

CHAPTER 7 ORDERS AND BONDS

Rule 4.7.1

Preparation of Orders

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

1. In conservatorship and decedent's estate matters, the proposed order must be submitted to the Probate Business Office three weeks prior to the hearing, with letters and bond.

2. In guardianships, a proposed order may be submitted at the time of hearing. Self-represented litigants must bring a self-addressed stamped envelope on the date of the hearing. Represented litigants must bring a prepared order, letters and a means of return on the date of the hearing.

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; or

2. 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)

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 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 share 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. 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)

Rule 4.7.3

Riders and Exhibits

No riders or exhibits may be attached to any order, except as may be otherwise provided on Judicial Council forms.

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

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) form SDSC PR-136, Probate Ex Parte Request and Order (should be printed on green paper); (2) the ex parte petition; (3) supporting declaration; (4) a declaration regarding notice; (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)

Rule 4.7.6

Ex Parte Guidelines for Setting Hearings and Fees

The Probate Court has two procedures for ex partes. The first type are referred to as “Drops” and are reserved for matters that are uncontested, routine and not subject to specific noticing rules in the Probate Code. The other type of Ex Partes are referred to as “Appearances.” These matters are generally contested.

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 filed by 10:00 a.m. to be considered that same day. If filed after 10:00 a.m., they will be considered the next business day.

2. These matters require only the fee charged for an Application for Ex Parte Relief. The two exceptions to this are Petitions for Letters of Special Administration and Petitions for Appointment of Temporary Guardianship or Conservatorship; these exceptions require an additional fee for the underlying petition, as set forth in the fee schedule. Refer to the most current Fee Schedule on the court’s website.

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 or set further out than the next available date.

3. These matters will carry an additional fee for the underlying petition, as determined by the fee schedule. Refer to the most current Fee Schedule on the court’s website.

C. 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.

(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)

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 made by the court or court staff, 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 a Probate Ex Parte Request & Order (SDSC PR-136).

B. If it is determined that there was an error in the information provided to the court in the petition or a supplement, local forms SDSC PR-137 Ex Parte Application for Issuance of Nunc Pro Tunc Order/Amended Order shall be submitted with a Probate Ex Parte Request & Order (SDSC PR-136). Additionally, a Proposed Amended Order must be submitted for the court's consideration.

C. 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)

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)