

Superior Court of California
County of Merced
Probate Department

Probate Notes

Probate Notes for future calendars are available from the time they are created until the morning of the scheduled hearing. The Probate Examiner's Notes typically will be posted 5 days prior to the hearing. If you are filing documents to cure a technical defect, documents should be filed a minimum of 2 court days prior to the hearing. Documents filed late will not be reviewed except on the date of the hearing at the Judge's discretion and could result in a continuance of your case.

Parties intending to appear in Court regarding their hearing must notify all other parties and call (209) 725-4111 to notify the Court of such intent by 4:00 pm on the day before the hearing.

Contacting the Probate Examiner:

Probate Examiner's email address is: probate.examiner@mercedcourt.org

Emails must have the case identification information and hearing date/time in the subject line. **No attachments will be opened.** The Probate Examiner can only respond to inquiries regarding the meaning of comments in the Notes. *Please do not email to request a confirmation whether documents have been received or to request the clearing of notes.* No legal or procedural advice may be given by the Examiner in response to your email.

Questions regarding fees, forms, status of orders, Zoom links or remote appearances should be directed to the Probate Unit of the Clerk's Office at (209) 725-4111 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 pm. and 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., Monday – Friday.

The following cases are not reflected in the Probate Notes and appearances are required unless previously excused by the Court:

- Guardianships and Conservatorships of the Person
- Minor's Compromise cases before the Probate Court for approval
- Petition for Special Immigrant Juvenile Findings

**Questions involving Guardianships (including SIJF) and Conservatorships of the Person should be directed to the Court Investigators Office at (209) 725-4190.*

***Please note no legal or procedural advice can be provided by the Court Investigator's Office. ***

Superior Court of California, County of Merced
PROBATE/CONSERVATORSHIP CALENDAR
HONORABLE: James LaPorte

DATE: Monday, September 14, 2026
TIME: 8:15 AM
Courtroom 10

PROBATE CALENDAR

The following tentative rulings shall become the ruling of the court unless a party gives notice of intention to appear as follows:

1. You must call (209) 725-4240 to notify the court of your intent to appear.
2. You must give notice to all other parties before 4:00 p.m. of your intent to object.

Per California Rules of Court, rule 3.1308(a)(1), failure to do both items 1 and 2 will result in no oral argument. **Parties who contest the tentative ruling or wish to appear remotely at a hearing must contact the clerk of the Court at (209) 725-4111 to provide their contact information for the remote hearing.**

CASE#: 25PR-00243

CASE NAME:

In the Matter of the Norma B. Bacal Revocable Living Trust, dated March 30, 2019

THIS CASE IS SET FOR HEARING ON:

Continued from June 8, 2026 re: Case Status

THE FOLLOWING ISSUES AND/OR DEFICIENCIES IN THE PAPERS WERE PREVIOUSLY NOTED:

1. Petitioners' Request for Dismissal as to the Petition to Compel Actions by Trustee and To Remove Trustee filed June 10, 2025, was entered on July 7, 2026. The remaining pending matter: *Trustee's First Account Current of Trust and Reservation of Right to Request Trustee Fees* filed on October 17, 2025 has not been served on any trust beneficiaries. Prob. Code, §§16062, 16063, 17203

TENTATIVE RULING:

Appearance required. Counsel to advise the Court on the current case status.

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CASE#: 25PR-00271

CASE NAME:

In re: The Jerry Menefee 2021 Trust, Dated December 22, 2021

THIS CASE IS SET FOR HEARING ON:

Trial Readiness Conference

THE FOLLOWING ISSUES AND/OR DEFICIENCIES IN THE PAPERS ARE NOTED:

None.

TENTATIVE RULING:

No appearance required. A Status Update was filed on September 1, 2026 informing the Court that the parties have settled. Absent any Objection, all currently set trial dates are hereby vacated and the matter is hereby set for an Order to Show Cause re: Dismissal for December 21, 2026 at 8:15 a.m. in Courtroom 10.

