



For CSM Use Only	
Filing Date:	<div>Commission on State Mandates Filed Date June 10, 2025</div>
TC #:	24-TC-07

TEST CLAIM FORM AND TEST CLAIM AMENDMENT FORM (Pursuant to Government Code section 17500 et seq. and Title 2, California Code of Regulations, section 1181.1 et seq.)

Section 1

Proposed Test Claim Title:

Race-Blind Charging

Section 2

Local Government (Local Agency/School District) Name:

City of Sacramento

Name and Title of Claimant's Authorized Official pursuant to [CCR, tit.2, § 1183.1\(a\)\(1-5\)](#):

Leyne Milstein, Interim City Manager

Street Address, City, State, and Zip:

915 L Street, 5th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

Telephone Number

(916)808-8491

Email Address

lmilstein@cityofsacramento.org

Section 3 – Claimant designates the following person to act as its sole representative in this test claim. All correspondence and communications regarding this claim shall be sent to this representative. Any change in representation must be authorized by the claimant in writing, and e-filed with the Commission on State Mandates. ([CCR, tit.2, § 1183.1\(b\)\(1-5\)](#).)

Name and Title of Claimant Representative:

Arthur M. Palkowitz, Esq. Attorney for Claimants

Organization: Law Offices of Arthur M. Palkowitz

Street Address, City, State, Zip:

12807 Calle de la Siena, San Diego, CA 92130

Telephone Number

(858)259-1055

Email Address

law@artpalk.onmicrosoft.com

Section 4 – Identify all code sections (include statutes, chapters, and bill numbers; e.g., Penal Code section 2045, Statutes 2004, Chapter 54 [AB 290]), regulatory sections (include register number and effective date; e.g., California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 60100 (Register 1998, No. 44, effective 10/29/98), and other executive orders (include effective date) that impose the alleged mandate pursuant to [Government Code section 17553](#) and check for amendments to the section or regulations adopted to implement it:

Penal Code Section 741(b)

Statutes 2022, Chapter 806

Assembly Bill No. 2778, Section 2

Effective Date: January 1, 2023

Page 93 (1-4)

☒ Test Claim is Timely Filed on [Insert Filing Date] [select either A or B]: 06 / 10 / 2025

☐ A: Which is not later than 12 months (365 days) following [insert effective date] / / , the effective date of the statute(s) or executive order(s) pled; or

☒ B: Which is within 12 months (365 days) of [insert the date costs were *first* incurred to implement the alleged mandate] 09 / 01 / 2024, which is the date of first incurring costs as a result of the statute(s) or executive order(s) pled. *This filing includes evidence which would be admissible over an objection in a civil proceeding to support the assertion of fact regarding the date that costs were first incurred.*

([Gov. Code § 17551\(c\)](#); [Cal. Code Regs., tit. 2, §§ 1183.1\(c\)](#) and [1187.5](#).)

Section 5 – Written Narrative:

☒ Includes a statement that actual or estimated costs exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000). ([Gov. Code § 17564](#).)

☒ Includes all of the following elements for each statute or executive order alleged **pursuant to [Government Code section 17553\(b\)\(1\)](#)**:

☒ Identifies all sections of statutes or executive orders and the effective date and register number of regulations alleged to contain a mandate, including a detailed description of the *new* activities and costs that arise from the alleged mandate and the existing activities and costs that are *modified* by the alleged mandate;

☒ Identifies *actual* increased costs incurred by the claimant during the fiscal year for which the claim was filed to implement the alleged mandate;

☒ Identifies *actual or estimated* annual costs that will be incurred by the claimant to implement the alleged mandate during the fiscal year immediately following the fiscal year for which the claim was filed;

☒ Contains a statewide cost estimate of increased costs that all local agencies or school districts will incur to implement the alleged mandate during the fiscal year immediately following the fiscal year for which the claim was filed;

Following FY: 2025 - 2026 Total Costs: \$50,000,000.00

☒ Identifies all dedicated funding sources for this program;

State: CA-None

Federal: None

Local agency's general purpose funds: Yes. General Funds

Other nonlocal agency funds: None

Fee authority to offset costs: None

☒ Identifies prior mandate determinations made by the Board of Control or the Commission on State Mandates that may be related to the alleged mandate: _____

Crime Statistics Report for the Department of Justice (Case No. 12-PGA-01, 02-TC-04 and 02-TC-11);

Crime Statistics Report for the Department of Justice Amended (07-TC-10.)

☒ Identifies any legislatively determined mandates that are on, or that may be related to, the same statute or executive order: None

Section 6 – The Written Narrative Shall be Supported with Declarations Under Penalty of Perjury Pursuant to [Government Code Section 17553\(b\)\(2\)](#) and [California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 1187.5](#), as follows:

- ☒ Declarations of actual or estimated increased costs that will be incurred by the claimant to implement the alleged mandate.
- ☒ Declarations identifying all local, state, or federal funds, and fee authority that may be used to offset the increased costs that will be incurred by the claimant to implement the alleged mandate, including direct and indirect costs.
- ☒ Declarations describing new activities performed to implement specified provisions of the new statute or executive order alleged to impose a reimbursable state-mandated program (specific references shall be made to chapters, articles, sections, or page numbers alleged to impose a reimbursable state-mandated program).
- ☐ If applicable, declarations describing the period of reimbursement and payments received for full reimbursement of costs for a legislatively determined mandate pursuant to [Government Code section 17573](#), and the authority to file a test claim pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (c) of [Government Code section 17574](#).
- ☒ The declarations are signed under penalty of perjury, based on the declarant's personal knowledge, information, or belief, by persons who are authorized and competent to do so.

Section 7 – The Written Narrative Shall be Supported with Copies of the Following Documentation Pursuant to [Government Code section 17553\(b\)\(3\)](#) and [California Code of Regulations, title 2, § 1187.5](#):

- ☒ The test claim statute that includes the bill number, and/or executive order identified by its effective date and register number (if a regulation), alleged to impose or impact a mandate. Pages 41 to 44.
- ☒ Relevant portions of state constitutional provisions, federal statutes, and executive orders that may impact the alleged mandate. Pages None to None.

- ☒ Administrative decisions and court decisions cited in the narrative. (Published court decisions arising from a state mandate determination by the Board of Control or the Commission are exempt from this requirement.) Pages None to None.
- ☒ Evidence to support any written representation of fact. *Hearsay evidence may be used for the purpose of supplementing or explaining other evidence but shall not be sufficient in itself to support a finding unless it would be admissible over objection in civil actions.* ([Cal. Code Regs., tit. 2, § 1187.5](#).) Pages 36 to 39.

Section 8 – TEST CLAIM CERTIFICATION Pursuant to [Government Code section 17553](#)

- ☒ The test claim form is signed and dated at the end of the document, under penalty of perjury by the eligible claimant, with the declaration that the test claim is true and complete to the best of the declarant's personal knowledge, information, or belief.

Read, sign, and date this section. Test claims that are not signed by authorized claimant officials pursuant to [California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 1183.1\(a\)\(1-5\)](#) will be returned as incomplete. In addition, please note that this form also serves to designate a claimant representative for the matter (if desired) and for that reason may only be signed by an authorized local government official as defined in [section 1183.1\(a\)\(1-5\)](#) of the Commission's regulations, and not by the representative.

This test claim alleges the existence of a reimbursable state-mandated program within the meaning of [article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution](#) and [Government Code section 17514](#). I hereby declare, under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California, that the information in this test claim is true and complete to the best of my own personal knowledge, information, or belief. All representations of fact are supported by documentary or testimonial evidence and are submitted in accordance with the Commission's regulations. ([Cal. Code Regs., tit.2, §§ 1183.1](#) and [1187.5](#).)

Leyne Milstein

Name of Authorized Local Government Official
pursuant to [Cal. Code Regs., tit.2, § 1183.1\(a\)\(1-5\)](#)

Interim City Manager

Print or Type Title


Leyne Milstein (Jul 17, 2025 14:48 PDT)

Signature of Authorized Local Government Official
pursuant to [Cal. Code Regs., tit.2, § 1183.1\(a\)\(1-5\)](#)









Test Claim Form

Final Audit Report

2025-07-17

Created:	2025-07-16
By:	CSM Sign (csmsign@csm.ca.gov)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAABbyXIg0MCWq0iMqTbPG8z1amU53x6bMu

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Section 1

Proposed Test Claim Title:

Race-Blind Charging

Section 2

Local Government (Local Agency/School District) Name:

County of Santa Clara

Name and Title of Claimant's Authorized Official pursuant to [CCR, tit.2, § 1183.1\(a\)\(1-5\)](#):

Margaret Olaiya. Director of Finance

Street Address, City, State, and Zip:

70 West Hedding Street, East Wing, San Jose, CA 95110

Telephone Number

(408)299-5201

Email Address

margaret.olaiya@fin.sccgov.org

Section 3 – Claimant designates the following person to act as its sole representative in this test claim. All correspondence and communications regarding this claim shall be sent to this representative. Any change in representation must be authorized by the claimant in writing, and e-filed with the Commission on State Mandates. ([CCR, tit.2, § 1183.1\(b\)\(1-5\)](#).)

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Arthur M. Palkowitz, Esq. Attorney for Claimants

Organization: Law Offices of Arthur M. Palkowitz

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Statutes 2022, Chapter 806

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Page 93 (1-4)

Effective date; January 1, 2023

☒ Test Claim is Timely Filed on [Insert Filing Date] [select either A or B]: 06 / 10 / 2025

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☒ Identifies all dedicated funding sources for this program;

State: None

Federal: None

Local agency's general purpose funds: Yes. General Funds

Other nonlocal agency funds: None

Fee authority to offset costs: None

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Margaret Olaiya

Name of Authorized Local Government Official
pursuant to [Cal. Code Regs., tit.2, § 1183.1\(a\)\(1-5\)](#)

Director of Finance

Print or Type Title

Margaret Olaiya
Margaret Olaiya (Jul 17, 2025 21:19 PDT)

Signature of Authorized Local Government Official
pursuant to [Cal. Code Regs., tit.2, § 1183.1\(a\)\(1-5\)](#)









Test Claim Form

Final Audit Report

2025-07-18

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TEST CLAIM FORM AND TEST CLAIM AMENDMENT FORM (Pursuant to Government Code section 17500 et seq. and Title 2, California Code of Regulations, section 1181.1 et seq.)

