set forth the portion of the trust that has been amended by designating deleted language in strikeout format and added language by underlining.

**I.** When the minute order is to be the order of the court, all information required in the sections above must be included in the prayer for relief.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1991; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2023; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.7.3**

##### **Attachments, Exhibits, and Riders**

Attachments, exhibits and riders may not be attached to any order or bond, with the following exceptions:

**1.** Attachments may be included on orders if the Judicial Council or local form references an attachment.

**2.** A stipulation and order approving a settlement shall include the fully-executed settlement agreement as an exhibit.

**3.** A rider may be filed to correct or amend a surety bond.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2024)

#### **Rule 4.7.4**

##### **Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Del. 1/1/2016)

#### Rule 4.7.5

##### Application for Ex Parte Orders - Generally

- A. All ex parte applications must comply with rule 3.1200 et seq. of the California Rules of Court.
  - B. All applications for ex parte orders must be reviewed by Probate Examining before presentation to the judge.
  - C. Any request must be accompanied by: (1) [SDSC Form #PR-136](#), Probate Ex Parte Coversheet; (2) the ex parte petition; (3) supporting declaration; (4) a declaration regarding notice on mandatory [SDSC Form #PR-136A](#); (5) a separate order setting forth the specific relief sought in the petition; and (6) appropriate fees. Points and authorities may be filed to support the application.
  - D. The requirements of the Probate Code and the policy of the court are determinative of whether a matter may be heard ex parte.
  - E. Contested applications require an appearance. When an appearance is required, a written declaration of notice or of the reason it was not given as required by California Rules of Court, [rule 3.1202\(a\)](#) must be filed pursuant to departmental rules. The court may take the ex parte matter off calendar for failure to file the notice declaration.
- (Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1995; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2023; Rev. 1/1/2025)

#### Rule 4.7.6

##### Ex Parte Guidelines for Setting Hearings and Fees

The Probate Court has two procedures for ex partes, referred to as “Drops” and “Appearances,” which are both subject to California Rules of Court, [rule 3.1203\(a\)](#). Ex parte drops are reserved for matters that are uncontested, routine and not subject to specific noticing rules in the Probate Code.

- A. Ex Parte Drops:
    - 1. These ex partes are not set for a hearing, but are considered by the court daily at 3:15 p.m. without an appearance by parties. Ex parte requests must be received by 10:00 a.m. to be considered that same day. If received after 10:00 a.m., they will be considered at 3:15 p.m., the next court day. Notice to all parties of the ex parte drop must be provided by 10:00 a.m. the court day before the ex parte will be considered.
    - 2. Ex parte drops may not be amended.
    - 3. Filings submitted after posting of probate notes will not be reviewed by an Examiner.
  - B. Ex Parte Appearances:
    - 1. These ex partes will be set for hearing on the next available date in the assigned department consistent with notice requirements.
    - 2. Dates cannot be reserved in advance.
    - 3. Ex parte appearances may be amended if filed and served prior to the scheduled hearing date. An amended application/petition will supersede the original, and will be rescheduled for the first available hearing date. An Ex Parte Coversheet ([SDSC Form #PR-136](#)) must accompany an amended application/petition.
  - C. **Ex Parte Fees:** All ex parte applications will be charged the applicable fee for ex parte relief, pursuant to Gov. Code section 70657(a)(2). Additionally, if the underlying petition requires a fee as set forth in the fee schedule, both fees will be charged. Refer to the most current Fee Schedule on the court’s website.
  - D. If a matter is filed as an ex parte and the court determines that it should have been filed in due course as a noticed petition, the ex parte may be denied in the court’s discretion without an appearance.
- (Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2023; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2025; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### Rule 4.7.7

##### Communications With the Court

Documents presented to the Probate Court for filing must comply with applicable Probate Code sections and [California Rules of Court](#), and notice of filing must be given as required. Other communications such as letters and notes directed to the court or staff are subject to California Rules of Court, [rule 7.10\(c\)](#). (See Code of Judicial Ethics.) (Adopted 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009)

#### **Rule 4.7.8**

##### **Nunc Pro Tunc and Amended Orders**

**A.** To correct an error in a minute order or signed order, local forms [SDSC PR-137](#) Ex Parte Application for Issuance of Nunc Pro Tunc Order/Amended Order and [PR-138](#) Nunc Pro Tunc Order shall be submitted with an Ex Parte Coversheet ([SDSC PR-136](#)). If a signed order is being corrected, a proposed amended order must also be submitted for the court's consideration.

**B.** If upon review of the Ex Parte Application for Issuance of Nunc Pro Tunc Order/Amended Order the court determines that the corrections requested substantially alter what was prayed for, a motion to set aside the incorrect order may be necessary. A new or amended petition, properly noticed, would then follow.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2024)

#### **Rule 4.7.9**

##### **Bond Requirements/Blocked Accounts**

**A.** Bonds required by the court at the hearing of the petition for appointment of a personal representative, conservator or guardian must be filed with the Clerk of the Superior Court before the clerk will issue the appropriate letters.

**B.** Cash may be blocked as provided in rule 4.7.11, and such blocked funds excluded from the bond amount.

**C.** Bond Review Hearing. If, at the hearing for the appointment of a temporary or permanent conservator of the estate, the proposed conservator does not have sufficient information regarding the proposed conservatee's income or assets to enable the court to set an appropriate bond, the court may appoint the temporary or permanent conservator and continue the hearing to a specified date so that the conservator can provide the required information and a proper bond can be set. Where appropriate, the court may place limitations on the letters of conservatorship until a proper bond has been posted. This rule also applies to appointments of guardians of the estate. (Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/2000; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2016)

#### **Rule 4.7.10**

##### **Bonds; Additional Bond**

**A.** In a matter where bond has previously been posted, there must be included in any current account a separate paragraph setting forth the total bond posted, the appraised value of personal property and real property subject to disposition without court approval or confirmation, the estimated annual income from real and personal property and a statement of any additional bond thereby required.

**B.** Conservators or guardians are required to seek ex parte authority to increase the amount of bond whenever the conditions of Probate Code section 2320.1 are met, and may not defer a request for such increase to a current account.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/1991; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007)

#### **Rule 4.7.11**

##### **Deposited Funds**

**A.** Unless specifically authorized by the court, all cash must be deposited in a fully insured account with a bank, credit union, trust company or savings and loan. The depositing party will allege the nature and location of the account and the fact of insurance at the time of an accounting and report.

**B.** Money deposited into a blocked account will be excluded in computing the amount of bond necessary.

**C.** Where the court makes the order blocking funds at any calendared hearing, both an order on the hearing and a separate "Order To Deposit Money Into Blocked Account" ([Judicial Council form MC-355](#)) must be presented.

**D.** Within 15 court days following the date of the minute order, the "Receipt and Acknowledgment of Order for the Deposit of Money into Blocked Account" ([Judicial Council form MC-356](#)) must be filed with the Probate Court. If the appropriate receipt is not returned, the personal representative and counsel of record are subject to an Order to Show Cause why bond should not be posted and sanctions imposed.

**E.** When there is good cause for failure to comply with paragraph D, a party may present an ex parte petition to extend the time to return the receipt.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1996; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009)

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTORS AND ADMINISTRATORS**

#### **Rule 4.8.1**

##### **Letters Issued in Decedent's Estate**

**A.** Letters issued in a decedent's estate will expire 18 months after the date the underlying petition is approved. Letters may be reissued upon filing a petition to reissue/extend letters or by discretion of the court.

**B.** Eighteen months after the issuance of letters, a review hearing will be set if a final or interim accounting, or the report of status of administration required by Probate Code section 12200 has not been filed. A notice of Failure to Perform Duties will be mailed to the attorney of record and the personal representative.

**C.** At the time of the review hearing, if a final or interim accounting, or the report of status of administration required by Probate Code section 12200 has been filed, the review hearing will be taken off calendar. If the estate has not been closed and the report of status of administration required by Probate Code section 12200 has not been filed, the petitioner will be ordered to file such report and may be required to show cause why sanctions should not be imposed pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 177.5, or statutory fee reduced, for failure to file a Status Report prior to the review hearing. The court may make additional orders as, in the court's discretion, are appropriate.

(Adopted 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.8.2**

##### **Allegations in Petitions Re: Beneficiaries**

All petitions pertaining to the administrative duties of a fiduciary must include:

**A.** A list setting forth the identification of the trustee(s) and all beneficiaries of a trust created by the decedent. (See also Rule 4.5.6.)

**B.** A list of contingent beneficiaries if the interest of the beneficiary is contingent as of the date of the petition, or the happening of an event, such as survivorship for a specified period.

**C.** A list of each person provided for in the original will whose devise has been revoked in a subsequent codicil.

**D.** The street address of the proposed personal representative and their relationship to the decedent.

**E.** The deceased ancestor through which second generation heirs take, along with the ancestor's relationship to decedent, when second generation heirs are listed in the Petition for Probate.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1991; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2025)

#### **Rule 4.8.3**

##### **Notice to Foreign Consul**

**A.** When notice is required to be given to foreign consul, pursuant to Probate Code section 8113, the identity of the proper consul must be set forth in the Petition for Probate.

**B.** If an heir or a beneficiary whose address is in a foreign nation is a United States citizen, that fact must be alleged to avoid having to set forth that nation's foreign consul.

**C.** Notices pursuant to this rule will be required only for an original Petition for Probate. This notice is in addition to that given to heirs and devisees under section 8110 and 15-day notice is required.

**D.** Information as to whether a country has recognized diplomatic or consular representation in the United States may be obtained from the United States Department of State.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018)



**Rule 4.8.4**

**Multiple Testamentary Instruments - Proof**

Each proffered instrument must be proved by a separate affidavit or declaration pursuant to Probate Code sections 8220-8223. Nevertheless, an instrument, as defined by Probate Code section 45, which has been republished by a subsequent instrument, need not be proven independently of the subsequent instrument.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Renum. 1/1/2014)

**Rule 4.8.5**

**Will With Deletions or Interlineations**

**A.** Where the will offered for probate contains alterations by interlineation or deletion on its face, the petition for probate must contain allegations to explain the alterations and state petitioner's position in the matter. The petition must request that the interlineated portion be admitted or not admitted or that the deletions take effect or be disregarded or make such other request as petitioner finds to be according to the law. The petition must further contain statements of all relevant facts regarding the alteration, for example, whether the will was in the possession of the decedent. Such additional statements must be set forth in an attachment to the Judicial Council form petition.

**B.** "Proof of Holographic Instrument," [Judicial Council form DE-135](#), is required whenever the petitioner alleges that the deletion or interlineation is in the handwriting of the testator and should be admitted. (Prob. Code, §§ 8221, 8222.)

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2017)

**Rule 4.8.6**

**Bonding of Personal Representatives**

**A.** When a bond is required, the minimum bond that will be set for a resident and non-resident personal representative upon initial appointment will be \$20,000.

**B.** Any request for less than full bond, or a waiver of bond, must include a statement by the petitioner regarding knowledge of any creditors and/or liabilities of the decedent, and the amount of each of the claim(s) and the total amount of all claims and liabilities must be set forth.

**C.** Non-resident personal representatives are subject to no less than the minimum bond notwithstanding a waiver of the bond by beneficiaries, heirs or by waiver in the will.

**D.** Unless otherwise ordered by the court, any waiver of bond on behalf of a minor heir or beneficiary must be executed by the court-appointed guardian of the estate or court-appointed guardian ad litem of the minor. If the property to be distributed to the minor will be held by a custodian under the California Uniform Transfer to Minors Act, the designated custodian may execute a waiver of bond on behalf of the minor heir or beneficiary, provided that the custodian is named as such in the decedent's Will, or, in the absence of a will, all requirements of Probate Code section 3906 are met.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Renum. 2014; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**Rule 4.8.7**

**Multiple Representatives**

The clerk will not allow less than all appointed representatives to qualify and will only issue letters jointly to all appointed representatives, unless the order of appointment specifically provides for separate qualification.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 2014; Renum. 1/1/2018)

**Rule 4.8.8**

**Nondomiciliary Decedent**

When petitioning to probate the will of a nondomiciliary decedent, the original will must be deposited, or authenticated copies of the will and the order admitting the will to probate in the sister state or foreign nation must be deposited, and a copy of the deposited documents must be attached to the petition.

(Adopted 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2024)

## CHAPTER 9 SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS

### Rule 4.9.1

#### **Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Del. 1/1/2016)

### Rule 4.9.2

#### **Spousal/Domestic Partner Property Petition**

**A.** If the basis for determining that property should pass or be confirmed to the surviving spouse is that the property is community property or quasi-community property, the following information must be included in the spousal property petition:

1. Date and place of marriage;
2. Ownership of any real and personal property on date of marriage and a description and approximation of values;
3. Decedent's net worth at time of marriage;
4. Decedent's occupation at time of marriage;
5. A description of any property acquired after date of marriage by gift, devise, descent, proceeds of life insurance or joint tenancy survivorship, and dates of receipt and approximation of values;
6. The identification of any property described in 2 or 5 above which is still a part of this estate;
7. A copy (preferably a photocopy, showing signatures) of any document establishing the character of the property;
8. Any additional facts upon which the claim that property is community or quasi-community property is based; and
9. Facts that rebut Evidence Code section 662.

**B.** If a petition references a will, the will must be on deposit with the court pursuant to Probate Code section 8200 and a copy of the Receipt of Deposited Will must be attached to the petition.

**C.** A Spousal/Domestic Partner Property Petition may not include a request for orders for property to pass to any person other than the spouse or domestic partner.

**D.** The petition must identify and present evidence of the current vesting, title, and character (community property or separate property) of each asset.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2021)

### Rule 4.9.3

#### **Proceedings to Establish Fact of Death/Birth/Marriage**

**A.** A petition to establish the fact of death (under Prob. Code, § 200), where title to or any interest in property is affected by the death of a person (as in the case of death of a joint tenant or life tenant), must be filed as a separate petition from a petition for probate. A petition to establish the fact of death of an individual under Health & Safety Code section 103450 is a separate proceeding from the petition filed under Probate Code section 200.

**B.** There is no provision in the Probate Code for the determination by the court of attorneys' fees in proceedings to establish the fact of death, birth or marriage. No request for fees for services of this character may be included in any probate proceeding relating to the petition for determination. Where, however, proceedings are necessary to establish the fact of death of a person who predeceased the decedent, a fee for extraordinary attorney's services may be proper in connection with administration of the latter decedent's estate.

**C.** A petition to establish the fact of death must be filed in a proceeding in the name of the deceased person whose interest is to be terminated, and the petition will not be acted upon if it is filed in any other proceeding.

