



**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA**  
**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Sacramento Superior Court's Civil Self-Help Services Program Marks Five Years Improving Public's Access to Justice**

Sacramento, CA – This month marks the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary for Sacramento Superior Court's Civil Self-Help Services program.

Civil Self-Help Services is one of only a few court-run programs in the state which assists people without lawyers to navigate the legal process related only to civil cases.

"It was a novel idea five years ago to establish the program, but it has become a lifeline to those in our community who try and navigate the legal system without a lawyer," said Kelly Sullivan, Chief Deputy Executive Officer at the Sacramento Superior Court. "Self-Help Services helps bridge the civil justice gap by providing access to legal information and support by helping explain court processes, fill out and file court forms, and connect with other services, including language access."

Civil Self-Help Services provides general information and assists individuals preparing their own forms in the area of civil law such as civil harassment restraining orders, name and/or gender changes and consumer debt cases.

The program is staffed by an attorney and three paralegals and has computers the public may use to complete court forms. It is funded by grants and there is no fee to access services.

“Civil Self-Help Services plays as an important role in our mission to serve the public and to provide equal access to the court system,” said Sacramento Superior Court Judge Steven M. Gevercer.

Prior to opening, Sacramento Superior Court staff had nowhere to send customers who walked in needing assistance with their civil matters.

When Civil Self-Help Services first opened, the only form of service was in the office.

But the center pivoted to providing services via email for several months during the pandemic. Then when employees returned to work in person, but the court was closed, the center offered telephone services and some walk-up services at an information booth located in the main courthouse in downtown Sacramento.

Today, Civil Self-Help Services provides aid in-person, via email and telephone.

“With so much going on in the world, it’s easy to lose sight of successes, achievements, and milestones. I am very excited to recognize a milestone achievement at our court by celebrating the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Civil Self-Help Services and the incredible team who provide services daily at our Hall of Justice,” Sullivan said. “I couldn’t be prouder of the program’s achievements!”

Use of the court’s Civil Self-Help Services has increased year over year. Since the program opened in 2019 it has logged more than 30,000 encounters with members of the public.

Civil Self-Help Services is located in the Sacramento Superior Court’s Hall of Justice Building, at 813 6<sup>th</sup> Street, on the first floor in Room 117. It is open 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Monday-Friday and 1:30-4 p.m. Monday-Wednesday and on Fridays, although hours may change based on staff availability. The center is closed Thursday afternoons and on all court holidays.

More information about the center is available online at <https://www.saccourt.ca.gov/civil/self-help-services/office-information.aspx>.