Section 1

Proposed Test Claim Title:

Race -Blind Charging

Section 2

Local Government (Local Agency/School District) Name:

County of Sutter

Name and Title of Claimant's Authorized Official pursuant to [CCR, tit.2, § 1183.1\(a\)\(1-5\)](#):

Nathan Black, Auditor/Controller

Street Address, City, State, and Zip:

1160 Civic Center Blvd. Suite D, Yuba City, CA 95993

Telephone Number

(530)822-7127

Email Address

NBlack@co.sutter.ca.us

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Nathan Black

Auditor/Controller

Name of Authorized Local Government Official
pursuant to [Cal. Code Regs., tit.2, § 1183.1\(a\)\(1-5\)](#)

Print or Type Title

Nathan Black
Nathan Black (Jul 18, 2025 16:44 PDT)
Signature of Authorized Local Government Official
pursuant to [Cal. Code Regs., tit.2, § 1183.1\(a\)\(1-5\)](#)










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2025-07-18

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-  Email viewed by Arthur Palkowitz (law@artpalk.onmicrosoft.com)
2025-07-15 - 10:47:02 PM GMT
-  Form filled by Arthur Palkowitz (law@artpalk.onmicrosoft.com)
Form filling Date: 2025-07-17 - 3:02:44 PM GMT - Time Source: server
-  Document emailed to nblack@co.sutter.ca.us for signature
2025-07-17 - 3:02:46 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by nblack@co.sutter.ca.us
2025-07-18 - 2:18:49 PM GMT
-  Signer nblack@co.sutter.ca.us entered name at signing as Nathan Black
2025-07-18 - 11:44:43 PM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Nathan Black (nblack@co.sutter.ca.us)
Signature Date: 2025-07-18 - 11:44:45 PM GMT - Time Source: server
-  Agreement completed.
2025-07-18 - 11:44:45 PM GMT

Test Claim: Race-Blind Charging

Assembly Bill No. 2778, Statutes 2022, Chapter 806, Section 2
Adding Penal Code § 741(b); Effective Date: January 1, 2023

Claimants: County of Santa Clara, County of Sutter, City of Sacramento

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5. Written Narrative

Test Claim of:	No. CSM _____
	Race-Blind Charging
	Assembly Bill No. 2778
County of Santa Clara, County of Sutter,	Statutes 2022, Chapter 806, Section 2
City of Sacramento	Penal Code § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6)
	(Page 93 (1-4).)
Claimants	Effective Date: January 1, 2023

Claimants agree to file this test claim as a joint effort and claimants attest to all of the following in the test claim filing:

(1) The claimants allege state-mandated costs result from the same statutes or executive order;

(2) The claimants agree on all issues of the test claim; and

(3) The claimants have designated one person to act as the sole representative for all claimants. (Cal. Code Regs, tit. 2, § 1183.1, subd. (b).)

Beginning on January 1, 2025, the test claim statute requires local prosecution agencies to develop and execute a new race-blind initial charging evaluation process in which local prosecutors make an initial charging determination based on case documentation that has been redacted to remove any direct means of identifying the race of suspects, victims, and witnesses. Specifically, the test claim statute requires that case documentation be redacted, that the initial charging evaluation determine whether the case should be charged or not charged, and that a prosecutor without knowledge of specified facts perform the initial charging evaluation based on the redacted case documentation. (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 2, Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6), eff. Jan. 1, 2023.)

II. In enacting A.B. 2778, the Legislature intended to reduce racial bias.

“In recent years, the increasing availability of data regarding criminal justice has raised legitimate questions regarding racial disparities in how cases are investigated, charged, and prosecuted. In particular, studies suggest that unknowing or ‘unconscious’ bias may infect many decisions within the criminal justice system, despite what may be the best intentions of the actors involved.” (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 1, subd. (a) [citing Baughman et al., *Blinding Prosecutors to Defendants’ Race: A Policy Proposal to Reduce Unconscious Bias in the Criminal Justice System* (Dec. 2015) *Behavioral Science & Policy*, p. 70].)

“One method to address bias is to ‘acknowledge its existence and create institutional procedures to prevent bias from influencing important decisions.’” (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 1, subd. (b) [quoting Baughman, *supra*, at p. 71].)

"We've seen it time and time again where a person of color is given a harsher punishment for the same crime a non-person of color commits. Creating a system where a person's race is unknown during the time of initial charging is imperative. It is long past time we start addressing the issue of punishing a person based on the crime and not the color of their skin." (AB 2778 Assembly Floor Analysis, p. 3.)

"In an effort to increase community confidence in the charging process, and to reduce the potential for unconscious bias, some district attorney offices employ a method whereby reports received from the police are stripped of all data from which the race of the suspect may be determined so that at least the initial charging assessment of the case is done 'race blind.' The Yolo County District Attorney in partnership with the Stanford Computational Policy Lab in 2021 created and implemented a race-blind charging system built into its case management system for most cases."¹ (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 1, subd. (c).) "[T]he spirit, goal, and legislative intent behind Penal Code section 741" is "to reduce the potential for unconscious bias to influence the initial charging decision in a case." (Cal. Dept. of Justice, Race-Blind Charging Guidelines (Jan. 1, 2024) p. 1.)

III. The California Constitution requires the State to reimburse all local agencies.

Article XIII B, section 6 of the California Constitution states:

Whenever the Legislature or any state agency mandates a new program or higher level of service on any local government, the state shall provide a subvention of funds to reimburse such local government for the costs of such programs or increased level of service.

The intent of Article XIII B, section 6 is "to [p]reclude the state from shifting financial responsibility for carrying out governmental functions to local agencies, which are 'ill equipped' to assume increased financial responsibilities because of the taxing and spending limitations that articles XIII A and XIII B impose." (*County of San Diego v. State of California* (1997) 15 Cal.4th 68, 81.) Thus, the subvention requirement of Section 6 is "directed to state-mandated increases in the services provided by [local

¹ The Stanford Computational Policy Lab has since relocated to Harvard University. The Harvard Computational Policy Lab similarly assisted Santa Clara in implementing the test claim statute. (See Declaration of J. Gibbons-Shapiro, ¶ 13.)

government]” (*County of Los Angeles v. State of California* (1987) 43 Cal.3d 46, 56.)

Reimbursement under Article XIII B, section 6 is required when the following elements are met:

1. A state statute or executive order requires or “mandates” local agencies or school districts to perform an activity. (*San Diego Unified School Dist. v. Commission on State Mandates* (2004) 33 Cal.4th 859, 874.)

2. Under the first alternative test set forth by the California Supreme Court, a “new program or higher level of service” is established by “programs that carry out the governmental function of providing services to the public.” (*County of Los Angeles, supra*, 43 Cal.3d at p. 56.)

3. Under the second alternative test set forth by the California Supreme Court, a “new program or higher level of service” is established by “laws which, to implement a state policy, impose unique requirements on local governments and do not apply generally to all residents and entities in the state.” (*County of Los Angeles, supra*, 43 Cal.3d at p. 56.)

4. The mandated activity is a new law when compared with the legal requirements in effect immediately before the enactment of the test claim statute, and it increases the level of service provided to the public in enforcing a state policy. (*San Diego Unified School Dist., supra*, 33 Cal.4th at pp. 874–875, 878; *Lucia Mar Unified School Dist. v. Honig* (1988) 44 Cal.3d 830, 835.)

IV. The test claim statute mandates new activities on Claimants.

The requirements for prosecution agencies to independently develop and execute a process to review and to redact information based on general criteria are mandated by the State. The California Supreme Court has stated that claimants must be legally or practically compelled to perform an activity, explaining:

Legal compulsion occurs when a statute or executive action uses mandatory language that “‘require[s]’ or ‘command[s]’” a local entity to participate in a program or service. [citations omitted] Stated differently,

legal compulsion is present when the local entity has a mandatory, legally enforceable duty to obey.

(*Coast Community College Dist. v. Commission on State Mandates* (2022) 13 Cal.5th 800, 815; see also *San Diego Unified School Dist.*, *supra*, 33 Cal.4th at p. 874.)

Claimants are legally compelled as they “*shall* independently develop and execute versions of this redaction and review process.” (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b).) The test claim statute consistently uses such “mandatory language”—namely, the word “shall” employed fourteen separate times in the test claim statute—to impose new duties on Claimants, none of which existed prior to the enactment of the test claim statute.

Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b), requires, “[P]rosecution agencies *shall* independently develop and execute versions of this redaction and review process.” (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 2, subd. (b), italics added [adding Section 741, subd. (b) to the Penal Code].)

Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(1), requires, “Beginning January 1, 2025, cases received from law enforcement agencies and suspect criminal history documentation *shall* be redacted, by the receiving prosecution agency, in order to be used for a race-blind initial charging evaluation, which *shall* precede the ordinary charging evaluation. This redaction may occur in a separate version of the documents and may be done mechanically, by hand performed by personnel not associated with the charging of the case, or by automation with the use of computer programming, so long as the method used reasonably ensures correct redaction. The redaction may be applied to the entire report or to only the ‘narrative’ portion of the report so long as the portion submitted for initial review is sufficient to perform that review and the unredacted portions are not part of the initial charging evaluation.” (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 2, italics added; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1).)

Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(2), requires, “The initial charging evaluation based on redacted information, including redacted reports, criminal histories, and narratives, *shall* determine whether the case should be charged or not be charged. Individual charges shall not be determined at this initial charging evaluation stage. Other

evidence may be considered as part of this initial charging evaluation so long as the other evidence does not reveal redacted facts. The initial charging evaluation *shall* be performed by a prosecutor who does not have knowledge of the redacted facts for that case.” (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 2, italics added; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(2).)

Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(3), requires, “After completion of a race-blind initial charging evaluation, the case *shall* proceed to a second, complete review of the case using unredacted reports and available evidence to consider the applicable individual charges and enhancements to charge in a criminal complaint or allow the case to be submitted to a grand jury.” (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 2, italics added; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(3).)

Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(4)(A), requires, “Each of the following circumstances *shall* be documented as part of the case record:

(i) The initial charging evaluation determined that the case not be charged and the second review determined that a charge shall be filed.

(ii) The initial charging evaluation determined that the case *shall* be charged and the second review determined that no charge be filed.” (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 2, italics added; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(4)(A).)

Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(4)(B), requires, “The explanation for the charging decision change *shall* be documented as part of the case record.” (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 2, italics added; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(4)(B).)

Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(4)(C), requires, “The documented change between the result of the initial charging evaluation and the second review, as well as the explanation for the change, *shall* be disclosed, upon request, after sentencing in the case or dismissal of all charges comprising the case, subject to Section 1054.6 or any other applicable law.” (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 2, italics added; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(4)(C).)

Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(5), requires, “If a prosecution agency was unable to put a case through a race-blind initial charging evaluation, the reason for

that inability *shall* be documented and retained by the agency. This documentation *shall* be made available by the agency upon request.” (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 2, italics added; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(5).)

Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(6), requires, “The county *shall* collect the data resulting from the race-blind initial charging evaluation process and make the data available for research purposes.

V. The test claim statute imposes a new program or higher level of service on Claimants.

The actions compelled by Penal Code, subdivision (b), impose a new program or higher level of service under either prong of the California Supreme Court’s test.

First, the test claim statute mandates actions that “carry out a governmental function of providing services to the public.” (*San Diego Unified Sch. Dist.*, *supra*, 33 Cal.4th at p. 874 (citation omitted).) Upon declaring that unconscious bias may infect the criminal justice system, the test claim statute identifies a corrective measure, a model of race blind charging that was previously trialed by other district attorney offices. (A.B. No. 2778, Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 1.) The test claim statute mandates this model statewide, thereby expanding an important public service to address racial bias in the criminal justice system.

Courts have repeatedly found that state laws aimed at providing beneficial and protective public services create programs or higher levels of service under this prong, and accordingly involve reimbursable State mandates. For example, permitting conditions establishing heightened stormwater drainage requirements involved a program because they benefitted the public with increased pollution abatement. (*Department of Fin.*, *supra*, 85 Cal.App.5th at pp. 555–556.) Similarly, a law requiring local agencies to contribute costs of educating area pupils with special needs at state schools created a program because “the education of handicapped children is clearly a governmental function providing a service to the public.” (*Lucia Mar Unified Sch. Dist.*, *supra*, 44 Cal.3d at p. 835.) And a law requiring that public school districts afford hearings with specified protections to students facing expulsion created a higher level of service for an existing program because “[p]roviding public schooling clearly constitutes

a governmental function, and enhancing the safety of those who attend such schools constitutes a service to the public.” (*San Diego Unified Sch. Dist.*, *supra*, 33 Cal.4th at p. 879.) Here, likewise, the test claim statute concerns a program because counties provide an important service to the public in carrying out a race blind charging process.

Second, the test claim statute “implement[s] a state policy, impose[s] unique requirements on local governments and do[es] not apply generally to all residents and entities in the state.” (*San Diego Unified Sch. Dist.*, *supra*, 33 Cal.4th at p. 874 [citation omitted].) By its very terms, the test claim statute uniquely applies to prosecution agencies, and not to all residents and entities in the state. (See generally Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6).)

VI. A new program is mandated when local agencies incur increased costs.

Government Code section 17514 provides that “[c]osts mandated by the state’ means any increased costs which a local agency is required to incur after July 1, 1980, as a result of any statute enacted on or after January 1, 1975, or any executive order implementing any statute enacted on or after January 1, 1975, which mandates a new program or higher level of service of an existing program within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.”

Government Code section 17564, subdivision (a), provides that “[n]o claim shall be made pursuant to Sections 17551, 17561, or 17573, nor shall any payment be made on claims submitted pursuant to Sections 17551 or 17561, or pursuant to a legislative determination under Section 17573, unless these claims exceed one thousand dollars.” Each Claimant alleges increased costs exceeding the \$1,000.00 minimum claim amount articulated in Government Code section 17564(a).

Government Code section 17556, subdivision (e), states that there are no costs mandated by the state, if additional revenue specifically intended to fund the costs of the mandated activities, in an amount sufficient to fund the cost of the state-mandated activities, has been appropriated in a Budget Act or other bill. There is no evidence that additional ongoing revenue has been appropriated, specifically to fund the costs of the mandated activities in this test claim. Thus, Government Code section 17556, subdivision (e), does not apply to deny this claim.

Accordingly, the evidence in the record supports the finding that the Claimants have incurred increased costs mandated by the State, pursuant to Government Code section 17514. However, to the extent a local agency receives any funding or grant funding and applies those funds to the mandated activities, those funds are required to be identified as offsetting revenue and deducted from the costs claimed by the local agency.

The author of the bill intended for local governments to be reimbursed for costs incurred to implement the Race-Blind Charging legislation. (Declaration of Kevin McCarty, ¶ 5.)

VII. The Commission on State Mandates has the authority to decide a test claim.

The Commission on State Mandates has the authority, pursuant to Government Code section 17551, subdivision (a), to hear and decide upon a claim by a local agency that the local agency or is entitled to be reimbursed by the State for costs mandated by the State, as required by section 6 of article XIII B of the California Constitution. (*Kinlaw v. State of California* (1991) 54 Cal.3d 326, 331–334; Gov. Code, §§ 17551, 17552.) The determination of whether a statute or executive order imposes a reimbursable state-mandated program is a question of law. (*County of San Diego, supra*, 15 Cal.4th at p. 109.)

VIII. Claimant Santa Clara first incurred increased costs in Fiscal Year 2024–2025 for the activities required by the test claim statute.

This test claim is filed within 365 days of Claimant Santa Clara first incurring increased costs on June 24, 2024, to implement the activities required by the test claim statute. (See Declaration of J. Gibbons-Shapiro (JGS Dec.), ¶ 16.)

The activities performed by Claimant Santa Clara District Attorney's Office (DAO) included conducting the initial charging evaluation and entering documentation in the case record, including changes in the decision and reason for changes. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(2),(4)-(5); JGS Dec. ¶ 7,10, 11–13.) Costs for these activities are \$1,589,814.00. (JGS Dec. Ex. 1, Task 1.)

Other activities performed were uploading electronic cases into CiberLaw, the DAO's case management system (Task 2); conducting background screening for vendor employees (Task 3); deploying redaction software and new Ciberlaw workflows (Task 4); and providing technical support for the redaction software and new CiberLaw workflows and end user support (Task 5). (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6); JGS Dec. ¶¶ 8–10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 19, 22, 25; JGS Dec. Ex. 1, Tasks 2–5.) Costs for Task 2 are \$74,735.84; costs for Task 3 are \$932.68; costs for Task 4 are \$14,683.31; and costs for Task 5 are \$14,111.96.

Additional activities include developing statistical reports and data dashboards (Task 6); programming and deploying a new program in Claimant Santa Clara's Criminal Justice Information Control (CJIC) system to redact local suspect criminal history documentation (Task 7); and providing training (Task 8). (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6); JGS Dec. ¶¶ 8–9, 19, 21; JGS Dec. Ex. 1, Tasks 6–8.) Costs for Task 6 are \$8,094.92; costs for Task 7 are \$9,324.00; and costs for Task 8 are \$46,256.00.

Additional activities include conducting governance meetings (Task 9); and integrating Axon Justice Premier with CiberLaw (Task 10). (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6); JGS Dec. ¶¶ 20, 23–24; JGS Dec. Ex. 1, Tasks 9, 10.) Costs for Task 9 are \$7,112.60; and costs for Task 10 are \$191,241.44.

Vendor Costs include the following:

HTC's costs for implementing new workflows in CiberLaw and the integration between CiberLaw and the redaction software in the amount of \$25,000.00. (JGS Dec. ¶¶ 8–12, 14–15; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(5); JGS Dec. Ex. 2, Task 1.)

Microsoft cloud hosting costs for running Redaction Software in the amount of \$35,415.95. (JGS Dec. ¶¶ 9, 14; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); JGS Dec. Ex. 2, Task 3.)

Based on performing the aforementioned activities required by Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(1)–(6), Santa Clara has incurred increased actual and estimated costs in Fiscal Year 2024–2025 as follows:²

Total Costs of Santa Clara employees/third-party professionals costs	
(JGS Dec. Ex. 1, Tasks 1–10)	\$1,956,306.75

² Santa Clara's costs are greater than the other Claimants in part due to its larger size, greater number of arrests, and higher wages due to significantly higher costs of living.

Total Vendor Costs (JGS Dec. Ex. 2, Tasks 1–4.) \$60,415.95

Total Actual and Estimated Costs 2024–2025 \$2,016,722.70

IX. The actual or estimated annual costs that will be incurred by Claimant Santa Clara to implement the alleged mandate during the fiscal year immediately following the fiscal year for which the claim was filed.

Based on performing the aforementioned activities required by Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(1)–(6), Santa Clara will incur increased actual and estimated costs in **Fiscal Year 2025–2026** as follows:

The activities performed by Claimant Santa Clara District Attorney’s Office (DAO) include conducting the initial charging evaluation and entering documentation in the case record, including changes in the decision and reason for changes (Task 1). (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(2)(4)–(5); JGS Dec. ¶ 7, 10, 11–13; JGS Dec. Ex. 1, Task 1.) Costs for these activities are \$3,179,628.00. (JGS Dec. Ex. 1, Task 1.)

Other activities performed include uploading electronic cases into CiberLaw (Task 2); and providing technical support for the Redaction Software and new CiberLaw workflows and end user support (Task 5). (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6); JGS Dec. ¶ 17, 19, 22, 25; JGS Dec. Ex. 1, Tasks 2–5.) Costs for Task 2 are \$149,471.68; and costs for Task 5 are \$9,689.12.

Additional activities include developing statistical reports and data dashboards (Task 6). (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(6); JGS Dec. ¶ 18; JGS Dec. Ex. 1, Tasks 6–8.) Costs for Task 6 are \$8,094.92.

Additional activities include conducting governance meetings (Task 9); and integrating Axon Justice Premier with CiberLaw (Task 10). (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6); JGS Dec. ¶ 20, 23–24; JGS Dec. Ex. 1, Tasks 9, 10.) Costs for Task 9 are \$15,257.36; and costs for Task 10 are \$285,777.44.

Vendor Costs include the following:

HTC’s costs for implementing integration between CiberLaw and Axon Justice Premier in the amount of \$40,000. (JGS Dec. ¶ 15, 23; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6); JGS Dec. Ex. 2, Task 2.)

Microsoft cloud hosting costs for running Redaction Software in the amount of \$59,110.32. (JGS Dec. ¶ 9, 14; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); JGS Dec. Ex. 2, Task 3.)

Axon Justice Premier software for submitting electronic cases in the amount of \$534,000.00. (JGS Dec. ¶ 23; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6); JGS Dec. Ex. 2, Task 4.)

Costs of Santa Clara Employees/third-party professionals (JGS Dec. Ex. 1, Tasks 1-10)	\$3,647,918.52
Vendor Costs (JGS Dec. Ex. 2, Tasks 1-4)	<u>\$633,110.32</u>
Total Actual and Estimated Costs 2025–2026	\$4,281,028.84

X. Claimant Sutter first incurred increased costs in Fiscal Year 2024–2025 for the activities required by the test claim statute.

This test claim is filed within 365 days of Claimant Sutter first incurring increased costs on June 14, 2024, when the contract with Sicuro Analytics was executed to implement the activities required by the test claim statute.