**D.** A petition to establish the fact of death, birth or marriage will be set for hearing at the time of filing unless otherwise requested by the person filing the petition. A hearing for a petition under the Health & Safety Code will be set not less than five nor more than 10 days after the filing of a petition.

**E.** In proceedings to establish the fact of death, the judgment may recite that the interest of the deceased person in the property has terminated. Recitals as to vesting of title must not be included.

F. The court may make an order on the petition filed under A., determining the death did in fact occur at the time and place shown by the proofs adduced at the hearing. The order must be made in the form prescribed and furnished by the State Registrar, and will become effective upon a filing of a certified copy with the State Registrar. (Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017)

**Rule 4.9.4**

**Testate Summary Proceedings**

If a petition references a will, the will must be on deposit with the court pursuant to Probate Code section 8200, unless it is alleged that the will is lost. (Adopted 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**CHAPTER 10**  
**[Reserved for future use.]**

**Rule 4.10.1**

**Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2011; Del. 1/1/2018)

**CHAPTER 11**  
**MISCELLANEOUS PETITIONS**

**Rule 4.11.1**

**Petition for Instructions**

A. The use of Petitions for Instructions is limited to those matters for which no other procedure is provided by statute.

B. Petitions for Instructions may not be used to determine the manner in which a probate estate should be distributed. A direction of the court regarding distribution of a probate estate will be furnished only pursuant to a Petition for Distribution or a Petition to Determine Entitlement.

C. The petitioner must set forth in the petition the specific instructions which petitioner believes the court should give.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2017)

**Rule 4.11.2**

**Petition to Determine Claim to Property (Prob. Code, § 850)**

Petitions filed pursuant to Probate Code section 850 must include the allegations and documentation required in rule 4.20.2.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2022)

**Rule 4.11.3**

**Petition to Determine Persons Entitled to Distribution (Prob. Code, §§ 11700-11705)**

A. Petitions under Probate Code section 11700 may be filed to resolve issues relating to the determination of persons entitled to distribution of the decedent's estate. Such issues include, but are not limited to, the identification of heirs or beneficiaries, the interpretation of the will, and the characterization of assets as estate assets. (The term "person" is defined in Probate Code section 56.)

B. A petition to determine entitlement must include a detailed explanation of family relationships (e.g. family tree or genealogical chart establishing the relationships between the decedent and the decedent's heirs) if distribution is to be determined by intestate succession.

C. A petition under Probate Code section 11700 must set forth the specific determination which the petitioner believes the court should make and must provide for a complete disposition of the property of the estate.

D. When a determination of persons entitled to distribution is requested in a petition for distribution, notice must be given in the same manner as required when a separate petition under Probate Code section 11700 is filed.

**E.** When a determination of persons entitled to distribution is requested and it appears that there may be an escheat, notice of hearing and a copy of the petition must be sent to the Attorney General. If any of the heirs are unknown in the petition for probate, then there will be a presumption of possible escheat and notice to the Attorney General is required.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2022)

#### **Rule 4.11.4**

##### **Petition for Family Allowance (Prob. Code, §§ 6540-6545)**

**A.** The petition for family allowance must set forth: (1) the nature of estate assets and estimated value of the estate, (2) an itemized estimate of the recipient's monthly expenses, and (3) the estimated value of the recipient's other property and estimated income. Where the itemized expenses show payments of loans secured by real or personal property, the vesting of title to the property must also be set forth in the petition.

**B.** All orders for family allowance will be limited to a definite period and must provide for the allowance to be “for \_\_\_\_\_ months from the date of the order or until further order of the court, whichever occurs first.” (Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020)

#### **Rule 4.11.5**

##### **Petition for Authority to Operate a Business (Prob. Code, § 9760)**

The court may direct that at least 15 days' notice be given to the three largest creditors of the business and to the beneficiaries of the estate or decedent's heirs when the personal representative petitions for authority to continue the operation of the decedent's business.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1996; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2017)

#### **Rule 4.11.6**

##### **Petition for Authority to Borrow (Prob. Code, §§ 9800-9807)**

**A.** Petitions for authority to borrow money must set forth the amount of the bond in force and the amount of the loan proceeds. If no additional bond is required, or if bond is waived, that fact must be alleged.

**B.** If a loan is to be secured by the property of the estate, an inventory for that property must be on file prior to the hearing.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006)

#### **Rule 4.11.7**

##### **Petition for Authority to Retain an Attorney**

**A.** A petition for authority to retain an attorney to pursue litigation must contain an allegation regarding counsel to be retained, the hourly rate or contingent fee agreement, the service to be provided, and a prospective amount that will be required for litigation.

**B.** If it appears that additional funds will be required over the amount allowed by the court on the initial petition, a subsequent petition must be set for hearing requesting an additional amount including the necessity for further funds, the amount spent to date, and for what services.

**C.** The petition must be accompanied by a declaration by counsel detailing why the fees are properly a charge against the estate or trust, rather than a personal charge against the petitioner. See *Whittlesey v. Aiello* (2002) 104 Cal.App.4th 1221 and *Terry v. Conlan* (2005) 131 Cal.App.4th 1445.

**D.** The proposed fee agreement must be attached to the petition.  
(Adopted 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2021)

#### **Rule 4.11.8**

##### **Joinder in Pleadings**

**A.** Any interested party in an action before the Probate Court may indicate their endorsement of all opinions and positions taken in the previously or contemporaneously filed pleading of another party (the “Joined Pleading”) by filing and serving a verified “Joinder in Pleading” prior to the hearing on the matter. The Joinder in

Pleading must identify the party endorsing the Joined Pleading, the exact title of the Joined Pleading, and the filing date of the Joined Pleading if applicable.

**B.** The filing of a Joinder in Pleading indicates the endorsing party's adoption of the entire Joined Pleading, without exception. To bring additional facts, issues or other matters before the court, the endorsing party must file a separate or supplemental pleading. A party served with such Joinder in Pleading may move, demur, or otherwise plead to the Joinder in Pleading in the same manner as to an original pleading.

**C.** The Joinder in Pleading must be served upon all persons entitled to notice of the original pleading, and their attorneys of record, in the same manner as required for an original pleading. A Proof of Service must be filed with the court prior to the hearing on the Joined Pleading.

**D.** A filing fee equal to the fee required by the original filed petition is required.  
(Adopted 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2025)

#### **Rule 4.11.9**

##### **Community Property Transactions**

Absent good cause, the court will appoint a guardian ad litem for the incapacitated spouse in all proceedings pursuant to Probate Code section 3100 et seq. The report of the attorney or guardian ad litem must set forth the ultimate testamentary disposition of the involved assets. An additional copy of the petition must be provided to the business office by counsel.

(Adopted 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2016)

#### **Rule 4.11.10**

##### **Petition for Transfer of Case to Another County**

**A.** There must be a signed order to transfer. If a stipulation is filed, it must be signed by all parties who have appeared on the case. The order or stipulation must include the name and address of the superior court to which the case is being transferred.

**B.** Separate fees are required to be submitted with the order or stipulation to transfer, unless fees have been waived by the court.

- 1.** Change of venue fee for San Diego Superior Court
- 2.** Initial filing fee for the receiving court.

These fees are to be paid by the moving party, unless otherwise noted on the order or minutes.

**C.** Any future hearing dates will be vacated.  
(Adopted 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2012)

#### **Rule 4.11.11**

##### **Petition for Authority to Continue Administration**

When a status report requests authority to continue the administration of an estate, the court will charge the fee pursuant to Government Code section 70658, subdivision (a)(3). Refer to the current fee schedule at [www.sdcourt.ca.gov](http://www.sdcourt.ca.gov). The court may require an accounting before approving a subsequent extension request. Refer to section 12201 of the Probate Code for notice requirements.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2016)

#### **Rule 4.11.12**

##### **Petition to Appoint Guardian ad Litem**

Any party petitioning for appointment of a guardian ad litem may suggest an independent individual to be appointed or request the court make such appointment. Due to the potential conflicts of interests, parents asserting individual claims or defenses may not serve as guardians ad litem for their children, absent a court order to the contrary. Appointment of a guardian ad litem may be requested by ex parte petition.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2013)

## CHAPTER 12 CREDITORS' CLAIMS

### Rule 4.12.1

#### **Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/2000; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2018; Renum. 1/1/2019)

### Rule 4.12.2

#### **Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Del. 1/1/2026)

### Rule 4.12.3

#### **Creditors' Claims of Personal Representatives or Counsel**

**A.** The creditor's claim of a personal representative or counsel for the personal representative must be timely filed with the court. A separate notation must be made on the face of the claim indicating that the claim requires specific court action.

**B.** An allowance or rejection form must be submitted to the court with a copy of the creditor's claim attached.

**C.** The court, on its own motion, may set the creditor's claim for hearing which will require that 15 days' notice of hearing on [form DE-120](#), as well as a copy of the creditor's claim filed with the court, be given by the creditor to all heirs and devisees.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2020)

### Rule 4.12.4

#### **Payment of Claims and Debts**

**A.** Other than those creditors' claims ordered paid by the court, the personal representative may defer payment of claims until settlement of an account. If the personal representative elects to defer payment of claims until settlement of an account, such claims shall be addressed in and included as a distribution in the settled account.

**B.** The personal representative may timely pay any debts that are just and reasonable subject to later approval by the court under Probate Code section 11005, which approval must be supported by appropriate evidence required by that section.

**C.** Payment pursuant to Probate Code section 11005 assumes that the debt is undisputed and the estate is solvent. Prudence may dictate caution before paying such claims.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1996; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2018)

### Rule 4.12.5

#### **Special Creditors' Claims**

**A.** Funeral expenses must be reasonable and interest is allowed on such claims commencing 60 days after the date of death (Health & Saf. Code § 7101).

**B.** Public entities' creditor's claims are governed by Probate Code section 9200 et seq., and may be barred only after actual notice is sent to the entity and the applicable claim period has expired.

**C.** Notice to the Director of Health Care Services for Medi-Cal claims must comply with Probate Code section 9202 and Welfare and Institutions Code section 14009.5.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1996; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2015)

## CHAPTER 13 SALES

### Rule 4.13.1

#### **Publication of Notice of Sale of Real Property**

**A.** Unless one of the exceptions mentioned in Probate Code sections 10301-10303 apply, a publication of notice of sale of real property is required. A discretionary power of sale given by a will to a named executor does not extend to an administrator with will annexed unless the will so provides.

**B.** The notice of sale of real property must set forth the assessor's parcel number as well as the street address or other common designation of the property, if any, or if there is none, the legal description.

**C.** If a petition for confirmation of sale is filed alleging the sale took place prior to the date stated in the published notice, the sale cannot be confirmed.

**D.** If a fiduciary publishes a notice of sale of real property, the property must be sold pursuant to such publication.

**E.** If a petition for confirmation of sale of real property is filed prior to the date of sale specified in the notice, the court cannot announce the sale on the date set for hearing, but must deny confirmation without prejudice to a new sale and filing of a new petition.

**F.** In conservatorships, notice must be given to the conservatee as well as to any person requesting special notice. In guardianships notice must be given to any ward age 12 or older.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1995; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2024)

#### **Rule 4.13.2**

##### **Vesting of Title to Property**

**A.** The court will not confirm a sale to a "nominee" or "assignee," only to the actual buyer.

**B.** In a conservatorship or guardianship, a statement must be made whether or not the purchase of the real property has been made by a person with a family or affiliate relationship to the conservator or guardian as defined by Probate Code sections 2359 and 2403.

**C.** In a conservatorship or guardianship, a statement must be made whether or not there is a family or affiliate relationship between the conservator or guardian and any agent hired by them as defined by Probate Code sections 2359 and 2403.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009)

#### **Rule 4.13.3**

##### **Bond on Sale of Real Property**

**A.** Petitions for confirmation of sale of real property must set forth a recalculation of the bond that includes the net amount of all property in the estate that must be covered by bond subsequent to the sale, including the proceeds of the sale and the probable annual income from all remaining property. If no additional bond is required, or if bond is waived, such facts must be alleged.

**B.** Where an additional bond is required, the personal representative must file an additional bond, rather than a substitute bond, and it must be filed with the order confirming the sale.

**C.** In a conservatorship or guardianship, a recovery bond must be included in the total bond as required by Probate Code section 2320 and California Rules of Court, [rule 7.207](#).

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev 1/1/2019)

#### **Rule 4.13.4**

##### **Exclusive Listings for the Sale of Real Property**

**A.** A specific commission percentage will not be approved by the court as part of the exclusive listing agreement. All commissions are determined at the confirmation hearing.

**B.** In decedent's estates, a personal representative with no authority or limited authority under the Independent Administration of Estates Act must not enter into an exclusive listing agreement or contract to sell real property of the estate without prior court approval.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2024)

#### **Rule 4.13.5**

##### **Commissions on Sale of Real Property**

**A.** In all cases, a reasonable broker's commission will be determined by the court at the time of confirmation and must be paid from proceeds of the sale confirmed by the court. The court may consider current community practices and standards in making its determination. The court may not allow a commission in excess of five percent (5%) on improved property or ten percent (10%) on unimproved property absent good cause shown for a larger commission.

**B.** The court must be advised whether the broker is, or has any interest in, the purchaser. (See Prob. Code, § 10160.5.)



(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/1991; Rev. 7/1/1995; Rev. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007)

**Rule 4.13.6**

**Sale of Real Property When Buyer Assumes Encumbrance: Necessity for Minimum Deposit**

**A.** A sale of real property may not be confirmed where the buyer assumes or takes subject to an existing encumbrance if the estate is subject to a contingent liability. The petition must set forth the facts pertinent to such assumption agreement.

**B.** The court requires that a reasonable deposit be made prior to confirmation on any sale of real property, such deposit to be held by the personal representative.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/1991; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2018)

**Rule 4.13.7**

**Sale of Specifically Devised Property**

The sale may not be approved without the specific beneficiary's consent unless the court finds good cause for approval without the consent.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006)

**Rule 4.13.8**

**Personal Property Must Be Appraised Before Sale**

Sales of personal property may not be approved as sales of depreciating property, or confirmed, unless the property has been appraised. When necessary, a partial inventory and appraisal or a letter of appraisal obtained from the probate referee may be filed for this purpose.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006)

**Rule 4.13.9**

**Sales of Mobile Homes**

The court may approve sales of mobile homes as depreciating property. The petition for approval must set forth the efforts made to expose the property to the market.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006)

**Rule 4.13.10**

**Sales of Securities**

**A.** Commonly traded securities need not be appraised before the sale may be authorized.

**B.** In petitions for sales of listed securities, the specific exchange on which such securities are traded must be set forth.