CASE#: 25PR-00282

CASE NAME: Estate of Matthew Fell

THIS CASE IS SET FOR HEARING ON:

Continued from June 1, 2026 re: Status Hearing

THE FOLLOWING ISSUES AND/OR DEFICIENCIES IN THE PAPERS WERE PREVIOUSLY NOTED:

1. A Petition for Final Account or Status Report has not been filed.
Prob Code §12200-12201

TENTATIVE RULING:

Appearance required

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CASE#: 25PR-00287

CASE NAME: Estate of Hugo Lopez

THIS CASE IS SET FOR HEARING ON:

Continued from January 15, 2026 re: Status Hearing ensuring the Closing of the Estate

THE FOLLOWING ISSUES AND/OR DEFICIENCIES IN THE PAPERS ARE NOTED:

1. A Petition for Final Account or Status Report has not been filed.
Prob Code §12200-12201

TENTATIVE RULING:

Appearance required. The Administrator to provide the Court with a current case status.

CASE#: 25PR-00436

CASE NAME: In the Matter of the Eva Pruett Pooled Special Needs Trust

THIS CASE IS SET FOR HEARING ON:

Continued from July 14, 2026 re: Status Review/Confirmation of Case Transfer

THE FOLLOWING ISSUES AND/OR DEFICIENCIES IN THE PAPERS WERE PREVIOUSLY NOTED:

1. Case has not been transferred to San Diego County Superior Court. [*Corrected](#)

TENTATIVE RULING:

No appearance required. The case has been transferred to San Diego County Superior Court on September 3, 2026. The hearing is dropped from calendar.

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CASE#: 26PR-00170

CASE NAME: Robert Dean Ashlock, Jr.

THIS CASE IS SET FOR HEARING ON:

Continued from August 28, 2026 re: Petition for Letters of Administration with Full IAEA Authority

THE FOLLOWING ISSUES AND/OR DEFICIENCIES IN THE PAPERS WERE PREVIOUSLY NOTED **as to the Amended Petition filed on 8/20/26:*

1. The decedent was survived by a minor son who has an interest in the estate. A Guardian Ad Litem will need to be appointed to adequately represent the minor's interest in the estate. Prob Code §§1003(a)(1)(b)
2. Notice has not been effectuated on all heirs of the estate. Prob Code §8100, §8110
3. Bond has not been waived by all heirs to the estate. Prob Code §8481

TENTATIVE RULING:

Appearance required.

CASE#: 26PR-00307

CASE NAME: Estate of Edith L. Murray

THIS CASE IS SET FOR HEARING ON:

Petition for Probate of Will and Letters of Administration with Full IAEA Authority

THE FOLLOWING ISSUES AND/OR DEFICIENCIES IN THE PAPERS ARE NOTED:

1. Petition is missing Attachment 3f(2) - A typed copy of the will. Prob Code §8002
2. Waivers of Bond have not been filed by all heirs to the estate. Prob Code §8481
3. The record does not currently reflect whether the decedent's predeceased sons Leroy Murray and Kevin Murray died testate or intestate.
4. No Proof of Publication with the corresponding signed affidavit.
Prob Code §8121, §8124
5. Proposed Letters and Order for Probate have not been lodged.
Prob Code §8006, §8400

TENTATIVE RULING:

No appearance is required. Although a Declaration of Due Diligence was filed, the unresolved status of a potential surviving spouse and the request for a bond waiver present nonroutine issues of notice, heirship, and fiduciary security. Petitioners' request for guidance on how to proceed constitutes a request for legal advice, which the Court cannot provide. Petitioners are advised to consult competent probate counsel regarding further diligence and compliance with applicable notice and bond requirements. The matter is continued to October 22, 2026, at 8:15 a.m. in Courtroom 10, with any corrective pleadings to be filed and served by the close of business on October 12, 2026.

(End of Tentative Rulings)