In preparation for the implementation of this legislation, as each law enforcement agency has different forms, and the fields which could contain race-based information could be located in various fields, it soon became apparent that to do this manually would be extremely time consuming and expensive. As a result, due to salary savings, Sutter hired a consultant, Sicuro Analytics, which has a Race Blind Charging Solution that is programmed to use artificial intelligence (“AI”) to redact all race-based descriptions. This can include, but is not limited to, names, race, complexion, and physical description. (Greeson Dec. ¶ 3, 4.)

Activities performed by Sutter include when law enforcement agencies reports within Sutter County are received, they are scanned in the Race Blind Charging Solution program. This web-based application uses Artificial Intelligence (“AI”) to determine which data fields could lead the assigned prosecutor to determine the race of the alleged offender and redacts the data. The prosecutor then logs into the Sicuro program and receives the redacted version for review and charging. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1) –(2); Greeson Dec. ¶ 4.)

The prosecutor decides the initial charge(s) to file based upon the redacted report and then the prosecutor must decide if the original charges were correct. If the prosecutor determines the original charges were not correct, substantial notes are required to document the reason for the change in charges. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1), (4); Greeson Dec. ¶ 4.)

In Fiscal Year 2024-2025, Sutter incurred actual and estimated costs of implementing the activities mandated by the test claim statute, Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(1)–(6), to be as follows:

Race Blind Charging Services

Sicuro Implementation Costs

Invoice 0624-2	\$2,310	June, 2024 Services
Invoice 0724-2	\$4,950	July, 2024 Services
Invoice 0824-2	\$6,600	August, 2024 Services
Invoice 0924-2	\$4,620	September, 2024 Services
Invoice 1224	\$11,880	December, 2024 Services

Sicuro Subscription, User Portal, and Overhead

Invoice 0225	\$1,760	February, 2025 Services
Invoice 0325	\$1,760	March, 2025 Services
Invoice 0425	\$1,760	April, 2025 Services
Invoice 0525	\$1,760	May, 2025 Services
Invoice 0625	\$1,760	June, 2025 Services

Total Actual and Estimated Costs 2024-2025: \$39,160.00

XI. The estimated annual costs that will be incurred by Claimant Sutter to implement the alleged mandate during the fiscal year immediately following the fiscal year for which the claim was filed.

In Fiscal Year 2025–2026, Sutter incurred estimated costs of implementing the activities mandated by the test claim statute, Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(1)–(6), to be as follows:

a. Race-Blind Charging Services

Sicuro Subscription, User Portal, and Overhead

Invoice 0725	\$1,760	July, 2025 Services
Invoice 0825	\$1,760	August, 2025 Services
Invoice 0925	\$1,760	September, 2025 Services
Invoice 1025	\$1,760	October 2025 Services
Invoice 1125	\$1,760	November 2025 Services
Invoice 1225	\$1,760	December 2025 Services
Invoice 0126	\$1,760	January 2026 Services
Invoice 0226	\$1,760	February 2026 Services
Invoice 0326	\$1,760	March 2026 Services
Invoice 0426	\$1,760	April 2026 Services
Invoice 0526	\$1,760	May 2026 Services
Invoice 0626	\$1,760	June 2026 Services

Total County of Sutter 2025–2026 increased estimated costs: \$21,120.00

XII. Claimant Sacramento first incurred increased costs in Fiscal year 2024-2025 for the activities required by the test claim statute.

This test claim is filed within 365 days of Claimant Sacramento first incurring costs in September 2024, to implement the activities required by the test claim statute. Benner Dec. ¶ 6 (a).)

The activities performed by Sacramento include implementing a two-step redaction process to identify racial information within the documents provided by arresting agencies, to redact that information, to produce the resulting material for review by the prosecutor performing the initial charging evaluation, and reasonably ensure correct redaction is applied in accordance with the implemented race-blind charging guidelines. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6); Benner Dec. ¶ 3.)

Secretaries drafted a procedures document, showing a step-by-step process of redacting documents, tracking filing decisions, and recording each case for future reference if/when needed. Secretaries and DCAs were trained on the new procedures. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(5); Benner Dec. ¶¶ 6 (a)–(c).)

Secretaries activities include electronically uploading police reports, manually redacting them, sending them to a filing attorney, recording the initial decision, and documenting the decision from the second review. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(3); Benner Dec. ¶ 8.)

Implementation of Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(6), requires regular updates in the form of meetings and emails to gauge the success of the implemented procedures. Continued review of the process ensures the filing DCAs are adequately staffed to keep up with the increased workload. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(6); Benner Dec. ¶ 7.)

In performing the aforementioned activities required by Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(1)–(6), Sacramento incurred increased actual and estimated costs in Fiscal Year 2024–2025 as follows:

Time spent by Secretarial Staff	\$30,597.60.
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Time spent by Attorneys Staff	\$91,680.00
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Total Sacramento actual and estimated increased costs 2024–2025:	\$122,277.60
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(Benner Dec. ¶¶ 9,11.)

XIII. The actual or estimated annual costs that will be incurred by Claimant Sacramento to implement the alleged mandate during the fiscal year immediately following the fiscal year for which the claim was filed.

Based on performing the aforementioned activities required by Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b)(1)–(6), Sacramento incurred increased actual and estimated costs in Fiscal Year 2025–2026 as follows:

Time spent by Secretarial Staff	\$61,195.20
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Time spent by Attorney Staff	\$183,360.00
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Total Sacramento actual and estimate of increased costs 2025–2026:
\$244,555.20.

(Benner Dec. ¶ 12.)

XIV. A statewide cost estimate of increased costs that all local agencies will incur to implement the alleged mandate during the fiscal year immediately following the fiscal year for which the claim was filed.

Claimants estimate the statewide cost estimate of increased costs that all local agencies will incur to implement the alleged mandate during the fiscal year immediately following the fiscal year for which the claim was filed is \$50,000,000.00.

XV. Identification of all of the funding sources available for this program.

Claimants are unaware of any funding resources available for this program.

(a.) Dedicated state funds.

Claimants are unaware at this time of any dedicated state funds available for the Race Blind Charging program.

(b.) Dedicated federal funds.

Claimants are unaware at this time of any dedicated federal funds available for the Race Blind Charging program.

(c.) Other nonlocal agency funds.

Claimants are unaware at this time of any other dedicated nonlocal agency funds available for the Race Blind Charging program.

(d.) The local agency's general purpose funds.

Claimants anticipate using their general-purpose funds for the Race Blind Charging program.

(e.) Fee authority to offset costs.

Claimants are unaware at this time of any fee authority available for the Race Blind Charging program.

XVI. Identification of prior mandate determinations made by the Board of Control or the Commission on State Mandates that may be related to the alleged mandate.

Claimants are aware at this time of a prior approved mandate related to the Race Blind Charging program: "Crime Statistics Reports for the Department of Justice; Crime Statistics Reports for the Department of Justice Amended." (Case No. 12-PGA-01, 02-TC-04 and 02-TC-11 and 07-TC-10.)

XVII. Identification of a legislatively determined mandate pursuant to Government Code section 17573 that is on the same statute or executive order.

Claimants are unaware at this time of any legislatively determined mandate related to the Race Blind Charging program.

DECLARATION OF JAMES GIBBONS-SHAPIO

1. I, James Gibbons-Shapiro, declare:
2. I have been employed by the County of Santa Clara (the "County") in its District Attorney's Office (DAO) since 1997 and currently hold the title of Assistant District Attorney. I have occupied this position since 2014.
3. As an Assistant District Attorney, I am responsible, *inter alia*, for overseeing the DAO's internal IT team and approving all changes made to the County's Criminal Justice Information Control (CJIC) system and to the portion of County's Microsoft Government Cloud managed by the DAO IT Team ("the Cloud"). In this position, I also help oversee the County's actions in carrying out the new programs mandated by Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b) ("Section 741(b)"), described in detail below. I have personal knowledge of the facts set forth in this Declaration and the attached exhibits, and if called to testify to the statements made herein, I could and would do so competently.
4. Section 741(b) was added by Assembly Bill No. 2778 (Stats. 2022, ch. 806) and became effective on January 1, 2023. Assembly Bill No. 2778 requires all offices of the district attorneys to implement Section 741(b) by January 1, 2025.
5. Section 741(b) mandates that all prosecution agencies in California provide new programs beginning on January 1, 2025. The DAO is a prosecution agency in California.
6. As an Assistant District Attorney, I am familiar with the DAO's new activities arising from Section 741(b) and the estimated, actual and anticipated costs incurred in carrying out these activities.
7. Under Section 741(b), the DAO must conduct an initial race-blind charging evaluation, an entirely new requirement in determining whether to charge an individual with a crime. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b); see Ex. 1, Task 1.) To conduct this initial race-blind charging evaluation, the DAO must redact case information received from law enforcement agencies and suspect criminal history documentation. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(2).)
8. To comply with Section 741(b), the DAO must redact all indicia of race from cases received from law enforcement agencies, such as police reports, and from suspect criminal history documentation. Pursuant to Penal Code Section 741, subdivision (b)(1), the DAO may apply the redactions "mechanically, by hand performed by personnel not associated with the charging of the case, or by automation with the use of computer programming, so long as the method used reasonably ensures correct redaction." (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Tasks 4, 7; Ex. 2, Tasks 1, 3.)

9. To the extent possible, the DAO has used software to apply redactions as it has a greater rate of accuracy and is more cost effective in light of the high volume of cases processed in Santa Clara County. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Tasks 4, 7; Ex. 2, Tasks 1, 3.) Because the DAO decided to perform redactions using software (as discussed further in paragraphs 14, 16, and 17), the DAO is not incurring ongoing personnel costs (beyond the software implementation and maintenance tasks discussed in further detail below) specifically related to this activity.
10. The DAO must also implement a new initial charging evaluation process where a prosecutor with no knowledge of the redacted facts must decide whether to charge the suspect based on the redacted documents. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(2); see Ex. 1, Tasks 1, 4; Ex. 2, Task 1.) All cases must be put through this initial charging evaluation except for those classes of crimes or factual circumstances that the prosecution agency removes or excludes, for example, due to the increased reliance on victim or witness credibility, the availability of additional defenses, the increased reliance on forensics, or the relevance of racial animus to the charging decision. (Pen. Code, § 741, subds. (b)(2), (c); see Ex. 1, Task 1, 4; Ex. 2, Task 1.)
11. After the initial charging evaluation, the DAO proceeds to a second, complete review using the unredacted reports and all available documents where a prosecutor will decide whether to submit the case to the grand jury or charge the suspect in a criminal complaint, including the applicable charges and enhancements. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(3); see Ex. 2, Task 1.)
12. Pursuant to Section 741, subdivision (b)(4)(A), the DAO documents as part of the case record whether the prosecutor's charging decision changed between the initial evaluation and the second review, as well as the reason for the change in the charging decision. (See Ex. 1, Tasks 1, 4; Ex. 2, Task 1.) The DAO is also required to document the reason if they are unable to put a case through a race-blind initial charging evaluation. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(4)(B); see Ex. 1, Tasks 1, 4; Ex. 2, Task 1.) This documentation must be made available upon request. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(4)(C).)
13. Complying with Section 741(b)'s new mandates, including conducting the initial charging evaluation and entering documentation in the case record, adds to the time that the DAO's attorneys spend reviewing cases and making charging decisions. (See Ex. 1, Task 1.) Between January 1 and June 30, 2025, DAO attorneys will have spent an estimated 30 additional minutes per case and will have reviewed an estimated 13,473 cases. Between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026, DAO attorneys are expected to have spent an estimated 30 additional minutes per case and to have reviewed an estimated 26,946 cases.
14. In Santa Clara County, redactions are automatically applied to police reports using software provided by Harvard University's Computational Policy Lab (CPL)

(“the Redaction Software”). (See Ex. 1, Tasks 4–5; Ex. 2, Tasks 1, 3.) Although CPL provides the Redaction Software at no cost to the County, the County incurs usage costs for hosting the Redaction Software in the Cloud, where it leverages technologies such as advanced optical character recognition and generative artificial intelligence. (See Ex. 2, Task 3.)