**C.** In petitions for sales of unlisted securities, the recent bid and asked prices must be set forth.

**D.** Petitions for sale of mutual funds redeemable by the issuer at net asset value need only allege that the shares will be redeemed for the net asset value per share on the date of redemption.

**E.** If securities are "closely held," the petition must furnish the basis (by appraisal or otherwise in the discretion of the court) for fixing the minimum sales price.

**F.** The order authorizing the sale of any bond or unlisted stock (other than a mutual fund) must provide that the sale must be at not less than a specified amount per unit.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006)

**Rule 4.13.11**

**Overbids**

**A.** A potential overbidder should have in their possession at the confirmation hearing sufficient certified funds or cashier's checks as a deposit in an amount equal to at least 10% of the amount they will bid, and a loan qualification letter or bank statements verifying the buyer's ability to complete the sale.

**B.** If the overbid is on terms different from the terms of the returned sale, the offer may be considered only if the personal representative, prior to confirmation of the sale, informs the court in person or by counsel that the offer is acceptable.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2023; Rev. 1/1/2025)

**Rule 4.13.12**

**Increased Bid Forms**

When there is a successful overbid in open court on a sale of real property, an “Increased Bid in Open Court” (SDSC PR-065) must be completed, signed, and filed with the court before the conclusion of the hearing; otherwise, confirmation is not effective. If the overbidding party is appearing virtually for the proceeding, that party must have the immediate ability to transmit the [SDSC PR-065](#) form to the courtroom clerk by email or facsimile before the proceeding concludes.

(Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2022)

**Rule 4.13.13**

**Allowance of Commissions Upon Overbid**

When sale is confirmed upon an overbid and a real estate commission is involved, it is the duty of counsel for the estate to compute the commission pursuant to Probate Code section 10164 or 10165 and any allocation thereof between brokers per any agreement they may have, and to report the same to the court for its approval and inclusion in the court's minute order.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006)

**CHAPTER 14  
INVENTORY AND APPRAISAL**

**Rule 4.14.1**

**Preparation of Inventory and Appraisal**

**A.** With the exception of specific sums of cash, all specifically bequeathed personal property owned by the decedent on the date of death must be itemized and separately appraised on the Inventory.

**B.** An Inventory of real property must include the following information:

1. Complete legal description;
2. Common address;
3. Assessor's Parcel Number;
4. Description of type of property (e.g., single family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural timber, mining, mineral interests, unimproved land).

**C.** Vehicle and mobile home descriptions must include the make, model, year, and Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).

**D.** An Inventory of stocks must include the number of shares of each stock. An Inventory of mutual funds must include the number of shares in each fund. An Inventory of bonds must include the serial number of each bond.

**E.** The Inventory must not include any asset which is not an asset of the estate, such as:

1. Insurance proceeds payable to named beneficiaries.
2. Individual retirement accounts payable to named beneficiaries.
3. Trust assets which pass by trust terms, including Totten Trusts.
4. Assets held in joint tenancy, if there is a surviving joint tenant.
5. Out-of-state real property.

**F.** Petitioner must characterize each item of property listed in the Inventory and Appraisal pursuant to Probate Code section 8850.

**G.** The Inventory and Appraisal must include a signature of the personal representative before it is submitted to the Probate Referee for completion.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2010; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2025)

**Rule 4.14.2**

**Correcting Inventory and Appraisal**

**A.** A corrected Inventory and Appraisal must reference in the caption the filing date and ROA number of the previously filed Inventory as to which the correction relates.

**B.** If, before filing the Inventory with the court, a mistake is found, the personal representative may make changes to Attachment No. 1. However, any changes to Attachment No. 2 must be made by the probate referee.

**C.** If a mistake is found after filing the Inventory with the court, a Corrected or Amended Inventory must be filed to correct the error.

**D.** If a change to Attachment No. 2 is necessary after it has been filed with the court, the correcting Inventory must be signed by the probate referee.

**E.** If a change to Attachment No. 1 is necessary, a Correcting Inventory may be signed only by the personal representative.

**F.** Only items being corrected are described on a Corrected Inventory and Appraisal.

For example:

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	APPRAISED VALUE
4	Item 4 was previously described as:	400 shares XYZ common stock
	Item 4 is correctly described as:	300 shares XYZ common stock
	Previously appraised value:	\$4,000.00
	Correct appraised value:	\$3,000.00
	Change in appraised value:	(\$1,000.00)

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1996; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2019)

#### **Rule 4.14.3**

##### **Petition for Waiver of Appraisal by Referee**

When no referee has been designated for the case, 15 days' notice of the filing of a petition for waiver of appraisal by referee must be given to the referee designated by the San Diego Probate Referees to represent them, in the same manner as would be given to a referee designated for the case.

(Adopted 7/1/1996; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006)

## **CHAPTER 15 ACCOUNTS AND REPORTS**

#### **Rule 4.15.1**

##### **Required Form of Accounts**

**A.** Accounting values of assets must not be changed to reflect fair market value, but fair market value must be set forth separately in the report or account.

**B.** Schedules for receipts and disbursements are to be set forth in subject-matter categories for: Trusts, Conservatorships, and Guardianships, and the subtotal for each category is to be set forth.

**C.** On a Waiver of Final Accounting in a decedent's estate, when a loss occurs, it must be calculated into the statutory fee and applicable schedule must be attached to the petition.

**D.** Dispositive provisions of the Will and Codicil(s), if any, must be set forth in the Final Accounting or Waiver of Final Accounting.

**E.** For assets passing by intestate succession, names and family relationships of proposed distributees should be set forth, including dates of death for pre- and post-deceased persons in the line(s) of succession.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/2000; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020)

#### **Rule 4.15.2**

##### **Bank Letters and Statements**

**A.** All accounts must be supported by bank statements or financial statements verifying the balances of accounts at financial institutions as of the closing date of the accounting. The statements must be the originals, must show the vesting of the account, date of balance and the amount of balance. If a financial institution will not produce records required by this rule, petitioner must submit a declaration setting forth the due diligence efforts undertaken to obtain the required records.

**B.** If bank statements and/or residential care facility statements are received electronically, the petitioner must provide verification that the records were submitted without alteration. Financial Statement Coversheet ([SDSC Form #PR-121](#)) or Confidential Financial Statement Coversheet ([SDSC Form #PR-121C](#)) may be used for this purpose.

**C.** The appropriate balance must be clearly highlighted or otherwise marked.

**D.** Balances shown in the accounting, if different, must be reconciled to the letters or statements.

**E.** Bank or financial statements containing personal information that would not otherwise be available in a public file (i.e., Social Security number) must be filed under a separate pleading marked "Confidential Bank and/or Financial Statements." [SDSC Form #PR-121C](#) Confidential Financial Statement may be used for this purpose.

**F.** For purposes of this section, "institution" is defined in Probate Code section 2890, subdivision (c).

**G.** For purposes of this section, "financial institution" is defined in Probate Code section 2892, subdivision (b).

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.15.3**

##### **Allegations Re: Claims**

The report accompanying any accounting or waiver of accounting must include the following information:

**A.** If all Notices of Administration were given prior to the last 30 days of the four-month statutory claims period, an abbreviated statement noting that the requirements of Probate Code section 9050 were met is sufficient.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.15.4**

##### **Reporting Payment of Debts**

Although a verified claim has not been filed, the court may approve payment of a debt. Such court approval is discretionary and may be granted pursuant to Probate Code section 11005 upon the basis of the following allegations in the verified petition and report:

**A.** Identification of the creditor, the amount and the date paid;

**B.** The debt was justly due from the decedent's estate;

**C.** The debt was timely paid in good faith;

**D.** The amount paid was the true amount owed by the decedent and was reasonable; and

**E.** The estate is solvent.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006)

#### **Rule 4.15.5**

##### **Allegation Re: Character of Property**

**A.** A petition for distribution must contain an allegation regarding the character of the property, whether separate, quasi-community or community.

**B.** An allegation regarding community or quasi-community property of the decedent must state whether the interest is the decedent's one-half or the entire community or quasi-community property of both spouses.

**C.** Unless the surviving spouse elects to include their interest in the probate estate pursuant to Probate Code section 13502, the court has no jurisdiction to order distribution of such interest or to order statutory fees based upon the value of such interest.

**D.** The court will authorize filing of a late election only upon showing of good cause.  
(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1991; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2025)

**Rule 4.15.6**

**Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 2014; Del. 1/1/2017)

**Rule 4.15.7**

**Damages for Wrongful Death and for Physical Injury of Decedent**

**A.** Damages for wrongful death, as distinguished from physical injury and property damage, are held by the personal representative on behalf of the statutory beneficiaries of the decedent's estate and are not part of the estate.

**B.** The disposition of such damages for wrongful death, and the amount of attorneys' fees and costs, may be determined by the court on a petition for authority to compromise. Notice of said petition must be mailed by the personal representative. This procedure is applicable to any action by the personal representative under federal as well as state law.

**C.** Damages and costs arising out of the physical injury to the decedent or property damage, as distinguished from wrongful death, must be held by the personal representative as the property of the estate and must be inventoried.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2014)

**Rule 4.15.8**

**Supplemental Accountings With Final Discharge**

Unless the accounting on the petition for final distribution was waived, a supplemental accounting must be filed with the court when more than \$10,000 is withheld at the time of the final accounting. The starting balance of the supplemental accounting must be for the amount withheld only, and receipts and disbursements must be reported. The supplemental accounting shall set forth the specific proposed distribution of the remaining amount of the reserve. See also Rule 4.17.10.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2000; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2013; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2023; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2025; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**Rule 4.15.9**

**Accounts and Reports of Conservators, Guardians of Estate, and Trustees of Trusts Funded by Court Order**

**A.** Unless otherwise ordered by the court, all accounts and reports must comply with Probate Code sections 2620 and 1060-1064 and California Rules of Court, [rule 7.575](#). If funds are maintained in a blocked account, the court may order proof of continued deposits in lieu of a full accounting.

**B.** Reports must contain the current address and whereabouts of the conservatee or minor, and describe the conservatee's or minor's status and condition. The guardian's report must set forth the guardian's address and the minor's age.

**C.** Reports must reference the amount of the current bond and state whether additional bond is necessary to cover unblocked personal property plus one year's estimated income, plus the recovery bond as set forth in California Rules of Court, [rule 7.207](#).

**D.** The report must also show any blocked bank accounts.

**E.** Final accountings must include a list of assets on hand at the end of the account period and set forth a specific proposed distribution of those assets.

**F.** In accountings where attorney/fiduciary fees have been disbursed prior to court order/approval, a complete fee declaration must be filed pursuant to SCLR 4.16.2C.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/1991; Rev. 1/1/2000; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2013; Renum. 2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**Rule 4.15.10**

**Required Form of Conservator and Guardian Accounts**

- A.** The first accounting must be for a period not to exceed one year from the date of appointment.
- B.** A final account must set forth a list of assets on hand for distribution and the specific proposed distribution.
- C.** The final accounting in conservatorships must distribute all assets to a court-appointed successor, or to the personal representative of the deceased conservatee's estate, or pursuant to Probate Code section 13100. The final account may not request any orders regarding distribution of after discovered property of a deceased conservatee.
- 1.** If distribution is proposed pursuant to Probate Code section 13100, the necessary affidavits must be filed before the court orders distribution. Local form, Affidavit for Collection of Personal Property ([SDSC Form #PR-132](#)) may be used for this purpose, if accompanied by the Cover Page for Affidavit for Collection of Personal Property ([SDSC Form #PR-132\(A1\)](#)) when submitted for filing.
- 2.** If distribution is proposed to the personal representative of a deceased conservatee's estate when the estate proceeding is outside of San Diego County, a copy of the Letters appointing the personal representative must be filed before the court orders distribution. If the proceeding is within San Diego County, the petition for final distribution must set forth the case number.
- D.** The final account must allege whether or not all income and other taxes which became due and payable during the conservatorship or guardianship have been paid.
- E.** In the final conservatorship account, an allegation must be made as to whether or not the conservatee or predeceased spouse, if any, were Medi-Cal recipients and if so, appropriate notice must be given per Probate Code section 215, unless distribution is to a personal representative of a deceased conservatee.
- F.** In all cases, notice must be given to all persons entitled to receive property.
- G.** All conservatorship accounts must disclose the existence of a trust where the conservatee is a vested beneficiary, the current fair market value of the conservatee's interest, whether the conservator is a trustee, whether counsel for the petitioner is also attorney for the trust and/or trustee, and whether fees approved in the account are to be paid from the trust.
- H.** Where a guardian accounts for assets of more than one minor, the accounting for each minor must be set forth separately within one report.
- (Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2013; Renum. 2014; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**Rule 4.15.11**

**Waiver of Account Involving Public Benefit Payments**

- A.** The court may enter an order that the conservator need not present an account pursuant to Probate Code section 2628. The order may be obtained in advance of, or subsequent to, the account due date, by filing and serving a petition requesting an order waiving account. The petition must contain allegations for the current account period as required by Probate Code section 2628, subdivision (b). If authority is granted to waive future accounts, the conservator must annually file, a verified declaration stating that the conditions specified in Probate Code section 2628, subdivision (b), have been met for the applicable accounting period. If the conditions have not been met for any subsequent accounting period, an account must be filed for that account period as required by Probate Code section 2620.
- B.** If accountings have been waived pursuant to Probate Code section 2628, upon the death of the conservatee or a request to terminate the estate, the conservator must file a final accounting or a petition for discharge upon waiver of final account.
- (Adopted 1/1/2008; Renum. 1/1/2013; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2021)

**Rule 4.15.12**

**Payment of Probate Referee**

In first accounts for decedent's estates, guardianships and conservatorships, the petition must contain an allegation as to whether the Probate Referee has been paid.

(Adopted 1/1/2017)

**Rule 4.15.13**

**Report of Court-Appointed Attorneys and Guardians ad Litem**

- A.** Counsel appointed by the court must serve and file a written report to the court at least five court days prior to the hearing. Said report must:

1. Discuss the pending issues, to the extent such discussion would not constitute a disclosure that would be restricted by or prohibited by Evidence Code section 950 et seq., or other fiduciary duties owed by the attorney to the client.

2. Document the services performed, specifying the dates the services were performed and setting forth the categories of services rendered, including the number of hours expended and the hourly rate requested for each category.

3. Include a fee request in the prayer.

4. Include a recommendation regarding the ability or inability of the client's estate to pay the fee, in order to enable the court to make a finding regarding such ability or inability, and to order payment by the client's estate or by the County of San Diego.

5. In conservatorship matters where the proposed conservator is the spouse or domestic partner of the proposed conservatee, include findings concerning the suitability of appointing the spouse or domestic partner as conservator pursuant to Probate Code sections 1813, subdivision (a)(2) and 1813.1, subdivision (a)(2).

