

# **Guide: Guidelines for the Operation of Self-Help Centers in California Trial Courts (California 2011)**



## JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

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OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS DIVISION  
CENTER FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN & THE COURTS

The Administrative Office of the Courts, in collaboration with judges, court executive officers, attorneys, and other parties with demonstrated interest in services to self-represented litigants, is charged with the development of [these guidelines](#) for dissemination to the trial courts by March 1, 2008, and thereafter to review them every three years. The attached document reflects the guidelines for the delivery of comprehensive statewide court based self-help in California.

The Judicial Council adopted rule 10.960 of the California Rules of Court, effective January 1, 2008, in order to establish the foundation for the administration of California court self-help centers. Rule 10.960 applies to all court-based self-help centers, whether the centers are managed by court employees or by entities other

than the court. The rule identifies assistance to self-represented litigants as a core court function and requires that the centers be staffed with an attorney. Rule 10.960 further requires that services delivered by the center be impartial, unbiased, and available to all parties in a case. Section 10.960(e) requires the development and dissemination of guidelines and procedures for the operation of court self-help centers. These guidelines must include: location and hours of operation, scope of services, attorney qualifications, other staffing qualifications and supervision requirements, language access, contracts with entities other than the court that provide self-help services, use of technology, ethics, efficiency of operation, and security.

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