15. In addition, the County contracted with HTC Global Services, Inc. (HTC) to integrate the DAO’s case management system, CiberLaw, with the Redaction Software and develop and implement new workflows in its case management system, CiberLaw. (See Ex. 2, Task 1.) These workflows enable DAO attorneys to (1) conduct the initial charging evaluations, including reviewing the redacted cases (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(2)); (2) document any change in the charging decision between the initial charging evaluation and the second review and the reason for the change (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(4)(A)–(B)); and (3) document the reason if they are unable to put a case through a race-blind initial charging evaluation (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(5)).
16. The County first incurred costs relating to Section 741(b) on June 24, 2024, when it started conducting project planning meetings with CPL, as described in Paragraph 17. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 4.)
17. The process of implementing the new Redaction Software and CiberLaw workflows involved the following actions, among others, taken by County employees and third-party professionals:
 - a. Conducting regular project planning meetings with CPL beginning on June 24, 2024 to ensure the Redaction Software was installed and tested at least four weeks prior to the January 1, 2025 implementation deadline. (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4.)
 - b. Configuring remote access for CPL to the Cloud and to County networks, which enabled CPL to support the Redaction Software and retrieve data (which is used by CPL to increase the accuracy of redactions and reduce errors). (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4.)
 - c. Conducting the federal and state criminal background checks of CPL employees, as required by the FBI Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Security Policy and California Department of Justice (DOJ) CLETS Policies, Practices, and Procedures, who needed access to DAO systems containing federal Criminal Justice Information (CJI) and other information derived from the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) in order to deploy the Redaction Software. (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 3.)
 - d. Providing CPL with a historical sample of several hundred police reports for purposes of configuring and improving the accuracy of the Redaction Software. (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4.)
 - e. Deploying the Redaction Software in the Cloud, which involved the following activities:

- i. Provisioning the Cloud resources and creating production and non-production networks to ensure communication among the Cloud resources (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4);
 - ii. Configuring the Cloud networks to communicate with the DAO's on-premises network, which hosts CiberLaw (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4);
 - iii. Conducting security review of the system architecture (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4);
 - iv. Collaborating with Microsoft to obtain their recommendations on implementing the Redaction Software in the Cloud and troubleshooting issues (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4);
 - v. Configuring the Cloud to set the appropriate access levels;
 - vi. Installing the Redaction Software in the Cloud (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4);
 - vii. Validating the Cloud components were functioning as expected after deployment (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4);
 - viii. Providing system logs to CPL to troubleshoot issues (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4); and
 - ix. Performing user acceptance testing (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4).
- f. Conducting meetings with HTC to discuss project scope and workflow design. (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4.)
- g. Conducting meetings with HTC and CPL to design the integration between the Redaction Software and CiberLaw. Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4.)
- h. Assisting HTC with developing new user interfaces and integrations with the Redaction Software, including the following activities:
 - i. Defining functional and technical requirements as well as changes to functionality and the frontend user experience (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4);
 - ii. Deploying the software updates into testing and production environments (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4); and
 - iii. Conducting user acceptance testing (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4).
- i. Conducting meetings with CPL to review how the Redaction Software is performing and address issues that arise. (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 4.)
- j. Providing ongoing technical support for the Redaction Software, including working with CPL to troubleshoot redaction errors that arise during production and providing CPL with error details for use in improving the Redaction Software. (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 5.)
- k. Collaborating with CPL and HTC to deploy and validate software updates that address bugs or improve user experience for the Redaction Software

and CiberLaw workflows. (Pen. Code § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 5.)

18. Section 741, subdivision (b)(6), requires counties to collect data from the race-blind initial charging evaluation process and make the data available for research purposes. The process for implementing this requirement included the following actions taken by County employees:

- a. Developing reports and data dashboards to provide statistics to gauge how the Redaction Software is running and at what rate attorneys are changing their charging decisions between the initial charging evaluation and the second review (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(6); see Ex. 1, Task 6); and
- b. Pulling, cleaning, and providing data from CiberLaw to CPL for purposes of conducting research on the effectiveness of race-blind charging (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(6); see Ex. 1, Task 6).

19. To implement Section 741(b), it was reasonably necessary for the DAO to educate staff on Section 741(b)'s requirements and how to implement it, including how to use the new tools conduct an initial charging evaluation. The training included all DAO attorneys because attorneys regularly rotate onto assignments where they are responsible for conducting charging evaluations. These activities included the following:

- a. Conducting a two-hour user training session for 98 attorneys, including background on the law and instructions on navigating the new user interface. (See Ex. 1, Task 8.)
- b. Instructing support staff on how to identify which documents require redaction and how to flag them for redaction in CiberLaw. (See Ex. 1, Task 5.)
- c. Assisting end users in response to service requests, for example, by explaining how to navigate the new workflows and the steps for conducting the initial charging evaluation and the second review. (See Ex. 1, Task 5.)

20. To implement Section 741(b), it was also reasonably necessary to conduct regular governance meetings within the DAO to monitor the project status, review the statistical reports, and assess the impact on attorneys' workload. During these governance meetings, two Assistant District Attorneys, one Supervising District Attorney, and the DAO's IT Manager have met to decide how to implement Section 741(b), how to allocate resources to cover the additional work required to implement the Redaction Software and new CiberLaw work flows, and how to ensure the charging units are adequately staffed to cover the additional work required to conduct initial charging evaluations. During these meetings, they also review (1) the statistical reports to assess at what rate attorneys are changing their charging determinations between the initial charging

evaluation and the second review; and (2) individual cases where there has been a change to determine if there is a legitimate rationale for the change. By conducting these reviews, the DAO ensures that it is effectuating the Legislature's intent in enacting Section 741(b); namely, to eliminate racial bias from charging decisions. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 9.)

21. To date, the Redaction Software provided by CPL is able to redact only police reports. To comply with the January 1, 2025 deadline, the DAO relied on local law enforcement agencies to manually redact state and local suspect criminal history documentation. Beginning in February 2025, the DAO worked with the County's Technology Services and Solutions (TSS) department to modify the County's CJIC system, which maintains local suspect criminal history documentation, to apply those redactions automatically by creating a new program in CJIC. The new program went live in March 2025. The process of implementing the new program in CJIC involved the following actions, among others, taken by County employees:
- a. Assigning resources to develop and implement the new program. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 7.)
 - b. Cloning the existing program and modifying it to replace database values indicating race in the program's screen, PDF and printed versions. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 7.)
 - c. Creating a new transaction in CJIC for end users to use to access the program. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 7.)
 - d. Conducting unit testing and quality assurance testing of the new program.
 - e. Deploying the new program to the test environment and remediating issues that arose during the deployment. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 7.)
 - f. Launching the new program into the production environment. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 7.)
 - g. Modifying CJIC to permit individual end users to be assigned access to the new transaction. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 7.)
 - h. Notifying stakeholders regarding the availability of the new program. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 7.)
 - i. Resolving service requests and issues that arose after deployment. (Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1); see Ex. 1, Task 7.)
22. To implement Section 741(b), it was reasonably necessary for the DAO to fully convert to the electronic submission of cases by local police departments. Prior to the effective date of AB 2778, some units in local police departments still submitted their cases to the DAO in paper. In order to apply the Redaction Software, the DAO required these units to submit their cases electronically using a temporary custom solution built by the DAO. The process of transitioning these units to submitting their cases electronically required a County employee to establish user accounts in the DAO's custom solution for the end users in local police departments. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 5.)

23. Beginning in February 2025, the DAO started the process of transitioning from this custom solution to Axon Justice Premier for the electronic submission of cases from local police departments, including integrating Axon Justice Premier with CiberLaw. Axon Justice Premier is reasonably necessary to implement Section 741(b) because it ensures that local police departments can submit their cases electronically, thereby enabling those cases to be redacted and presented to DAO attorneys for review during the initial charging evaluation without having to manually scan the documents. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10; Ex. 2, Tasks 2, 4.)
24. The process of implementing the electronic submission of cases in Axon Justice Premier has involved the following actions, among others, taken by County employees and third-party professionals:
- a. Gathering business requirements for integrations related to CiberLaw and Axon. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
 - b. Attending regular project planning and design meetings.
 - c. Coordinating with Axon and HTC to define the scope of the project and the technical and business requirements. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
 - d. Conducting meetings with Axon to design the integration between Axon and CiberLaw. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
 - e. Conducting meetings with HTC to discuss project scope and workflow design. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
 - f. Developing design documentation and diagrams for integrations. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
 - g. Conducting security and IT architecture review of the design documentation and diagrams. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
 - h. Assisting HTC with developing new user interfaces and integrations with Axon, including the following activities:
 - i. Defining functional and technical requirements as well as changes to functionality and the frontend user experience (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10).
 - ii. Deploying the software updates into testing and production environments (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10); and
 - iii. Conducting user acceptance testing (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10).
 - i. Deploying the integrations in the County's Information Sharing Environment, including the following activities:
 - i. Setting up and deploying development, test, and production environments (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10);
 - ii. Creating and developing system requirements based on business requirements (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10);

- iii. Developing and deploying source codes and test scripts for integration (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10);
 - iv. Defining and developing quality assurance test plans for functional and load testing (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10);
 - v. Defining and developing quality assurance test cases (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10);
 - vi. Coordinating release planning (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10);
 - vii. Configuring pre-production settings (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10);
 - viii. Deploying integrations in the production environment (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10);
 - ix. Drafting and delivering documentation, including the runbook (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10); and
 - x. Performing knowledge transfer to relative stakeholders (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10).
 - j. Coordinating with Axon and HTC to review development progress and backlog through the scrum process. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
 - k. Notifying local police departments of the new workflow and solution. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
 - l. Conducting user acceptance testing with end users in both DAO and local police departments. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
 - m. Training end users in both the DAO and local police departments. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
 - n. Providing ongoing technical support for Axon, CiberLaw, and the ISE, including working with Axon and HTC to troubleshoot errors that arise during production as related to the integrations. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
 - o. Collaborating with Axon and TSS to deploy and validate software updates that address bugs or improve user experience for Axon and CiberLaw workflows as related to the integrations. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 10.)
25. DAO staff must also manually upload the electronic cases into CiberLaw in order to leverage the integration between CiberLaw and the Redaction Software and the new CiberLaw workflows for conducting an initial charging evaluation. (Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6); see Ex. 1, Task 2.)
26. In 2024-2025 the County estimates the increased costs of implementing the activities mandated by the test claim statute to be as follows:
- a. An estimated \$1,956,306.75 for an estimated 8,714 hours of employee and third-party professional labor. (See Ex. 1, Tasks 1–10.)
 - b. An estimated \$60,415.95 in vendor costs during the 2024-2025 fiscal year. (See Ex. 2, Tasks 1–4.)