6. Make a recommendation whether or not counsel may be discharged.

7. State that counsel has met the qualifications and continuing education requirements pursuant to California Rules of Court, [rule 7.1102](#).

**B.** Proof of service of the report on petitioner, attorney for petitioner, proposed conservator, attorney for proposed conservator, and all relatives required to be named in the petition that prompted the appointment of the attorney or guardian ad litem, must be filed at least four court days prior to the hearing.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2013; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2024)

#### **Rule 4.15.14**

##### **Deferred Fees for Public Entities.**

If any court fees have been deferred during the accounting period based on a party's status as a public entity, a petition for approval of the accounting shall address the court's recovery of those fees (e.g. payment from the estate being administered).

(Adopted 1/1/2016; Del. 1/1/2017; Adopted. 1/1/2024)

### **CHAPTER 16**

### **FEES, COMMISSIONS AND COST REIMBURSEMENT**

#### **Rule 4.16.1**

##### **Probate Estate Administration**

**A.** Ordinary office expenses and travel expenses incurred by a fiduciary or counsel are deemed to be compensated by the statutory fee, and the court will not allow further reimbursement except:

1. An exception may be made for the reasonable expenses of fiduciaries for travel on estate business.

2. For good cause shown, the court may allow office expenses such as photocopying, express mail, postage, or long-distance phone expenses, if the court considers such expenses necessary and reasonable in view of the amount of the statutory fee and work required in the administration of the estate.

3. An itemized description of each item of costs must be set forth in the report.

**B.** Travel and office expenses appearing in any account must be explained in the report.

**C.** Requests for Extraordinary Fees must comply with rule 4.16.2, subsection C(4), and must be submitted on mandatory local forms, Attorney Declaration for Extraordinary Compensation ([SDSC Form #PR-196](#)) and Personal Representative Declaration for Extraordinary Compensation ([SDSC Form #PR-197](#)).

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2025)

#### **Rule 4.16.2**

##### **Fees, Costs and Commissions in Trusts, Conservatorships, and Guardianships**

**A.** The court will not grant a fee request without an accounting, absent good cause.

**B.** Fees for court-appointed counsel should be requested in the hearing as part of counsel's report and comply with the requirements of rule 4.15.13.



**C.** Any Requests for Court Approval and/or confirmation of compensation must be set forth in a declaration that is separate from the Petition or Account.

**1.** Conservators seeking compensation must submit the following:  
**a.** A completed “Fee Declaration: Conservator” (form [SDSC PR-096](#)) for all requests for compensation in excess of \$750.

**b.** A statement whether or not funds from any outside sources have been received by the conservator which cover in whole or in part the costs of administration of the conservatorship.

**2.** Institutional fiduciaries seeking approval of fees premised upon fee schedules must submit a declaration that sets forth the published fee schedule for the period involved, the compensation paid to the fiduciary during the period, and the dates of such payment(s).

**3.** In guardianships and conservatorships in which the Public Guardian or County Counsel seek compensation, a declaration must be filed that sets forth information regarding the factors listed in Probate Code section 2942 together with the information required in rule 4.16.2(C)(4) except that the hours expended and an hourly rate of service need not be set forth.

**4.** In all other fee requests, including requests for post-motion or post-judgment attorney’s fees, the declaration must:

**a.** Specify the specific dates during which the services were performed;  
**b.** Set forth categories of services rendered, together with the number of hours expended for each such category and the hourly rate sought for each such category;

**c.** Set forth in each category the total number of hours performed by each person who performed the services and the hours spent by each of them;

**d.** Set forth the total cumulative number of hours for each of the following: each attorney, paralegal, law clerk, legal assistant or any other person who performed the services set forth in the declaration;

**e.** Comply with the requirements set forth in [rule 7.703\(e\)](#) of the California Rules of Court if paralegals are used.

**f.** Set forth information that will assist the court in determining whether the hours incurred and the rate sought are just and reasonable, including a discussion of the nature and difficulty of the tasks performed; the results achieved; the benefit to the trust, ward or conservatee; the background, skill and experience of the person rendering the service; an explanation of why the work required more than ordinary skill or judgment; and the standard rate in the community for such tasks.

**5.** If a trustee wishes the court to consider the factors set forth in California Rule of Court, [rule 7.776](#) in assessing the fee request, their declaration should include allegations regarding such factors.

**6.** If a conservator or guardian wishes the court to consider the factors set forth in California Rule of Court, [rule 7.756](#) in assessing the fee request, their declaration should include allegations regarding such factors.

**7.** The court will not consider fee requests for work performed during a prior accounting period that were not included in the prior account. Fiduciaries and counsel wishing to delay their request for fees to a subsequent accounting period must request and obtain the consent of the court and include such authority in the prior order approving the account.

**8.** Fees may be sought for work related to the report and accounting for the current period.

**9.** In trust accountings, an allegation must be made as to the total amount of attorneys’ fees and trustee’s fees paid during the applicable accounting period.

**10.** An itemized description of each item of costs must be set forth in the request.

**D.** In post-motion or post-judgment attorney’s fee requests, the declaration must:

**1.** Specify the specific dates during which the services were performed;  
**2.** Set forth categories of services rendered, together with the number of hours expended for each such category and the hourly rate sought for each such category;

**3.** Set forth in each category the total number of hours performed by each person who performed the services and the hours spent by each of them;

**4.** Set forth the total cumulative number of hours for each of the following: each attorney, paralegal, law clerk, legal assistant or any other person who performed the services set forth in the declaration;

**5.** If the request for attorney’s fees includes the services of a paralegal, the request must:

a. Describe the qualification of the paralegal (including education, certification, continuing education, and experience). The description must state that the paralegal: (1) Acted under the direction and supervision of an attorney; (2) Satisfies one or more of the minimum qualifications specified in Business and Professions Code section 6450(c); and (3) Has completed mandatory continuing education required by Business and Professions Code section 6450(d) for the last two-year certification period ending before the year during which any part of the paralegal's services were performed.

b. State the hours spent by the paralegal and the hourly rate requested for the paralegal's services;

c. Describe the services performed by the paralegal;

d. State why it was appropriate to use the paralegal's services in the particular case; and

e. Demonstrate that the total amount requested for the services of the attorney and the paralegal does not exceed the amount appropriate if the attorney had performed the services without the paralegal's assistance.

6. Set forth information that will assist the court in determining whether the hours incurred and the rate sought are just and reasonable, including a discussion of the nature and difficulty of the tasks performed; the complexity of the case; the results achieved; the background, skills, and experience of the person rendering the service; and the standard rate in the community for such tasks.

E. A fee declaration is not required if court approval of attorney or fiduciary fees is not required by statute and such approval is not otherwise sought in the pleadings unless the court orders that a fee declaration be prepared and filed.

(Adopted 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2025; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.16.3**

##### **Periodic Payments to Trustees**

On petition, the court may authorize periodic payments on account to the trustee. The petition must describe the services to be rendered on a periodic basis, the value of the services to be performed, the method of calculating the value, and the reason why authority to make payments is requested. If the court authorizes such payments, the trustee may receive such payments only if the services described in the petition are actually rendered. The payments are subject to review by the court upon the next succeeding account to determine that the services were actually rendered and that the amount paid on account was not unreasonable. If the court finds that the amount paid on account was either excessive or inadequate in view of the services actually rendered, the court may make such additional orders as appropriate.

(Adopted 1/1/2011)

#### **Rule 4.16.4**

##### **Payments from Other Sources**

Any request for a court order approving fees, costs, and compensation to be paid from a source other than the estate must set forth an allegation of the total amount to be paid and disclose the source of the payment. If funds are to be paid from a court-supervised source in probate, the case number must be set forth.

(Adopted 1/1/2015)

#### **Rule 4.16.5**

##### **Imposition of Lien**

Where all or a portion of the fee awarded exceeds the cash on hand in the estate, the court may issue an order imposing a lien bearing simple interest at a rate ordered by the court. Ordinarily, enforcement of the lien will be deferred until the assets of the estate, subject to the lien, have been liquidated for reasons other than the satisfaction of an unpaid fee.

(Adopted 1/1/2016)

## **CHAPTER 17 DISTRIBUTION**

**Rule 4.17.1**

**Distribution to Minor/Disabled Adult**

When a beneficiary is a minor or a disabled adult, the court requires the following documents to be filed in conjunction with the accounting and petition for final distribution:

**A.** A certified copy of the Letters of Guardianship or Conservatorship when distribution is to be made to the guardian of the minor **or** to the conservator of a disabled adult.

**B.** The written assurance of a parent that the minor's estate, including the bequest, does not exceed \$5,000 when distribution is made pursuant to Probate Code section 3401.

**C.** The consent of the custodian to act if distribution is to be made to a custodian under the California Uniform Transfers to Minors Act (Prob. Code, § 3900 et seq.).

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**Rule 4.17.2**

**Distribution Under Probate Code Section 13101 Affidavit**

If distribution is to be made to a person collecting assets under Probate Code section 13100, the required affidavit or declaration pursuant to Probate Code section 13101 must be filed before distribution will be ordered.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006)

**Rule 4.17.3**

**Blocked Accounts**

In any case in which funds are to be placed in a blocked account, rule 4.7.11 must be followed.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006)

**Rule 4.17.4**

**Distribution to Deceased Beneficiary**

**A.** When an heir or beneficiary dies during administration of an estate, the Petition for Distribution must request distribution to the personal representative of the estate of the heir or beneficiary, pursuant to Probate Code sections 11801 and 11802, or, if applicable, to the person(s) entitled to the property in a summary proceeding pursuant to a declaration or affidavit under Probate Code section 13101.

**B.** The Petition for Distribution must set forth the case number for the estate proceeding for the heir or beneficiary. If the estate proceeding for the heir or beneficiary is outside of San Diego County, the Petition for Distribution must also include a copy of the letters for the personal representative of the heir or beneficiary's estate.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1991; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016); Rev. 1/1/2022)

**Rule 4.17.5**

**Assignment of Interest in Estate**

When distribution is requested pursuant to an assignment by a distributee, the court will require that the assignment be filed in the proceeding. The court will require additional information, including consideration paid, to assure that the assignor fully comprehends the effect of the assignment, that it was voluntarily made and was not grossly unreasonable. The terms of distribution of said assignment will be set forth in the Order for Distribution as set forth in rule 4.7.2, *infra*.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2023)

**Rule 4.17.6**

**Preliminary Distribution Bond**

**A.** If a preliminary distribution is made before the time for filing creditors' claims has expired, a bond must be furnished by the distributees.

**B.** When a bond is not required by the court, the order must include a finding that the time for filing or presenting claims against the estate has expired and that all uncontested claims have been paid or are sufficiently secured.

C. An allegation and showing will be required concerning notice to any additional known or reasonably ascertainable creditors pursuant to *Tulsa Professional Collection Services, Inc. v. Pope* (1988) 485 U.S. 478. Unless such notices have been given, the time to file claims will not be considered to have expired and the court will impose a bond upon each distributee of the preliminary distribution. (Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1991; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006)

#### **Rule 4.17.7**

##### **Receipts on Distribution**

A. Receipts for property received in preliminary distributions must be filed with the court before the petition for final distribution and must follow the requirements of rule 4.17.8.

B. Receipts for property received by a successor personal representative, trustee, guardian, or conservator must be filed with the court before the filing of the first accounting filed by the successor fiduciary. Such receipt shall follow the requirements of rule 4.17.8.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2019)

#### **Rule 4.17.8**

##### **Receipts on Final Distribution**

A. Receipts for property received on final distribution must be signed by (1) the distributee, unless there is a showing of good cause why the distributee cannot or will not sign the receipt, (2) the attorney-in-fact for the distributee under a valid power of attorney where a true copy of the power of attorney is attached to the receipt and the attorney-in-fact certifies under penalty of perjury that the power of attorney is in full force and effect, or (3) the conservator or guardian of the estate of the distributee, or (4) the personal representative of the estate of the distributee.

B. A receipt must be specifically itemized, giving the valuation of each asset and the total value of all the property received.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2011)

#### **Rule 4.17.9**

##### **Property to be Distributed Must Be Listed**

A. The prayer of a petition for distribution must list and describe in detail all property to be distributed, including cash. The proposed distribution of cash must specify the exact dollar amount to be distributed to each recipient. Proposed distribution of non-cash assets must specify the percentage to be distributed to each recipient.

B. The description of promissory notes must indicate whether they are secured or unsecured; if secured, the security interest must be described.

C. Real property descriptions must include a complete legal description and street address and Assessor's Parcel Number.

D. A description of stocks must include the number of shares of each stock. A description of mutual funds must include the number of shares in each fund.

E. The description must be set forth in the prayer.

F. Description by reference to the inventory is not acceptable.

G. The carry value of each individual asset on hand and the total value of the assets must be set forth.

H. Vehicle and mobile home descriptions must include the make, model, year, and Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2012; Renum. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017)

#### **Rule 4.17.10**

##### **Requests to Withhold Funds from Final Distribution**

In every case where the petitioner requests to withhold more than \$10,000, the petitioner must specify the items for which the withholding is required, together with an estimate of each item. (See also Rule 4.15.8.)

(Adopted 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2022)

**Rule 4.17.11**

**Alteration of Distribution**

If distribution is to be other than according to the terms of the will or the laws of intestate succession, a written agreement signed by all parties affected by the distribution must be filed.  
(Adopted 1/1/2021)

**CHAPTER 18  
CONSERVATORSHIPS**

**Rule 4.18.1**

**Conservatorship Orientation Program**

All conservators, excluding limited conservators of the person, who are not private professional conservators as defined by Probate Code section 2340, must complete an education class if ordered at the time of their appointment as conservator. Links to online classes can be found on the court's website. Classes must be completed within 90 days of appointment as a conservator, and a Certificate of Completion – Conservatorship Orientation Class ([SDSC Form #PR-186](#)), evidencing completion must be filed with the court. Classes are designed to explain the duties and responsibilities of Conservator of the Person and/or Estate and include information on healthcare, safety, living arrangements, management of assets, accountings and other legal obligations. Failure to complete this requirement may be grounds for removal as ordered by the court. In addition to removal, failure to comply with these requirements may result in the imposition of sanctions.

(Adopted 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**Rule 4.18.2**

**Temporary Conservatorships**

**A.** A petition for temporary conservatorship will be “short set” by the probate business office on the next available moving calendar, unless a later date is specifically requested. The petition will be set at a shortened date and time to allow five court days’ notice to parties so entitled.