Total 2024-2025 estimated increased costs are \$2,016,722.70.

27. In 2025-2026 the County estimates the costs of implementing the activities mandated by the test claim statute to be as follows:

- a. An estimated \$3,647,918.52 beginning in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, accounting for an estimated 16,231 hours of employee and third-party professional labor. (See Ex. 1, Tasks 1–10.)
- b. An estimated \$633,110.32 in vendor costs during the 2025-2026 fiscal year. (See Ex. 2, Tasks 1–4.)

Total 2025-2026 estimated increased costs are \$4,281,028.84.

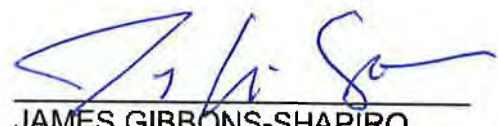
28. If not reimbursed by the State, the County would pay for all the costs discussed above from its General Fund.

29. To the best of my knowledge, the County has not received any local, State, or federal funding and does not have a fee authority to offset the increased direct and indirect costs that the County will incur to implement the programs mandated by Section 741(b).

30. To the best of my knowledge, there are no legislatively determined mandates on Section 741(b).

31. I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my personal knowledge, information, or belief.

32. Executed on July 16, 2025, at San José, California.



JAMES GIBBONS-SHAPIRO
Assistant District Attorney
County of Santa Clara
70 W. Hedding, San José, CA
95134
(408) 792-2985
jgibbonsshapiro@dao.sccgov.org

Test Claim: Race-Blind Charging
 Claimant: County of Santa Clara
 Section: 6 Declaration-James Gibbons-Shapiro

Exhibit 1: Estimated costs of County employees and third-party professionals incurred by implementing Penal Code Section 741(b).

Task	Resource Type	Average Hourly Rate	FY 2024-2025 Hours	FY2024-2025 Cost per Task	FY 2025-2026 Hours	FY 2025-2026 Cost per Task	Total Cost
1. Conducting the initial charging evaluation and entering documentation in the case record; documenting changes in decision and reason for changes. (JGS Decl. ¶ 7, 10, 11–13; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(2), (4)–(5).)	Deputy District Attorney I-IV	\$236.00	6,736.5	\$1,589,814.00	13,473	\$3,179,628.00	\$4,769,442.00
2. Uploading electronic cases (e.g., police reports and suspect criminal history documentation) into CiberLaw. (JGS Decl. ¶ 25; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(4).)	Justice System Clerk; Legal Secretary	\$111.88	668	\$74,735.84	1336	\$149,471.68	\$224,207.52
3. Conducting background screening for CPL employees. (JGS Decl. ¶ 17, subd. (c); Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1).)	Criminal Investigator II	\$266.48	3.5	\$932.68	0	\$0.00	\$932.68

Test Claim: Race-Blind Charging
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Task	Resource Type	Average Hourly Rate	FY 2024-2025 Hours	FY2024-2025 Cost per Task	FY 2025-2026 Hours	FY 2025-2026 Cost per Task	Total Cost
4. Deploying Redaction Software and new Ciberlaw workflows. (JGS Decl. ¶ 8–10, 12, 14, 16, 17; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6).)	IT Manager	\$258.04	34	\$8,773.36	0	\$0.00	\$8,773.36
	Infrastructure Engineer	\$218.51	20	\$4,370.20	0	\$0.00	\$4,370.20
	Network Engineer	\$102.65	15	\$1,539.75	0	\$0.00	\$1,539.75
5. Providing technical support for the Redaction Software and new CiberLaw workflows and end user support. (JGS Decl. ¶ 17, 19, 22; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(5).)	IT Manager	\$258.04	26	\$6,709.04	24	\$6,192.96	\$12,902.00
	Infrastructure Engineer	\$218.51	32	\$6,992.32	16	\$3,496.16	\$10,488.48
	Network Engineer	\$102.65	4	\$410.60	0	\$0.00	\$410.60
6. Developing statistical reports and data dashboards. (JGS Decl. ¶ 18; Pen. Code, § 741(b)(6).)	IT Manager	\$258.04	8	\$2,064.32	8	\$2,064.32	\$4,128.64
	Business Intelligence Analyst	\$201.02	30	\$6,030.60	30	\$6,030.60	\$12,061.20
7. Programming and deploying new CJIC program. (JGS Decl. ¶ 8–9, 21; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1).)	Senior Application Developer	\$252.00	20	\$5,040.00	0	\$0.00	\$5,040.00
	Quality Assurance Engineer	\$252.00	16	\$4,032.00	0	\$0.00	\$4,032.00

Test Claim: Race-Blind Charging
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Task	Resource Type	Average Hourly Rate	FY 2024-2025 Hours	FY2024-2025 Cost per Task	FY 2025-2026 Hours	FY 2025-2026 Cost per Task	Total Cost
	System Engineer	\$252.00	1	\$252.00	0	\$0.00	\$252.00
8. Providing training. (JGS Decl. ¶ 19; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(5).)	Deputy District Attorney I-IV	\$236.00	196	\$46,256.00	0	\$0.00	\$46,256.00
9. Conducting governance meetings. (JGS Decl. ¶ 20; Pen. Code, § 741, subds. (b)(1)–(6), (c).)	Assistant District Attorney	\$380.37	6	\$2,282.22	12	\$4,564.44	\$6,846.66
	Assistant District Attorney	\$381.99	6	\$2,291.94	12	\$4,583.88	\$6,875.82
	Supervising District Attorney	\$337.06	6	\$2,022.36	12	\$4,044.72	\$6,067.08
	IT Manager	\$258.04	2	\$516.08	8	\$2,064.32	\$2,580.40
10. Integrating Axon Justice Premier with CiberLaw. (JGS Decl. ¶ 23–24; Pen. Code, § 741, subd. (b)(1)–(6).)	IT Manager	\$258.04	52	\$13,418.08	52	\$13,418.08	\$26,836.16
	Senior IT Project Manager	\$230.00	208	\$47,840.00	208	\$47,840.00	\$95,680.00

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Exhibit 2: Estimated vendor costs incurred by Penal Code Section 741(b).

Costs	FY 2024-2025	FY 2025-2026	Total Cost
1. HTC's costs for implementing new workflows in CiberLaw and integration between CiberLaw and the Redaction Software. (JGS Decl. ¶¶ 8–12, 14–15; Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(5).)	\$25,000.00	\$0.00	\$25,000.00
2. HTC's costs for implementing integration between CiberLaw and Axon Justice Premier. (JGS Decl. ¶¶ 15, 23; Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6).)	\$0.00	\$40,000	\$40,000
3. Microsoft cloud hosting costs for running Redaction Software. (JGS Decl. ¶¶ 9, 14; Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1).)	\$35,415.95	\$59,110.32	\$94,526.27
4. Axon Justice Premier software for submitting electronic cases. (JGS Decl. ¶¶ 23; Pen. Code, § 741(b)(1)–(6).)	\$0.00	\$534,000.00	\$534,000.00
TOTAL	\$60,415.95	\$633,110.32	\$693,526.27

Test Claim: Race-Blind Charging
Claimant: County of Sutter
Section: 6 Declaration-Jeff C. Greeson

1. I, Jeff C. Greeson, am an attorney at Law, Licensed to practice before the courts of this state, and the Chief Deputy District Attorney for the County of Sutter (“Sutter”). I have been one of the individuals charged with assisting in the implementation of AB 2778, Penal Code 741(b)(1-6), in Sutter County.
2. Prior to the enactment of this test claim legislation, when a report was received from a law enforcement agency, there was no requirement that any of the information in the report was subject to redaction. The prosecutor to whom the case was assigned would review the report and determine the appropriate charges against the alleged offender.
3. In the initial review of this legislation, it was obvious that to do the required redactions manually would be cost prohibitive, we determined there would be cost savings by utilizing a contractor. Our office selected Sicuro Analytics. We are informed and believe that Sicuro has also contracted with other counties to formulate a program to enable compliance with the Race-Blind Charging mandate.
4. Throughout the day, various local law enforcement agencies within Sutter County bring their reports to the District Attorney’s Office. When reports are received, they are scanned into Sicuro’s program commonly referred to as the Race Blind Charging Solution. This web-based application uses Artificial Intelligence (hereinafter referred to as “AI”) to determine which data fields could lead the assigned prosecutor to determine the race of the alleged offender and redacts the data. (Penal Code Section 741(b)(1).The prosecutor then logs into the Sicuro program and receives the redacted version for review and charging. The prosecutor then decides which charge(s) to file based upon the redacted report. Once the initial charges are decided, the prosecutor then must review the original, unredacted report, and the prosecutor must decide if the original charges were correct. (Penal Code Section 741(b)(1). If the prosecutor determines the original charges were not correct, substantial notes are required to document the reason for the change in charges. (Penal Code Section 741(b)(4). The documentation requirements are substantial.
5. There is a 48-hour limit from the time of arrest before a defendant is arraigned. We sometimes receive reports late in the morning and even into the early afternoon, yet have to decide by 1:00 p.m., so that formal charges are at the courthouse by 3:00 p.m. for calendar call.
6. The process requires the prosecutor to review each report twice, and then make required documentation for changes in the charges. (Penal Code Section 741(b)(3). This was never required prior to the enactment of AB 2778. It should also be noted that each of the law enforcement agencies that submit reports to our office have their own report forms, and fields are located in different areas on the forms. Furthermore, law enforcement agencies are continually changing and modifying their forms. This requires continual updates to the AI process within Sicuro's Race Blind Charging Solution so that all of the racial indicia can be redacted. Sicuro is compiling statistics which need to be gathered and maintained. (Penal Code Section 741 (b)(6).