**B.** The court will not consider the appointment of a temporary conservator ex parte and will set the petition for hearing with a five court day notice requirement unless proper showing is made as follows:

**1.** Good cause and an immediate necessity are affirmatively shown in a declaration containing competent evidence based on personal knowledge as set forth in California Rule of Court [7.1062](#);

**2.** The proposed conservatee is present or if the proposed conservatee is unable to attend:  
**a.** The proposed conservatee is hospitalized, has notice of the ex parte hearing and its purpose, and cannot attend for medical reasons that must be supported by a physician’s declaration;  
**b.** Evidence is presented that the proposed conservatee has notice of the ex parte hearing and its purpose and cannot appear; or

**c.** In appropriate circumstances where capacity is not an issue, the proposed conservatee has consented and waived notice.

**3.** There are no relatives in equal or closer relationship than the petitioner, or such relatives nominated or consented to petitioner's appointment. This requirement may be waived by the court upon a showing of good cause.

**4.** Petitioner must state in the ex parte application whether there are known objectors.  
**a.** If there are known objections, absent good cause, the matter will be set for a noticed hearing; or

**b.** If the petitioner desires to proceed without notice to a known objector, the petitioner must demonstrate by competent evidence the need to waive notice based on good cause.

**5.** Unless good cause is shown, the reports of a court-appointed attorney and court investigator are on file.

**6.** Absent good cause, 24-hour notice has been given to the proposed conservatee’s spouse or domestic partner, and all relatives within the second degree.

**7.** In matters where the application is made primarily to make health care decisions, a declaration is on file by petitioner and court appointed counsel setting forth reasons why temporary conservatorship is more appropriate than proceeding under Probate Code section 3200 et seq.

**C.** No initial appointment of a temporary conservator may exceed a period of 30 days, but such appointment may be extended by the court to the date of the hearing on the permanent conservatorship. If a continuance

of the hearing on the general conservatorship petition is necessary, counsel may appear at the hearing and request the extension of the temporary conservatorship. Alternatively, a request to extend may be made ex parte, if the request is presented before the expiration of the initial appointment and there are no objections.

**D.** Good cause must be shown for special powers to be granted without a hearing. When special powers are sought, they must be specifically requested and supported by factual allegations.

**E.** Good cause is defined as those circumstances where it is essential to protect the proposed conservatee, or the proposed conservatee's estate, from immediate and substantial harm.

**F.** Whenever an ex parte temporary conservatorship is sought and a waiver of notice is requested, or presence of the proposed temporary conservatee is not excused by statute, it must be accompanied by a proposed order which includes factual findings reflecting the substantial harm posed to the proposed conservatee or the proposed conservatee's estate.

**G.** A petition for appointment of a temporary conservatorship of the person or estate or both must be made in a separate pleading. It may not be included in, and may not be filed prior to the filing of, the petition for appointment of a permanent conservator.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1995; Rev. 1/1/2000; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2023)

### **Rule 4.18.3**

#### **Petition for Appointment of Conservator; Allegations and Notice Requirements; Supplemental Information**

**A.** All petitions for appointment of conservator must state whether or not there is presently a conservator appointed under the Lanterman-Petris Short Act ("LPS") and, if so, the case number of the Mental Health action, the name of the conservator, when the conservatorship expires, and that court's findings regarding the proposed conservatee's incapability of communicating, with or without reasonable accommodations, a desire to participate in the voting process.

**B.** If an LPS conservatorship exists, notice must be given to: (1) the LPS conservator; (2) counsel representing the LPS conservatee; and (3) all persons otherwise required by Probate Code section 1460 et seq.

**C.** When the conservatee has a spouse, the petition must allege whether any property is community property. If community, the petition should state what portion, if any, is to be included in the conservatorship. (Prob. Code, § 3051.)

**D.** Spouses, registered domestic partners, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents and siblings are relatives within the second degree. The petition must allege all relatives within the second degree and must list their names, current addresses and telephone numbers, relationship to the proposed conservatee, and whether they are minors or adults (e.g., "John Smith, adult grandchild," or "John Smith, grandchild age 13").

**E.** Unless the petitioner is a bank, any petition for appointment of conservator must be accompanied by the forms required by the California Rules of Court, [rule 7.1050](#), the Referral Information and List of Relatives ([SDSC PR-020](#)) and the Duties of Conservator ([Judicial Council form GC-348](#)). For non-imaged cases, a copy of such forms must also be filed for the Court Investigator who must review the allegations in the supplemental information. A temporary appointment will not be made unless the petition for permanent conservatorship which is to be filed is accompanied by such supplemental information.

**F.** In any petition for appointment of conservator in which the proposed conservator is not a licensed private professional fiduciary (PPF) and is not related to the proposed conservatee, the proposed conservator must allege facts in a declaration under penalty of perjury to aid the court in determining whether they are a "professional fiduciary," as defined in Business and Professions Code section 6501, subdivision (f).

**G.** The petition for conservatorship must state, with specificity, evidence to support a finding of lack of capacity to make decisions or do other acts as required by Probate Code section 811. The petition should set forth evidence attesting to a deficit in at least one of the mental functions set forth in Probate Code section 811. This evidence may, however, be set forth in a separate declaration attached to the petition.

**H.** When the proposed conservatee is, or was, the subject of a guardianship, the "Petition for Appointment of a Conservator" must include the case number of the prior guardianship, the name(s) of the prior guardian(s), and the name(s) of the attorney(s) for the prior guardian(s) and ward, if any.

**I.** When the petitioner, or the proposed conservator, also serves as the trustee of a trust in which the conservatee has a beneficial interest, the existence, the name of the trust, the location of the trust, the date the trust was established, whether the trust is under court supervision, the existing case number, as well as the petitioner or

proposed conservatee's status and interest therein must be disclosed in the petition. Additionally, the petition for conservatorship must state whether the petitioner, or the proposed conservator, also serves as attorney in fact under a Power of Attorney in which the conservatee is the principal.

**J.** The petition for conservatorship must state, with specificity, evidence to support a finding that petitioner has standing pursuant to Probate Code section 1820. The court generally considers an "interested person" and/or "friend" to include the proposed conservatee's physician, accountant, stockbroker, neighbor, or other such acquaintance. (Prob. Code, § 1820, subd. (a)(5).) Where a petitioner's relationship to the proposed conservatee may not confer standing sufficient to meet this criteria, notice of the proceedings must be given to the Public Guardian.

**K.** Whenever the petitioner is not a family member, a separate verified declaration containing the following information must be submitted:

**1.** The due diligence efforts of the petitioner to locate family members, friends and neighbors, and to ascertain the proposed conservatee's preferences in appointing a conservator, or explain why it was not feasible to do so.

**2.** The efforts of the petitioner to discuss with family members and friends the proposed conservatee's preferences in appointing a conservator.

**3.** A description of the petitioner's prior relationship, and contacts with, the proposed conservatee. If the petitioner was not nominated by a relative or the proposed conservatee, the petitioner must set forth the specific circumstances under which they became involved with the proposed conservatee.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/1991; 7/1/1996, Rev. 1/1/2000; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2025)

#### **Rule 4.18.4**

##### **Capacity to Give Informed Consent for Medical Treatment**

**A.** Any petition seeking a determination that the proposed conservatee lacks capacity to give informed medical consent must contain facts to support the finding and must be accompanied by a declaration of a licensed physician or, where appropriate, an accredited practitioner, as to the conservatee's lack of capacity to consent to medical treatment.

**B.** Medical authority for a limited conservator is granted pursuant to Probate Code section 2351.5, not Probate Code section 2355, and the Petition for Limited Conservatorship may not ask for section 2355 authority.

**C.** A request for major neurocognitive disorder powers under Probate Code section 2356.5 may be made in a petition for general conservatorship or a petition for limited conservatorship.

**D.** If any conservatorship petition, including a temporary conservatorship, is premised on the need to exercise medical authority, the petitioner must explain why a Probate Code section 3200 petition is not the least restrictive alternative.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/1991; Rev. 7/1/1996; Rev. 1/1/2000; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2008; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020)

#### **Rule 4.18.5**

##### **Major Neurocognitive Disorder (F.K.A. Dementia) Authority**

**A.** A request for major neurocognitive disorder authority per Probate Code section 2356.5 may be contained in a petition for appointment of conservator, a petition for exclusive medical authority, or in a petition asking only for major neurocognitive disorder authority.

**B.** A petition for appointment of conservator which includes such request must be a petition for appointment of conservator of the person, must also include a request for exclusive medical authority and must have sufficient specific examples and allegations to be clear and convincing evidence of major neurocognitive disorder as defined by the last edition of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).

**C.** A Confidential Capacity Assessment and Declaration – Probate Conservatorship ([JC #Form GC-335](#)) must be filed in support and must address each required finding per Probate Code section 2356.5, subdivision (f)(3).

**D.** A request for major neurocognitive disorder authority can be contained in a petition for exclusive medical authority if there is a conservator of the person in place.

**E.** A request for major neurocognitive disorder authority can be the subject of a petition only where there is already a conservator of the person who has exclusive medical authority.



**F.** A request for placement in a secured facility must indicate on the Referral Information and List of Relatives ([SDSC Form # PR-020](#)) the specific facility and a showing that it is the least restrictive placement available.

**G.** A request to authorize medications must indicate on the Referral Information and List of Relatives ([SDSC Form #PR-020](#)) the specific medications currently prescribed, however no further relief will be required if changes to medication are required.

**H.** Major neurocognitive disorder authority will not be granted where the petitioner is the proposed conservatee as there is a conflict in a person having sufficient capacity to file a petition and the court finding major neurocognitive disorder per the DSM.

**I.** The court finds that notice required on a petition for appointment of conservator is sufficient notice of a request for major neurocognitive disorder authority, and an additional “Order Prescribing Notice ([JC Form #GC-022](#))” need not be submitted.

**J.** The court will require 15 days’ notice, with a copy of the petition, to the conservatee, conservatee’s spouse, registered domestic partner, and relatives within the second degree.

(Adopted 1/1/2000; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2023; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.18.6**

##### **Independent Powers: Sale of Residence**

**A.** The court will grant individual powers as authorized by Probate Code sections 2590 and 2591 only in response to specific allegations regarding their necessity.

**B.** If independent power of sale of real property is requested, an allegation must be made whether the real property is conservatee’s residence or former residence, as described in Probate Code section 2540.

**C.** The independent powers granted must be set forth in the order and in the letters of conservatorship.

**D.** If a conservatee’s present or former residence, including a mobile home or recreational vehicle, is to be sold, authority must first be obtained from the court. The petition must indicate the conservatee’s support or opposition, including whether the conservatee opposed the sale in the past, the necessity for the sale, whether the conservatee has the ability to reside therein and alternatives to the sale. In addition, the tax issues must be discussed, particularly the impact of capital gains tax.

**E.** The court will consider the petition for authority to sell a residence on an ex parte basis, upon showing of immediate need, if there are no requests for special notice or if the persons requesting special notice waive notice and it is shown the conservatee does not object or does not have the capacity to object.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/1991; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2021)

#### **Rule 4.18.7**

##### **Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1991; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2014; Del. 1/1/2016)

#### **Rule 4.18.8**

##### **Court Investigation/Response to Court Investigator’s Report**

**A.** A Referral Information and List of Relatives (Confidential) [[form SDSC PR-020](#)] must be filed with the Petition for Appointment of Probate Conservator. An updated Referral Information and List of Relatives must be filed with each accounting or subsequent petition following the establishment of a conservatorship.

**B.** No Order Appointing Court Investigator is required because the court has made a general order appointing the court investigators for all cases.

**C.** If it is alleged that the petitioning or nominating proposed conservatee will attend the hearing, but before the hearing becomes unable or unwilling to attend, the Confidential Declaration on Medical Ability to Attend Hearing—Probate Conservatorship ([JC Form #GC-325](#)), must be filed and the business office must be alerted of the need for an investigation. If this is not accomplished at least 10 days before the hearing date, a continuance ordinarily will be required.

**D.** Petitioner must cooperate with the Court Investigator in the preparation of a Court Investigator’s Report and must use all reasonable efforts to timely provide appropriate information as requested by the Court Investigator, to include making the proposed conservatee available to be interviewed by the Court Investigator.

**E.** When an investigator's report or report of the court-appointed attorney for the conservatee is mailed to counsel and/or the conservator subsequent to the establishment of the conservatorship, the conservator must promptly file a report responsive to the concerns addressed by the investigator or court-appointed attorney.

**F.** Allegations of abuse that may result in harm to the conservatee if disclosed shall be submitted to the court in a confidential attachment to the Court Investigator's report and will be released to parties and/or counsel only upon court order.

**G. Subpoena Process.** As employees of the Superior Court, witness subpoenas for Court Investigators are governed by Government Code sections 68097.1 and 68097.2, including the subpoenaing party's obligation for all statutory fees and salary reimbursements.

1. The subpoena must be served at least 10 calendar days before the hearing along with the required fee deposit. If a completed and signed proof of service for the subpoena is not provided at the time of initial service, then the subpoenaing party must submit a completed and signed proof of service within 24 hours of service of the subpoena.

2. If the investigator's appearance will no longer be required, the subpoenaing party must notify the probate business office at their earliest convenience.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/1991; Rev. 7/1/1991; Rev. 7/1/1995; Rev. 7/1/1996; Rev. 1/1/2000; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.18.9**

##### **Limited Conservatorships**

Upon a petition for appointment of limited conservator, and under proper circumstances, the court may appoint a general conservator for a developmentally disabled person pursuant to Probate Code section 1828.5.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2017)

#### **Rule 4.18.10**

##### **Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/2000; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2013; Renum. 1/1/2014; Del. 1/1/2023)

#### **Rule 4.18.11**

##### **Successor Conservator / Co-Conservator**

Appointment of a successor conservator or co-conservator does not require service of a citation or personal service of notice on the conservatee, nor does it require a physician's affidavit of inability to attend the hearing or a Probate Code section 811 declaration per rule 4.18.3, subsection G. Unless the petition for appointment of successor states that the conservatee will attend the hearing, the court investigator must interview the conservatee and file a report before the hearing. The notice of hearing and a copy of the petition must be served on the conservatee, either personally or by mail, at least 15 days prior to the hearing, and other notice must be given pursuant to Probate Code section 2683 (successor) or 1460 (co-conservator).

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2020)

#### **Rule 4.18.12**

##### **Conservatorship Assessments**

An assessment will be made against the estate of each conservatee for the cost of any investigation made by the court investigator under appropriate statutes. The assessment for investigations by the court investigator is set by the court. Absent proof of Medi-Cal benefits or unless the court orders otherwise, the assessment is due and must be paid immediately upon receipt of the investigator's report. The court will routinely check for the payment of assessments when any conservatorship proceeding is before the court and no order will be processed until all assessments are paid unless the court grants a request to defer payment for good cause shown. If it is proven the conservatee receives Medi-Cal benefits and also has a Trust, an assessment will be made against the conservatee's trust for the cost of any investigation made by the court investigator. A provision in a trust or will of some other living person for the benefit of the proposed conservatee shall not form the basis for an assessment.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/1991; Rev. 7/1/1995; Rev. 7/1/1996; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018)

**Rule 4.18.13**

**Investments by Conservator**

**A.** In accordance with Probate Code section 16040, investments by conservators must be prudent and in keeping with the size and character of the conservatee's estate.

**B.** The court will not approve the following:

- 1.** Unsecured loans.
- 2.** Loans to relatives.
- 3.** Bonds or obligations of foreign governments or corporations.

**C.** The court will not authorize investments in real estate, either by purchase or encumbrance, unless supported by an appraisal by the court-appointed probate referee or other qualified appraiser.

**D.** A conservator may continue managing investments specified in Probate Code section 2459, subdivision (b), which pre-existed the conservatorship, but may not make additional investments without court authority. A conservator may petition the court for instructions and authority to make a specific investment, including investments in Certificate of Deposit Account Registry Service (CDARS).

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Renum. 1/1/2014)

**Rule 4.18.14**

**Substituted Judgments in Conservatorships, Probate Code Section 2580**

Absent good cause, the court will appoint a guardian ad litem to represent the conservatee.

(Adopted 1/1/2018)

**Rule 4.18.15**

**Fees for Conservators and Counsel**

See Chapter 16 regarding fees and commissions generally.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1991; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2011; Renum. 1/1/2014)

**Rule 4.18.16**

**Elder Abuse and Dependent Adult Civil Protection Act Proceedings (EADACPA)**

**A.** Where a conservator of the person and/or estate has been appointed, any EADACPA action can be filed by petition, in pleading format, in the Probate Court and will be part of the conservatorship case file. Mandatory Judicial Council forms to request elder or dependent adult abuse restraining orders (CLETS-TEA or TEF) must be filed in the civil division.

**1.** The petition will be set for hearing at least 30-days away, on the Miscellaneous Probate calendar.

**2.** Notice of Hearing, pursuant to applicable statutes, must be filed prior to the hearing.

**B.** If a jury trial is demanded, or if the time estimate exceeds what Probate Court has the ability to hear, and the matter does not settle, at the Case Management Conference, the matter will be reassigned to an available Civil department.

**C.** If the conservatee dies while an action is pending in the Probate Court, the Probate Court will retain jurisdiction of the action in the conservatorship case file. (Prob. Code, § 2630.)

**1.** A personal representative or successor in interest to the conservatee must substitute in. (Welf. & Inst. Code, § 15657.3.)

(Adopted 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2012; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2025)

**Rule 4.18.17**

**Court-Ordered Review Hearings**

**A.** At the hearing approving a Petition for Conservatorship of the Person or Estate, the court will set compliance dates as follows:

**1.** Within 90 days, the Conservator of the Person is to file with the court a Certificate of Completion - Conservatorship Orientation Class ([SDSC Form #PR-186](#)) for completing the Conservatorship Orientation Program and the Notice of Conservatee's Rights ([JC Form #GC-341](#)) (Prob. Code, § 1830). The Conservator of the Estate is to file an inventory and appraisal (Prob. Code, § 2610) at or before the 90-day compliance date.

2. Within 120 days of appointment, the Conservator of the Person must file a Confidential Conservatorship Care Plan-Part 1 ([JC Form #GC-355](#)) and Part 2 (Medical Information), as applicable under Probate Code section 2351.2.

3. Within 425 days of appointment, the Conservator of the Estate is to file the first account required under Probate Code section 2620.

4. Within 790 days of filing the previous accounting, the Conservator of the Estate is to file the subsequent account required under Probate Code section 2620, unless otherwise directed by the court.

5. If any of the above required materials are not filed prior to the compliance date, the court will set the matter for review hearing. If the materials are filed five court days prior to the review hearing, the review hearing will be taken off-calendar. Counsel who file the materials fewer than five court days prior to the hearing must attend and bring evidence of compliance to the review hearing.

**B.** If materials required by subsection A above have not been filed by the date of the review hearing, the conservator and counsel, if any, must appear at the review hearing and must show cause why the conservator should not be suspended, removed, or otherwise sanctioned pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 177.5 or 575.5 and/or why counsel should not be appointed to represent the conservatee. The court, in its discretion, may make additional orders as appropriate.

(Adopted 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.18.18**

##### **Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/2015; Del. 1/1/2017)

## **CHAPTER 19 GUARDIANSHIPS**

#### **Rule 4.19.1**

##### **Temporary Guardianships**

**A.** A petition for appointment of temporary guardian must be a separate pleading and may not be filed prior to the filing of a petition for appointment of a general guardian.

**B.** The court will require a full bond from the temporary guardian of the estate unless waived for good cause.

**C.** The court will not consider the appointment of a temporary guardian ex parte unless proper showing is made by separate declaration and order as set forth at California Rules of Court, [rule 7.1012](#). Upon granting of an ex parte temporary guardianship, a reconsideration hearing will be set if the petition for general guardianship is more than 30 days from date of temporary appointment order.

**D.** A petition for temporary guardianship, will be “short set” by the Probate Business Office on the next available moving calendar, unless a later date is specifically requested. The petition will be set at a shortened date and time to allow five court days’ notice to parties so entitled.

**E.** The filing fee required for petitions for temporary guardianship is due at filing in addition to the ex parte filing fee, if any.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2023)

#### **Rule 4.19.2**

##### **Petition for Appointment of Guardian: Jurisdiction**

**A.** Counsel and Self-Represented Litigants must review the information contained in [SDSC ADM-411](#), available on the Court’s website and in the Probate Business Office, to determine if the matter is properly filed in the Probate Division.

**B.** Any request for appointment of guardianship of the person shall state whether the minor or minors that are the subject of the proposed guardianship are the subject of a juvenile dependency proceeding, and shall state whether the minor or minors are subject to the jurisdiction of the family court in a pending or concluded dissolution, paternity, child support or domestic violence proceeding. If the minor or minors become the subject of a juvenile dependency or family court proceeding while any request for appointment of a guardian is pending, any party with

knowledge of such a proceeding shall immediately file and serve in the guardianship proceeding a pleading describing such proceeding.

**C.** When an appointment is requested for guardianship of the estate only, the petition must be filed in the Probate Court.

**D.** Any proposed guardian not related to the minor must disclose if they are serving as guardian for any other minors to whom they are not related.

**E.** It is the petitioner's responsibility to ensure that allegations that parental custody would be detrimental to the minor child, other than a statement of ultimate fact, not appear in the petition. Allegations of this nature must be submitted on a separate document which will be maintained in a confidential envelope. (Fam. Code, § 3041.)

(Adopted 1/1/1990, Rev. 7/1/1996; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2023)

#### **Rule 4.19.3**

##### **Co-Habitant of Proposed Guardian**

**A.** If the minor resides with the proposed guardian and the proposed guardian is co-habiting with another adult who will share in the physical custody of the minor, the court must presume that the co-habiting adult is a person having care of the minor. Unless waived, the co-habiting adult must be noticed and served with a copy of the petition for appointment of guardian. The co-habiting adult is subject to a background screening by the investigating agency.

**B.** Written consent of the co-habiting adult must be filed with the court.  
(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2018)

#### **Rule 4.19.4**

##### **Proceedings to Have Child Declared Free From Custody and Control of One or Both Parents**

Probate proceedings authorized by Probate Code section 1516.5 will be filed and heard in the Juvenile Division. The guardianship file will be consolidated into the juvenile proceedings pursuant to the request and direction of the Juvenile Court.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006)

#### **Rule 4.19.5**

##### **Investigation**

Probate Code section 1513 requires that, unless waived by the court, in each proposed appointment of guardian, an investigation be made and a report be submitted to the court. Investigations will be conducted by Family Court Services (FCS), County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), or a Court Investigator (CI) as follows:

<b>Guardianship of:</b>	<b>Proposed Guardian:</b>	<b>Agency:</b>
A. Person or Person/Estate	Relative	FCS
B. Person or Person/Estate	Non-relative	HHSA
C. Estate Only	Relative or Non-relative	CI
D. Estate Only-Waiver Granted	Relative or Non-relative	No Investigation

For these purposes, relative is defined in Probate Code section 1513 subdivision (g). Note: If a Petition for Appointment of Guardian (JC Form [#GC-210/210\(P\)](#)) is filed and accompanied with a Petition for Special Immigrant

Juvenile Findings ([JC Form #GC-220](#)) and the minor is 18 at the time of the hearing, the court will automatically waive the investigation requirement at the time the petitions are filed.

**A. Relative Guardian - Person or Person/Estate**

1. FCS will conduct an investigation upon appointment only (location and phone number can be found at [www.sdcourt.ca.gov](http://www.sdcourt.ca.gov)). Appointments can only be made in person. Conformed copies of the following documents must be provided to FCS:

- a. Petition for Appointment of Guardian of Minor(s) ([JC Form #GC-210P](#)).
- b. Order Directing or Waiving Investigation signed by Judge of the Superior Court ([SDSC Form #PR-063](#)).
- c. Declaration Under Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA) (JC Form [#FL-105/GC-120](#)).
- d. Confidential Guardianship Screening Form ([JC Form #GC-212](#)).
- e. Guardianship Questionnaire ([SDSC Form #FCS-045](#)). *(Submit original to FCS. Do not file with Probate Business Office)*

2. Since FCS conducts screenings for prior referrals of neglect or abuse of minors in relative guardianship petitions, notice pursuant to Probate Code section 1516, subdivision (a) for relative guardianships is not required.

**B. Non-Relative Guardian - Person or Person/Estate**

1. Probate Code 1542 requires that notice be given to the Director of Social Services in Sacramento and HHSA.
2. When providing notice to HHSA, conformed copies of all documents filed with the petition must be provided.
3. HHSA will provide the petitioner with a packet of materials to complete and return prior to its investigation.

**C. Relative or Non-Relative Guardian - Estate Only**

1. Guardianship Questionnaire – Estate ([SDSC Form # PR-064](#)) must be filed with the Probate Business Office.
2. CI will contact the petitioner and conduct an investigation prior to the hearing.

**D. Relative or Non-Relative Guardian - Estate Only- Waiver Requested**

1. The following documents must be submitted to the Probate Business Office:
  - a. Application for Waiver of Investigation ([SDSC Form # PR-062](#))
  - b. Ex Parte Coversheet ([SDSC Form #PR-136](#))
  - c. Guardianship Questionnaire ([SDSC Form #PR-064](#))
  - d. Order Directing or Waiving Investigation ([SDSC Form #PR-063](#)). (Complete information in caption only.)

2. If request is approved, no investigation will be required. If denied, a CI will contact the petitioner and conduct an investigation prior to the hearing.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1995; Rev. 1/1/2000; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2025; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**Rule 4.19.6**

**Additional Powers**

The court may, on the petition of the guardian of the estate, either at the time of appointment or later, grant additional powers to the guardian as authorized by sections 2590 and 2591 of the Probate Code. Such powers are not granted unless sufficient reason is shown for their necessity. The court will grant only those additional powers necessary or proper under the specific circumstances of each case. The powers so granted must be set forth in the order and in the letters of guardianship.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2011; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016)

**Rule 4.19.7**

**Investments by Guardian**

- A.** See rule 4.18.13.
- B.** The guardian should also consider the circumstances of the estate, indicated cash needs, the age of the minor and the date of prospective termination of the guardianship.  
(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2011; Renum. 1/1/2014)

**Rule 4.19.8**

**Request for Use of Minor's Assets**

- A.** If a minor has a living parent or receives or is entitled to support from another source, prior court approval must be obtained before using guardianship assets for the minor's support, maintenance or education pursuant to Probate Code section 2422. The father and mother of a minor child have an equal responsibility to support the minor.
- B.** A request to expend funds may be made at the time of appointment of guardian, in a separate noticed petition, or in an accounting and report.
- C.** The petition must set forth in detail the parents' financial inability or other circumstances which in the minor's interest would justify use of the guardianship assets.
- D.** The request must be for a specific and limited purpose and for a limited period of time.
- E.** The petition must be accompanied by a statement describing income, expenses, assets and liabilities of any parent and must include the receipt of Social Security aid if applicable.  
(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2011; Renum. 1/1/2014)

**Rule 4.19.9**

**Fees and Commissions in Guardianships**

See Chapter 16 regarding fees and commissions generally.  
(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2011; Renum. 1/1/2014)

**Rule 4.19.10**

**Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/2015; Del. 1/1/2017)

**Rule 4.19.11**

**Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/2016; Del. 1/1/2019)

**CHAPTER 20**  
**TRUSTS**

**Rule 4.20.1**

**Testamentary Trust Accounts**

- A.** Unless the testator provides otherwise in the will or the court specifically orders otherwise, a trust created by will executed on or after July 1, 1977, is not subject to the continuing jurisdiction of the court, and the court will require an accounting and report only when the same has been requested by someone beneficially interested in the trust.
- B.** All initial proceedings for court supervision of trusts, including but not limited to related but separate trusts or testamentary trusts funded by a probate estate, and petitions to establish special needs trusts, are new actions, and require assignment of a new case number and payment of a filing fee.  
(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1996; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 1/1/2003; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2011; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2025)

**Rule 4.20.2**

**Petition to Determine Claim to Property in Trust Matters (Probate Code Section 850-Heggstad)**



In trust matters filed with the court to determine the title to property under Probate Code section 850, the following allegations and documentation must be set forth in the petition:

- A.** The vesting of each asset at all relevant times;
- B.** Evidence that each asset was placed in trust;
- C.** Evidence of every transaction affecting title to each asset in question during the relevant time;
- D.** Where a transaction takes legal title to an asset out of the trust or occurs when title is not held by the trustee, evidence to overcome the inference that the trustor intended that the transaction be considered a non-trust transaction.

**E.** Prayers must state, with specificity, each asset at issue in the petition. See also SDLR 4.17.9. (Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.20.3**

##### **Identification of Persons Entitled to Notice**

In addition to the requirements of Probate Code section 17201 and California Rules of Court, [Rule 7.902](#), to state the names and addresses of each person entitled to notice of a trust petition, the petition must also contain the relationships of those persons to the trustor(s). The trustee and petitioner will likewise be identified by name, address and relationship to the trustor(s).

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 1/1/2005; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2018)

#### **Rule 4.20.4**

##### **Trusts Established Before Decree of Distribution**

**A.** Probate Code section 6321 provides that a decedent may designate as beneficiary of a life insurance policy a trustee named in decedent's will. The statutes also apply to certain employment and other benefits which may be payable to such a trustee.