Test Claim: Race-Blind Charging
Claimant: County of Sutter
Section: 6 Declaration-Jeff C. Greeson

7. Our office has not yet had an opportunity to fully track our attorney time and compare the additional staff burden that we will bear when we fully implement case review under Sicuro's Race Blind Charging Solution. We are currently facing a staffing crisis with attorneys, and cannot devote the resources necessary to reliably document how much more time it will add to an average work day.
8. I am informed and believe, and based upon such information, allege that Sicuro is reviewing the Municipal and Superior Court's website to see what charges were historically alleged, in order to determine whether there is a statistical discrepancy compared to charging after implementation of Sicuro's application.
9. In 2024-2025 Sutter estimates the costs of implementing the activities mandated by the test claim statute, Penal Code 741 (b)(1-6) to be as follows:

- a. Sutter initially incurred increased costs when the contract with Sicuro was executed on June 14, 2024.
- b. Race-Blind Charging Services

Sicuro Implementation

Invoice 0624-2	\$2,310	June, 2024 Services
Invoice 0724-2	\$4,950	July, 2024 Services
Invoice 0824-2	\$6,600	August, 2024 Services
Invoice 0924-2	\$4,620	September, 2024 Services
Invoice 1224	\$11,880	December, 2024 Services

Sicuro Subscription, User Portal, and Overhead

Invoice 0225	\$1,760	February, 2025 Services
Invoice 0325	\$1,760	March, 2025 Services
Invoice 0425	\$1,760	April, 2025 Services
Invoice 0525	\$1,760	May, 2025 Services
Invoice 0625	\$1,760	June, 2025 Services

Total 2024-2025 actual and estimated costs are: \$39,160.

10. In 2025-2026 Sutter estimates the costs of implementing the activities mandated by the test claim statute, Penal Code 741 (b)(1-6) to be as follows:

- a. Race-Blind Charging Services

Sicuro Subscription, User Portal, and Overhead

Invoice 0725	\$1,760	July, 2025 Services
Invoice 0825	\$1,760	August, 2025 Services
Invoice 0925	\$1,760	September, 2025 Services
Invoice 1025	\$1,760	October, 2025 Services

Test Claim: Race-Blind Charging
Claimant: County of Sutter
Section: 6 Declaration-Jeff C. Greeson

Invoice 1125	\$1,760	November, 2025 Services
Invoice 1225	\$1,760	December, 2025 Services
Invoice 0126	\$1,760	January, 2026 Services
Invoice 0226	\$1,760	February, 2026 Services
Invoice 0326	\$1,760	March, 2026 Services
Invoice 0426	\$1,760	April, 2026 Services
Invoice 0526	\$1,760	May, 2026 Services
Invoice 0626	\$1,760	June, 2026 Services

Total 2025-2026 estimated costs are: \$21,120.

11. If not reimbursed by the State, Sutter would pay for all the costs discussed above from its General Fund.
12. To the best of my knowledge, Sutter has not received any local, State, or federal funding and does not have a fee authority to offset the increased direct and indirect costs that the County will incur to implement the programs mandated by Section 741(b)(1-6).
13. To the best of my knowledge, there are no legislatively determined mandates on Section 741(b)(1-6).
14. I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my personal knowledge, information, or belief.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration is executed this 11th day of July, 2025 at Yuba City, California.



Jeff C. Greeson, Chief Deputy District Attorney
County of Sutter

1 DECLARATION OF MICHAEL BENNER IN SUPPORT OF
2 CITY OF SACRAMENTO'S REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT PURSUANT TO
3 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RACE-BLIND CHARGING PROCEDURES
4 IN ACCORDANCE WITH PENAL CODE SECTION 741, SUBDIVISION (b)

5 I, Michael Benner, declare:

6 1. I have been employed by the Office of the City Attorney for the City of
7 Sacramento for 22 years and I currently serve as Supervising Deputy City Attorney
8 for the Community Advocacy and Public Safety Division ("CAPS"). My duties
9 include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 10 • Supervise and oversee the handling by deputies of civil, criminal and
11 administrative law matters, including the preparation of legal opinions,
12 ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and other legal documents.
- 13 • Assign, train, direct and evaluate subordinate professionals,
14 paralegals, and investigation support staff and provide input as to
15 training, duties and evaluation of other support staff.
- 16 • Provide training guidance for staff involved in various aspects of
17 professional work; recommend and implement disciplinary actions
18 when necessary.
- 19 • Ensure workloads are balanced; ensure production and performance
20 of quality work; and promote efficiency in the office.
- 21 • Help to develop and administer Office policies and procedures within
22 assigned scope of responsibility; monitor the efficiency and
23 effectiveness of professional workflow, and perform other duties as
24 assigned.

25 2. I am personally aware of the implementation of the race-blind charging
26 guidelines pursuant to Penal Code Section (PC) 741, subdivision (b) and the specific
27 requirements listed in PC 741(b), which took effect on January 1, 2025.

28 3. In an effort to comply with the specific statutory requirements listed in Penal

1 Code section 741(b)(1-6), the Sacramento City Attorney's Office ("CAO") has
2 implemented a two-step redaction process to identify racial information within the
3 documents provided by arresting agencies, to redact that information, and to produce the
4 resulting material for review by the prosecutor performing the initial charging evaluation,
5 and reasonably ensure correct redaction is applied in accordance with the implemented
6 race-blind charging guidelines.

7 4. Since the implementation of this program on January 1, 2025, the CAPS Division
8 workload has significantly increased because of the additional time and effort required
9 to comply with the procedures mandated under this program.

10 5. On information and belief, since the implementation of this program on January
11 1, 2025, and to date, the support staff in the CAPS Division, in accordance with the
12 implemented redaction guidelines, has redacted a total of approximately 571 police
13 reports which equate to a total of 190 hours of labor time.

14 6. On information and belief, to implement the new redaction and reviewing
15 requirements of PC741 (b) , the following actions were taken by the CAO:

16 a. Beginning in September 2024, City of Sacramento first incurred costs
17 relating to Penal Code Section 741 (b) when Deputy City Attorneys (DCAs) and Legal
18 Secretaries (Secretaries) began to develop a procedure to implement the required
19 changes. Meetings were held on an as-needed basis, at least monthly, through
20 implementation in January 2025.

21 b. Secretaries drafted a procedures document, showing a step-by-step
22 process of redacting documents, tracking filing decisions, and recording each case for
23 future reference if/when needed. (Penal Code Section 741 (b)(1).) Prior to race-blind
24 charging (RBC), there was only one DCA assigned to make criminal filing decisions.
25 Prior to RBC, the average daily time spent making criminal filing decisions by the single
26 DCA was 4 hours per day. Since RBC became required, this time has doubled to 8
27 hours per day. As such, we have assigned a second DCA to assist in making filing
28 decisions, as making criminal filing decisions is in addition to the multiple other

responsibilities the DCAs have. (Penal Code Section 741(b)(1-6). The total increase in DCA time spent making charging decisions due to RBC has increased to approximately 20 hours per week.

c. Secretaries and DCAs were trained on the new procedures and given a trial/error period that began in December 2024.

7. On information and belief, implementation of PC 741(b)(6) has required regular updates in the form of meetings and emails to gauge the success of the implemented procedures. Continued review of the process ensures the filing DCAs are adequately staffed to keep up with the increased workload.

8. As of May 2025, our Secretaries are training an additional Secretary on the procedures required by PC 741(b)(1-3), including electronically uploading police reports, manually redacting them, sending them to a filing attorney, recording the initial decision, and then documenting the decision from the second review.

9. On information and belief, the additional time spent by Secretarial staff is an average of 38 hours per month. At an average rate of pay of \$67.10, this is a monthly cost of \$2,549.80 per Secretary, totaling \$30,597.60 per Secretary each year. CAO has two Secretaries in this assignment, making the annual Secretarial cost for implementing PC 741(b) requirements \$61,195.20.

10. On information and belief, as noted in paragraph 6(b), above, since the implementation of this program on January 1, 2025, and to date, the prosecuting DCAs in the CAPS Division have spent an average of eight (8) hours per day performing the initial and second reviews of the redacted and unredacted police reports to comply with the requirements under this program. (Penal Code Section 741(b)(1-5). This equates to an increase of 4 additional hours per day, or 960 hours annually, of DCA time that is a direct result of PC 741(b) requirements. CAO has one DCA per day making filing decisions. At an average rate of pay of \$191.00, this is an increased cost of \$183,360.00 incurred by the CAO for DCA time spent implementing the race-blind charging guidelines.

1 11. On information and belief, the total estimated costs (reflecting actual costs and
2 projections through June 30, 2025) for the CAO in fiscal year 2024-25 resulting from
3 implementation of PC 741(b) requirements, is \$122,277.60, for six months of work at
4 the rates described in Paragraphs 9 and 10, above.

5 12. On information and belief, the total estimated costs for the CAO in fiscal year
6 2025-26 resulting from implementation of PC 741(b) requirements, is \$244,555.20, as
7 described in Paragraphs 9 and 10, above.


8 13. If not reimbursed by the State, the CAO would be forced to pay for all the costs
9 discussed above from its General Fund, which may result in decreased city services.

10 14. To the best of my knowledge, the CAO has not received any local, State, or
11 Federal funding and does not have a fee authority to offset the increased direct and
12 indirect costs that the CAO has and will incur to implement the changes mandated by
13 PC 741(b).

14 15. The City of Sacramento prosecutes criminal disobediences of city codes that
15 includes violations, misdemeanors, and infractions.

16 I declare under penalty of perjury according to the laws of the State of California
17 that the foregoing is true and correct.

18 Executed on July 1, 2025, in Sacramento, California.

19
20
21 
22 Michael Benner (Jul 1, 2025 12:25 PDT)
23 Michael J. Benner
24 Supervising Deputy City Attorney
25 City of Sacramento
26
27
28

1 **DECLARATION OF MAYOR KEVIN MCCARTY IN SUPPORT**
2 **OF CITY'S REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT PURSUANT TO**
3 **THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RACE-BLIND CHARGING PROCEDURES**
4 **IN ACCORDANCE WITH PENAL CODE SECTION 741, SUBDIVISION (A)**

5 I, Kevin McCarty, declare:

6 1. I am currently the Mayor of the City of Sacramento in the state of California. I
7 assumed office on December 10, 2024, and my current term ends in 2028.