**B.** A trustee named in a will admitted to probate may be appointed before the decree of distribution is made, upon the filing of a petition and proper notice pursuant to Probate Code sections 17200 and 17203, and rule 4.20.4.

**C.** Where a vacancy exists in the office of the trustee before distribution, a trustee not named in the will may be appointed upon the filing of a petition and proper notice pursuant to Probate Code sections 17200 and 17203, and rule 4.20.4.

**D.** The order appointing the trustee must contain all the terms of the trust, and the trustee must have all the powers and duties in respect to the trust corpus set forth in the order.

**E.** Any matters governing the trust not specifically covered by these sections must be governed by the provisions of Probate Code section 15000 et seq.

**F.** If no trustee claims the trust corpus or can qualify to receive the same and there is no indication in the will as to where the proceeds are to be distributed, a petition to determine heirship may be filed to determine to whom distribution shall be made.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2012; Renum. 1/1/2014)

#### **Rule 4.20.5**

##### **Trust Created or Funded Pursuant to Court Order**

**A.** Trusts created or funded by court order, including trusts created pursuant to Probate Code sections 2580 et seq. ("substituted judgment"), 3100 et seq. (relating to particular transactions for disabled spouses or registered domestic partners), and 3600 et seq. (relating to the compromises of claims of minors and persons with disabilities) are governed by California Rules of Court, [rule 7.903](#). All such trusts must include provisions for protection of the trust assets against misuse and continuing supervision by the court, except as provided in subsections B.10 and D, or unless the court otherwise orders.

**B.** With respect to Special Needs Trusts and Discretionary Trusts presented for establishment pursuant to rule 2.4.6, subsection C, or otherwise, the following rules apply:

**1.** The proposed trust must include a payback provision upon termination of the trust. Medi-Cal or any other Medicaid agency which has paid benefits to the beneficiary shall receive all amounts remaining in the trust up to an amount equal to the benefits paid (42 U.S.C. § 1396p(d)(4)(A)). The Department of Health Services



provides general guidelines regarding special needs trusts, and the guidelines can be obtained by contacting that agency.

2. The proposed trust must include notice requirements upon death of the trust beneficiary, termination of the trust, additions to the trust or changes of trustee.

3. The proposed trust must be established for a disabled individual under the age of 65. The disabled individual must be the sole beneficiary of the trust.

4. The Trust is irrevocable.

5. The proposed trust must contain dispositive provisions after reimbursement to all State Agencies required by title 42 of the United States Code section 1396p(d)(4)(A).

6. All petitions to establish a special needs trust must be “short set” by the Probate Business Office on the next available miscellaneous calendar. The petition will be set at a shortened date and time to allow 15 days’ notice to parties so entitled. Notice must include the notice required by Rule 4.5.2.B.

7. Except for Pooled Special Needs Trusts, the order establishing the special needs trust must set forth the provisions of the trust entirety.

8. After the probate court approves establishment of a Special Needs Trust presented under Rule 2.4.6(C), upon approval of the settlement by the civil court, the Trustee shall file a copy of the order directing settlement proceeds to be placed in it.

9. After the petition to establish a Special Needs Trust or Discretionary Trust is approved, a copy of the executed trust must be filed if the matter remains under court supervision.

10. Third Party Special Needs Trusts need not be presented for court approval.

C. All proposed Trusts must include a schedule A or a schedule of assets that will be used to fund the trust upon approval of the court.

D. Unless otherwise ordered by the court, for good cause shown, this rule does not apply to trust instruments or trusts that have a total asset value of \$20,000 or less.

(Adopted 7/1/2003; Rev. 1/1/2005; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2012; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2017; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2023; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.20.6**

##### **Fees and Commissions in Trusts**

See Chapter 16 regarding fees and commissions generally.

(Adopted 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2011; Renum. 1/1/2014)

#### **Rule 4.20.7**

##### **Petitions for Modification or Termination of Trusts**

A. Petitions seeking the amendment of a trust must set forth in the petition and in the prayer the portion of the trust to be amended by designating language to be deleted in strikeout format, and language to be added by underlining.

B. Petitions seeking authority to terminate a trust pursuant to Probate Code section 15403 must affirmatively allege that the trust is not subject to a valid restraint on transfer of the beneficiary’s interest as provided in Probate Code section 15300 et seq.

C. Petitions seeking to amend the provisions of a trust relating to the identification of a successor trustee must contain a provision requiring a trustee’s bond unless the petition contains allegations upon which the court may make the finding required by Probate Code section 15602, subdivision (b).

(Adopted 1/1/2008; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2018)

#### **Rule 4.20.8**

##### **Petitions for Appointment of a Successor Trustee**

A. Petitions requesting appointment of a successor trustee must include related documents, such as declination to act, resignation, nomination, or consent; said documents must be filed, not lodged.

B. Petitions seeking to amend the provisions of a trust relating to the identification of a successor trustee must contain a provision requiring a trustee’s bond unless the petition contains allegations upon which the court may make the finding required by Probate Code section 15602, subdivision (b).

C. Petitions seeking to amend the provisions of a trust relating to the appointment of a successor trustee must contain a provision requiring a trustee's bond unless the petition contains allegations upon which the court may make the finding required by Probate Code section 15602, subdivision (b).  
(Adopted 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016)

**Rule 4.20.9**

**Uniform Trust Decanting Act**

A. If a petition to appoint a guardian ad litem is filed pursuant to Probate Code section 19507(d) or (e), notice must be given to the parties listed in Probate Code section 19507(c).

B. If a petition is filed pursuant to Probate Code section 19509 the following must be filed with the court:

1. A copy of the notice of intent to exercise the decanting power, as specified by Probate Code section 19507(c).

2. Copies of the first trust instrument and all second trust instruments.  
(Adopted 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2025)

**CHAPTER 21  
MISCELLANEOUS**

**Rule 4.21.1**

**Withdrawal of Counsel of Record**

The following provisions apply to attorneys appointed by the court to serve as appointed counsel and guardians ad litem and to attorneys for guardians of the estate, conservators of the estate, personal representatives in estates, and trustees of trusts.

A. Counsel wishing to withdraw from a probate proceeding as counsel of record must file and serve a Motion to Withdraw in accordance with Code of Civil Procedure section 284 and California Rules of Court, rule [3.1362](#).

B. The filing in the case file of a substitution in pro per without prior court approval will not effectively relieve the counsel of record and will be rejected. Such counsel will be relieved only by substitution of another counsel or by court order upon showing that the person wishing to act in pro per is not precluded from doing so by virtue of their capacity in the pending proceeding. See, for example, *Ziegler v. Nickel* (1998) 64 Cal.App.4th 545. Court approval may be obtained by a noticed motion.

C. Motions for withdrawal where a bond has been filed by a surety must be accompanied by proof of service of the notice required by Probate Code section 1213.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 7/1/1991; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2025)

**Rule 4.21.2**

**Appointment of Probate Referees**

A. Probate referees will be appointed in rotation.

B. A probate referee may be designated out of rotation where the property has already been appraised by the probate referee or interests in the property are part of two pending proceedings. Examples of such proceedings would be the conservatorship of husband and wife, simultaneous deaths or death of husband and wife within one year of each other, decedent's estate following conservatorship, guardianships of siblings and court proceedings following non-judicial proceedings.

C. A declaration must be presented with the order designating probate referee which sets forth the relevant circumstances.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Rev. 1/1/2000; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006)

**Rule 4.21.3**

**Petitions Involving Charities**

The Attorney General is a party to and is entitled to notice of probate matters involving interests of charities. Attention is directed, for example, to Government Code section 12591, as well as to the Probate Code.

(Adopted 1/1/1990; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016)

#### **Rule 4.21.4**

##### **Dismissal of Proceedings**

**A.** Once a fiduciary has been appointed by the court in decedent's estates, conservatorships of an estate, and guardianships of an estate, the entire proceeding may not be dismissed except upon duly noticed petition and order of the court. If a fiduciary has not yet been appointed, refer to subsection C.

**B.** Once a fiduciary has been appointed by the court in conservatorships of the person and guardianships of the person, unless the matter has terminated by operation of law, the entire proceeding may not be dismissed except upon duly noticed petition and order of the court. If a fiduciary has not yet been appointed, refer to subsection C.

**C.** Petitions may be dismissed only upon an order of the court. Such order may be made upon oral request prior to commencement of trial, with such notice as the court requires; or by stipulation signed by the parties and presented to the court; or by noticed petition or application, which may be submitted to the court ex parte with proper notice.

**D.** Individuals may be dismissed from a petition or proceeding upon the submission of [Judicial Council form CIV-110](#) Request for Dismissal and upon approval of the assigned judicial officer. Alternatively, such requests can be made orally, prior to commencement of trial with such notice as the court requires.

**E.** Objections and Responses. An objection and/or response may be withdrawn by the party originally filing it upon filing of a verified statement of withdrawal, and providing notice of such withdrawal to all persons entitled to notice of the original filing.

(Renum. 7/1/2001; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2019)

#### **Rule 4.21.5**

##### **Disclosure by Conservators, Guardians, and Attorneys**

Conservatees and wards generally are not in a position to give their informed consent to representation by attorneys, or the appointment of a conservator and/or guardian. To avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest in duty, a conservator, proposed conservator, guardian, proposed guardian, and/or attorney who appears in matters involving a conservatee, ward, or their estate, must disclose all present and past relationships to the court at their earliest opportunity in the following circumstances:

**A. Conservators.** A person who is or has served in the past as a conservator of the individual or estate which is the subject of the pending proceeding (trust or decedent's estate) must disclose all present and past relationships.

**B. Attorneys.**

**1.** An attorney for a conservatee or proposed conservatee, or a conservator or proposed conservator, must disclose all present or past attorney-client relationships with any other person appearing in the matter.

**2.** An attorney for a ward or proposed ward, or a guardian or proposed guardian, must disclose all present or past attorney-client relationships with any other person appearing in the matter.

**3.** In complying with this rule an attorney shall not be required to violate an existing attorney-client privilege, but should consider that continued participation in the matter may constitute a violation of the Professional Rules of Conduct.

**C. Guardians.** A person who is or has served in the past as a guardian of the individual or estate which is the subject of the pending proceeding (conservatorship, trust, or decedent's estate) must disclose all present and past relationships.

**D. Court-appointed attorneys and guardians ad litem** generally are appointed on a rotational basis. At times, the court-appointed attorney or guardian ad litem may have represented another party in the proceeding. The court appointment is conditional on a conflict check by the proposed court-appointed attorney or guardian ad litem. The appointment is effective 10 days after the date of mailing of the order, unless written communication is received by the court investigator support desk indicating that a conflict exists. Once the appointment is effective, an ex parte application must be made to discharge appointed counsel. Once the appointment of a court-appointed attorney or guardian ad litem becomes effective, the court-appointed attorney or guardian ad litem shall immediately notify the petitioner and any other party that has appeared in the action that the appointment has been made and accepted. If this notification is made before the 10-day period from the date of the mailing of the order has passed, the appointment shall become effective on the date the notification is made.

**E. Proof of Insurance.** In addition to submitting the appropriate Judicial Council form(s), attorneys seeking initial appointment or reappointment as court-appointed attorneys in probate conservatorships and guardianships must submit a report of insurance setting forth the amount of the insurance coverage and its effective dates as well as the Court-Appointed Attorney Cover Sheet ([SDSC form PR-150](#)).  
(Adopted 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2013; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2018; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2021)

**Rule 4.21.6**

**Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2014; Del. 1/1/2016)

**Rule 4.21.7**

**Elisors**

Where one of the parties will not or cannot execute a document necessary to carry out a court order, the clerk of the court, or their authorized representative or designee, may be appointed as an elisor to sign the document. An application for appointment of an elisor may be made ex parte. (See rules 4.7.5 and 4.7.6 for Ex Parte requirements). When applying for an appointment of an elisor, the application and proposed order must designate “The Clerk of the Court or Clerk’s Designee” as the elisor and indicate for whom the elisor is being appointed and in what capacity they are to sign the document. The application must not set forth a specific court employee. The order must expressly identify the document being signed and a copy of the document must be attached to the proposed order. The original document, presented for signature by the elisor, must match the copy of the document attached to the proposed order. The declaration supporting the application must include specific facts establishing the necessity for the appointment of the elisor. If the elisor is signing documents requiring notarization, the applicant must arrange for a notary public to be present when the elisor signs the document(s).  
(Adopted 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2025)

**Rule 4.21.8**

**Disclosure of Change in Licensing Status of Licensed Private Fiduciary**

A Licensed Private Fiduciary who knows or reasonably should know that their license has expired or has been suspended or revoked, within five court days after they obtain such knowledge, must file a written declaration setting forth their license status in every open case in which they have been appointed by the court to serve, and must serve a copy of each such declaration on the Operations Manager of the Probate Division at the Probate Business Office.

(Adopted 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2025)

**CHAPTER 22  
CONTESTED MATTERS**

**Rule 4.22.1**

**Introduction**

**A.** When objections are filed to a petition or other pleading seeking affirmative relief in the Probate Court, the matter becomes a “contested matter” as the term is used in these rules. These rules apply to all contested matters. They supplement applicable general statutes and other rules of court and are intended to further the policies of the Legislature and the San Diego Superior Court for the prompt completion of probate administration and efficient resolution of disputes.

**B.** If an interested party appears in person or by counsel when a petition is called for hearing and declares a desire to file a written objection or contest, the court may continue the hearing with the understanding that if an objection or contest is not actually on file at the new hearing date, the hearing will proceed.

(Adopted 1/1/1993; Rev. 7/1/1996; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2016)

#### **Rule 4.22.2**

##### **Filing of Petitions and Contests and Setting Contested Matters for Hearing**

All petitions, will contests and other pleadings seeking affirmative relief or adjudication by the Probate Court must be set as follows:

**A.** By statute or rule of court.  
**B.** Notice Not Prescribed. If the time for notice of hearing on a particular matter is not set forth in a statute or a rule of court, the time for notice of hearing must be 30 days. The provisions of Code of Civil Procedure section 1013 apply.

**C.** Will Contests. A probate summons must be presented by the contestant and issued by the court at the time of filing of a will contest. A will contest filed before admission of the will to probate constitutes an objection to the petition to admit the will, and the hearing on the petition to admit the will must be continued to a date no less than 30 days from the date of filing the will contest, in order to allow sufficient time to complete service in the will contest. If all service, including personal service of the summons as required by law, is not completed by the date of the continued hearing on the petition to admit the will, the contestant must appear ex parte at least two court days prior to the hearing to request additional time for service. If a continuance is granted ex parte and service is not thereafter completed prior to the continued hearing, the court at the hearing may further continue the matter or may impose sanctions. When service has been completed, the will contest will be set for trial or short cause hearing pursuant to these rules. The petition to admit the will may be continued until the date of trial or short cause hearing on the will contest.

(Adopted 1/1/1993; Rev. 7/1/1995; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2015)

#### **Rule 4.22.3**

##### **Service of Notice**

All notice requirements on contested matters, including personal service when required, must be completed prior to the date of the hearing (whether the hearing date originally assigned to the matter by the clerk of the court or a later date if the matter has been continued). If a party on whom personal service is required has not been served timely, the contestant must appear ex parte at least two court days prior to the hearing and set forth the cause for the lack of service.

(Adopted 1/1/1993; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/12/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2015)

#### **Rule 4.22.4**

##### **Filing of Objections**

**A.** A person with standing may appear and object orally at the first hearing on any matter before the Probate Court. Thereafter objections, including grounds of opposition, to any petition or other pleading filed in Probate Court must be set forth in writing, filed and served either as required by statute or, in the absence of specific statutory requirements or court order, at least four court days before the next scheduled hearing date on the petition or pleading. If written objections have not been filed in accordance with this rule, the court may decide the matter pursuant to California Rules of Court, [rule 7.801](#) as if no objection had been made. In any event, written objections may not thereafter be made without leave of court by the party orally objecting. This Rule is not applicable to law and motion matters governed by Chapter 23.

**B.** Objections to petitions (not including ex partes or motions) will carry a fee as determined by the court's Fee Schedule ([SDSC Form #ADM-001](#))

(Adopted 1/1/1993; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2022; Rev. 1/1/2024)

#### **Rule 4.22.5**

##### **Determination of Contested Matters**

**A. General.** Contested matters will be determined as set forth herein. At the earliest appropriate hearing after a contested matter is at issue, the court may determine the type of hearing required, the length of the hearing and the manner of disposition.

**B. Submission Without Evidentiary Hearing.** If all parties agree in writing or on the record in open court, the court may decide the matter based on the pleadings, evidentiary materials filed prior to the conclusion of the hearing, and the arguments of counsel, or as otherwise agreed.

**C. Short Cause Matter Hearing.** If the court determines that the matter will require an evidentiary hearing of three hours or less (a “hearing”), the court may establish guidelines to govern discovery proceedings, if any are required, and may set the matter for hearing as a “short cause” matter. Trial briefs must be filed in the trial department and electronically served (in accordance with Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.251), faxed (in accordance with Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.306), or personally served on opposing counsel no later than 4:30 p.m. five court days prior to the date set for the short cause hearing unless the court orders otherwise.

Due to the “short cause” nature of this hearing, the court will not entertain, receive or read responses to said trial briefs. The trial briefs submitted are deemed sufficient to allow the parties the opportunity to state their positions regarding the contested issue(s) to be addressed at the short cause hearing. The provisions of rules 4.22.11 and 4.22.9 do not apply to short cause hearings.

**D. Trial.** If the court determines that the matter will require an evidentiary hearing of more than three hours (a “trial”), the court may set the matter for a Case Management Conference (see rule 4.22.7 below).

**E. Other Procedural Orders.** If none of the foregoing procedures are appropriate for the matter before the court, the court may make any other procedural orders the court deems appropriate.  
(Adopted 1/1/1993; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.22.6**

##### **Meet and Confer, Joint Case Management Report**

If a contested matter is set for a Case Management Conference, counsel must, unless excused by the court:

**A.** Meet and confer no later than seven days before the Case Management Conference.

**B.** No later than four court days before each Case Management Conference, serve and file with the court a Case Management Statement ([SDSC Form #PR-157](#)).

(Adopted 1/1/1993; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2015; Rev. 1/1/2019; Rev. 1/1/2020; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2026)

#### **Rule 4.22.7**

##### **Case Management Conference**

At the Case Management Conference, the court may take any one or more of the following actions:

**A.** Determine whether or not all applicable procedures have been complied with and, if not, order appropriate remedial action, including the imposition of sanctions considered appropriate in the court's discretion;

**B.** Set the following dates based upon review of the “Case Management Statement” ([SDSC form PR-157](#)) and the representations of counsel:

1. Trial date;
2. Trial readiness conference date;
3. Discovery cut-off date;
4. Law and motion cut-off date;
5. Dates for the exchange of experts;
6. Settlement conference date, if requested (see rule 4.22.10).

**C.** Make appropriate assignments and orders upon approval of a written agreement to refer the dispute to a temporary judge or to arbitration (Prob. Code, §§ 9620-9621) or to a Special Master or Referee (Prob. Code, § 1000; Code Civ. Proc., §§ 638-645.1).

**D.** Dispense with any of the procedures provided for herein for good cause, which includes agreement of the parties.

**E.** Direct counsel to submit an order setting forth the dates and directives of the court.  
(Adopted 1/1/1993; Rev. 7/1/1996; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2015)

#### **Rule 4.22.8**

##### **Trial Readiness Conference Report/Advance Trial Review Order**

**A.** Unless dispensed with by the court at the Case Management Conference, no later than five days prior to the trial readiness conference, counsel must meet and confer in person to prepare in good faith a Trial Readiness Conference Report/Advance Trial Review Order. The Trial Readiness Conference Report/Advance Trial Review Order must be in the format set forth on [SDSC form CIV-252](#) which can be viewed under the Civil Forms section of the San Diego Superior Court's website, <http://www.sdcourt.ca.gov>.

**B.** Matters deemed too lengthy to be heard by one of the Probate Departments shall be sent to the master civil assignments department or to one of the civil departments as appropriate. Counsel must file the Trial Readiness Conference Report/Advance Trial Review Order at least two days prior to the Trial Readiness Conference. Failure to complete the Trial Readiness Conference Report/Advance Trial Review Order may cause the Court to vacate the trial date and set another Trial Readiness Conference.

(Adopted 1/1/1993; Rev. 7/1/1996; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Rev. 7/1/2003; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2016)

#### **Rule 4.22.9**

##### **Trial Readiness Conference; Sanctions**

**A.** Counsel completely familiar with the case and possessing authority to enter into stipulations must be present at the scheduled hearing; however, clients need not appear unless specifically ordered by the court. Orders made will be binding on trial counsel and will not be subject to reconsideration due to counsel's unfamiliarity with the case at the time of the trial readiness conference.

**B.** If the court determines that a party, or counsel, has failed to reasonably comply with these rules, including the diligent preparation of a Trial Readiness Conference Report/Advance Trial Review Order, the court may impose appropriate sanctions against that party or counsel including a summary determination of any contested issues in accordance with the other party's papers filed in compliance with these rules, the levy of sanctions pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 575.2, the issuance of citations or bench warrants, or any other appropriate action.

(Adopted 1/1/1993; Rev. 7/1/1995, 7/1/1996; Rev. & Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 2010; Rev. 1/1/2011)

#### **Rule 4.22.10**

##### **Mandatory Settlement Conference (MSC)**

**A. Calendaring.** Before the court will set a trial date, unless otherwise ordered by the court, an MSC will be scheduled by the court in contested matters. The parties and their attorneys of record must participate virtually or in person. MSCs must take place at least 10-days prior to the next case management conference. The court will allow additional time only for demonstrated good cause. A request for additional time may be submitted ex parte or via a stipulation signed by all parties.

**B. Settlement Conference Panel.** The court will appoint an attorney pursuant to the qualifications set forth in the California Rules of Court, [rule 2.812](#), as a settlement attorney to assist the parties and trial counsel in reaching a settlement at the MSC. If available, two settlement attorneys may be assigned to more complex cases. The settlement attorneys will be responsible for reaching out to the parties to set up the date, time, and location/technology for the MSC. Each settlement attorney will be required to keep track of how many hours are spent volunteering and shall email the amount of hours to the MSC clerk at the conclusion of the MSC.

**C. Meet and Confer Requirements.** Counsel must meet and confer either virtually or in person before the MSC to resolve as many issues as possible and to identify those issues which remain unresolved. The results of this conference will be included in the Settlement Conference Brief.

**D. Settlement Conference Briefs.** Each party must prepare a Settlement Conference Brief and deliver a copy to each party and the settlement attorney, prior to the MSC. The brief should not exceed 10 pages and must contain a summary of the dispute, the procedural background of the case, any pending motions or other dispositive pleadings, a brief description of any legal issues or material facts which are not in dispute, any stipulations reached by the parties affecting trial of the matter, a specific proposal for the resolution of each contested issue and the reasons for the proposed resolution, and an addendum listing all witnesses expected to be called at trial, all documents expected to be introduced at trial, and any evidentiary objections by the opposing party. The Settlement Conference Brief shall not become part of the court file and will be available for retrieval by the filing party at the MSC.

**E. Settlements.** If a settlement is reached, a Stipulation and Order After Mandatory Settlement Conference (PR-164) must be completed and submitted to the court for review. If approved, the future hearing dates may be vacated. If a settlement is not reached, the matter will be heard at the scheduled case management conference.

**F. Judicially Supervised Settlement Conferences.** In lieu of utilizing the Probate Settlement Conference Panel, with the authorization of the judge assigned to the case, the parties to the case may request a Settlement Conference with a Judicial Officer in the Civil Division pursuant to Civil Local Rule 2.3.1. Information regarding the panel is available on the Court website at <https://www.sdcourt.ca.gov/sdcourt/settlementconferences>. The list of participating judges is available at <https://www.sdcourt.ca.gov/availablejudges.pdf>.



(Adopted 1/1/1993; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2023)

**Rule 4.22.11**

**Trial Briefs and Motions in Limine**

**A.** Unless otherwise directed by the court, all motions in limine (as authorized by law) and trial briefs must be filed with the clerk of the trial court and electronically served (in accordance with Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.251), faxed (in accordance with the Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.306), or personally served on opposing counsel no later than 4:30 p.m. five court days prior to the date set for trial. Opposition pleadings to in limine motions must be filed and electronically served (in accordance with Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.251), faxed (in accordance with the Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.306), or personally served on opposing counsel no later than 12 noon of the day prior to the date set for trial.

**B.** Unless otherwise directed by the court, four court days before trial, the parties must provide the clerk of the trial court with a final joint witness list and joint exhibit list.

**C.** At trial call, the parties must provide two joint exhibit binders, one for the court and one for the witnesses, containing a complete set of all exhibits. The exhibits must be marked to correspond to the joint exhibit list. Copies of exhibits to be offered by the petitioner must not be duplicated by the respondent.

(Adopted 1/1/1993, Rev. 1/1/2000; Renum. 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2011; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2024; Rev. 1/1/2026)

**Rule 4.22.12**

**Mediation Statements and Documents Not Admissible Evidence**

All responsive pleadings and all other documents filed with the court or with an ADR neutral concerning mediation under these rules, and all matters disclosed verbally concerning any such mediation, are not admissible evidence in any later contested proceeding between the parties solely by reason of their disclosure under these rules. Evidence Code section 1119 governs statements and documents disclosed in mediation.

(Adopted 7/1/2001; Rev. 7/1/2002; Renum. 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2008; Rev. 1/1/2012; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2014)

**CHAPTER 23**  
**LAW AND MOTION**

**Rule 4.23.1**

**Preliminary Definitions and Procedure**

**A.** An application for relief based upon the Probate Code must be brought as a petition. An application for relief based upon the Code of Civil Procedure or Civil Code must be brought as a motion.

**B.** Parties may not bring unrelated requests for relief in a single motion but must file each in a separate motion.

(Adopted 1/1/2006; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2010)

**Rule 4.23.2**

**Applicability of Division Two in Probate Proceedings**

**A.** Except to the extent the Probate Code provides otherwise, counsel and self-represented parties must comply with the pertinent sections (as amended from time to time) of Division II of these Rules and the California Rules of Court beginning at [rule 3.1100](#) et seq., with respect to demurrers, motions to strike, requests to take judicial notice, motions for summary judgment, and all other pretrial motions. Counsel and self-represented parties must also consult Department Rules of the various Probate Departments for further requirements.

**B.** The form and format of discovery proceedings in probate are governed by the California Rules of Court, [rule 3.1000](#) et seq., which will be enforced in all probate proceedings.

(Adopted 1/1/2006; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2017)



### **Rule 4.23.3**

#### **Filing Motion Papers**

**A.** Unless a specific greater or lesser time is authorized by statute, court rule, or order, moving papers must be filed at least 16 court days prior to the scheduled hearing. This rule may be waived by an order shortening time upon ex parte application.

**B.** In a law and motion matter, a request to shorten time, continue a hearing or for consideration of late-filed papers must be presented to the judicial officer(s) designated to hear that law and motion matter.

**C.** Unless otherwise ordered by the court, motions must be presented to the Probate Business Office prior to the issuance of a hearing date. Motions that must be served before they are filed, such as motions pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure 128.7, will be given a hearing date upon presentation that will take the proposed filing date into account.

**D.** The phrase “LAW & MOTION” must appear at the beginning of the title of all papers submitted to the court in support of the motion.

(Adopted 1/1/2006; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010; Rev. 1/1/2013; Rev. 1/1/2016; Rev. 1/1/2021; Rev. 1/1/2022)

### **Rule 4.23.4**

#### **Hearings**

Once set, a matter may be continued only with a written order of approval from the court. A matter “continued” by stipulation without court approval will be taken off calendar. Once the court publishes a tentative ruling, the motion may not be taken off calendar or withdrawn.

(Adopted 1/1/2006; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010)

### **Rule 4.23.5**

#### **Filing and Serving Opposition or Support Papers on Motion**

**A.** Opposition, joinder and reply papers must be filed and served as provided in Code of Civil Procedure section 1005. In this regard, the court is not obligated to, and may not without good cause shown, consider any late-filed or surreply papers in a matter.

**B.** The phrase “LAW & MOTION” must appear at the beginning of the title of all papers submitted to the court in opposition, joinder and reply to a pending motion.

(Adopted 1/1/2006; Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2009; Rev. 1/1/2010)

### **Rule 4.23.6**

#### **Reserved for future use.**

(Adopted 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2014; Del. 1/1/2021)

### **Rule 4.23.7**

#### **Tentative Rulings**

At the option of the judicial officer sitting in Probate, tentative law and motion rulings will be made available in accordance with rule 2.1.19. Tentative rulings will be made available on the court's website at <http://www.sdcourt.ca.gov> (click on “tentative rulings” from the probate webpage). Pursuant to the California Rules of Court, [rule 3.1308\(a\)\(2\)](#), the court does not require notice of intent to appear at oral argument.

(Rev. & Renum. 1/1/2006; Renum. 1/1/2007; Rev. 1/1/2009; Rev 1/1/2011; Rev. 1/1/2012; Renum. 1/1/2014; Rev. 1/1/2020)