8 2. From 2014 to 2024 I served as Sacramento's Assemblymember representing
9 the 6th Assembly District which includes the majority of the City of Sacramento and parts of
10 the unincorporated County.

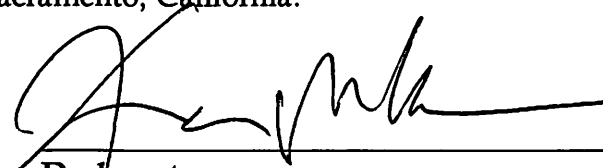
11 3. In 2022, I authored Assembly Bill ("A.B.") No. 2778, Statutes 2022, Chapter 806,
12 Section 2, codified as California Penal Code § 741 also known as the "Race Blind Charging"
13 bill, which mandates that the California Department of Justice establish a "Race Blind
14 Charging System" that all prosecutors must implement which is designed to address systemic
15 biases in the criminal justice system and promote a more fair and equitable charging process.

16 4. Based on personal knowledge, AB 2788 became California law which requires all
17 prosecution agencies to adopt race-blind charging procedures by January 1, 2025.

18 5. When I authored the bill, I explicitly intended that local government be reimbursed
19 for costs incurred to implement this program and this is consistent with the legislative record of
20 A.B. No. 2778, which precludes the state from shifting financial responsibility for carrying out
21 governmental functions to local agencies, which are 'ill equipped' to assume increased financial
22 responsibilities based on taxing and spending limitations.

23 I declare under penalty of perjury according to the laws of the State of California that the
24 foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and recollection.

25 Executed on June 25, 2025, in Sacramento, California.

26 

27 **Declarant:**
28 **Kevin McCarty, Sacramento Mayor**

Assembly Bill No. 2778

CHAPTER 806

An act to add Section 741 to the Penal Code, relating to crimes.

[Approved by Governor September 29, 2022. Filed with
Secretary of State September 29, 2022.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2778, McCarty. Crimes: race-blind charging.

Existing law provides a district attorney the discretion to file criminal charges against an individual. Existing law allows a district attorney to complete necessary investigations into alleged criminal conduct and make the decision of whether to proceed with filing criminal charges. Existing law allows a district attorney to participate in any project or program to improve the administration of justice.

This bill would, beginning on January 1, 2024, require the Department of Justice to develop and publish "Race-Blind Charging" guidelines whereby all prosecuting agencies, as specified, implement a process to review a case for charging based on information, from which all means of identifying the race of the suspect, victim, or witness have been removed or redacted. Following the department's guidelines, the bill would require prosecution agencies to independently develop and execute a process to review and to redact information based on general criteria, including, beginning January 1, 2025, how cases are to be redacted, that the initial charging evaluation is to determine whether the case should be charged or not charged, and that a prosecutor without knowledge of specified facts is required to perform the initial charging evaluation based on redacted information. The bill would require a second, complete review of the case using unredacted reports and available evidence to consider the applicable individual charges and enhancements to charge in a criminal complaint, or allow the case to be submitted to a jury. If the decision to charge or not to charge after a second review is different from the charging determination after the initial charging evaluation, the bill would require documentation of the change in charging determination as well as an explanation for the change to be part of the case record and would require these documents to be disclosed, upon request, after sentencing or dismissal of the charges, unless the documents are privileged or work product. The bill would require a decision not to put a case through a race-blind charging evaluation to be documented. The bill would authorize a prosecuting agency to remove or exclude certain classes of crimes or factual circumstances from a race-blind initial charging evaluation, including homicides, hate crimes, and cases involving public integrity. The bill would make related legislative findings and declarations.

By imposing a higher level of service on local prosecutors, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) In recent years, the increasing availability of data regarding criminal justice has raised legitimate questions regarding racial disparities in how cases are investigated, charged, and prosecuted. In particular, studies suggest that unknowing or “unconscious” bias may infect many decisions within the criminal justice system, despite what may be the best intentions of the actors involved. (Baughman et al., Blinding Prosecutors to Defendants’ Race: A Policy Proposal to Reduce Unconscious Bias in the Criminal Justice System (Dec. 2015) Behavioral Science & Policy, 70.)

(b) One method to address bias is to “acknowledge its existence and create institutional procedures to prevent bias from influencing important decisions.” (id. 71) In other contexts, such as science, employment, or academia, the “blinding” of evaluators assists in dispelling concerns of discrimination or bias in decisionmaking. (id. 71-72)

(c) In an effort to increase community confidence in the charging process, and to reduce the potential for unconscious bias, some district attorney offices employ a method whereby reports received from the police are stripped of all data from which the race of the suspect may be determined so that at least the initial charging assessment of the case is done “race blind.” The Yolo County District Attorney in partnership with the Stanford Computational Policy Lab in 2021 created and implemented a race-blind charging system built into its case management system for most cases.

SEC. 2. Section 741 is added to the Penal Code, to read:

741. (a) Beginning January 1, 2024, the Department of Justice shall develop, issue, and publish “Race-Blind Charging” guidelines for a process whereby all prosecution agencies, for purposes of this section defined as agencies, or branches of agencies, that prosecute criminal violations of the law as felonies or misdemeanors, shall implement a process by which an initial review of a case for potential charging is performed based on information, including police reports and criminal histories from the Department of Justice, from which direct means of identifying the race of the suspect, victim, or witness have been removed or redacted.

(b) Following the department's guidelines, prosecution agencies shall independently develop and execute versions of this redaction and review process with the following general criteria:

(1) Beginning January 1, 2025, cases received from law enforcement agencies and suspect criminal history documentation shall be redacted, by the receiving prosecution agency, in order to be used for a race-blind initial charging evaluation, which shall precede the ordinary charging evaluation. This redaction may occur in a separate version of the documents and may be done mechanically, by hand performed by personnel not associated with the charging of the case, or by automation with the use of computer programming, so long as the method used reasonably ensures correct redaction. The redaction may be applied to the entire report or to only the "narrative" portion of the report so long as the portion submitted for initial review is sufficient to perform that review and the unredacted portions are not part of the initial charging evaluation.

(2) The initial charging evaluation based on redacted information, including redacted reports, criminal histories, and narratives, shall determine whether the case should be charged or not be charged. Individual charges shall not be determined at this initial charging evaluation stage. Other evidence may be considered as part of this initial charging evaluation so long as the other evidence does not reveal redacted facts. The initial charging evaluation shall be performed by a prosecutor who does not have knowledge of the redacted facts for that case.

(3) After completion of a race-blind initial charging evaluation, the case shall proceed to a second, complete review for charging using unredacted reports and all available evidence in which the most applicable individual charges and enhancements may be considered and charged in a criminal complaint, or the case may be submitted to a grand jury.

(4) (A) Each of the following circumstances shall be documented as part of the case record:

(i) The initial charging evaluation determined that the case not be charged and the second review determined that a charge shall be filed.

(ii) The initial charging evaluation determined that the case shall be charged and the second review determined that no charge be filed.

(B) The explanation for the charging decision change shall be documented as part of the case record.

(C) The documented change between the result of the initial charging evaluation and the second review, as well as the explanation for the change, shall be disclosed, upon request, after sentencing in the case or dismissal of all charges comprising the case, subject to Section 1054.6 or any other applicable law.

(5) If a prosecution agency was unable to put a case through a race-blind initial charging evaluation, the reason for that inability shall be documented and retained by the agency. This documentation shall be made available by the agency upon request.

(6) The county shall collect the data resulting from the race-blind initial charging evaluation process and make the data available for research purposes.

(c) Each prosecution agency may remove or exclude certain classes of crimes or factual circumstances from a race-blind initial charging evaluation. This list of exclusions and the reasons for exclusion shall be available upon request to the Department of Justice and members of the public. Due to the increased reliance on victim or witness credibility, the availability of additional defenses, the increased reliance on forensics for the charging decision, or the relevance of racial animus to the charging decision, each of the following crimes may be excluded from a race-blind initial charging evaluation process:

- (1) Homicides.
- (2) Hate crimes.
- (3) Charges arising from a physical confrontation where that confrontation is captured in video as evidence.
- (4) Domestic violence and sex crimes.
- (5) Gang crimes.
- (6) Cases alleging either sexual assault or physical abuse or neglect where the charging decision relies upon either a forensic interview of a child or interviews of multiple victims or multiple defendants.
- (7) Cases involving financial crimes where the redaction of documentation is not practicable or is cost prohibitive due to the volume of redactions, including, but not limited to, violations of Sections 368 and 503 and other crimes sounding in fraud consisting of voluminous documentation.
- (8) Cases involving public integrity, including, but not limited to, conflict of interest crimes under Section 1090 of the Government Code.
- (9) Cases in which the prosecution agency itself investigated the alleged crime or participated in the precharging investigation of the crime by law enforcement, including, but not limited to, the review of search warrants or advising law enforcement in the course of the investigation.
- (10) Cases in which the prosecution agency initiated the charging and filing of the case by way of a grand jury indictment or where the charges arose from a grand jury investigation.

SEC. 3. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 2778 (McCarty)

As Amended June 21, 2022

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to develop a "Race-Blind Charging" guideline for enumerated prosecutorial agencies to follow which, at the initial charging stage, would require redacting documents of certain identifying information related to the race of the suspect, victim, or witness.

Senate Amendments

- 1) Specify that "Race-Blind Charging" guidelines must redact direct, rather than all, means of identifying the race of a suspect, victim, or witness.
- 2) State that the prosecution agency shall be the agency to redact the charging documents received from law enforcement agencies.
- 3) Require the prosecution agency to disclose, upon request, certain documents explaining the reason a specified charging decision was made.
- 4) Made non-substantive grammatical changes.

COMMENTS

- 1) Required that, commencing January 1, 2024, the DOJ develop and publish guidelines for a process called "Race-Blind Charging" which must be adhered to by agencies prosecuting misdemeanors or felonies.
- 2) Required any initial review of a case for charging, be based on documents from which all means of identifying the race of the suspect, victim, or witness has been redacted.
- 3) Provided that, beginning January 1, 2025, prosecution agencies shall independently develop and execute versions of the process created by the DOJ.
- 4) Stated that the prosecution agencies' redaction process adhere to the following:
 - a) Redacting racially identifying information from criminal histories, reports received from law enforcement agencies, and other pertinent documents. Such redactions may occur manually, by hand, performed by personnel not involved in the charging process. Or such redactions may occur by use of computer programming so long as the method reasonably assures correct redaction;
 - b) Applying any such redactions to any part of the police report which would reasonably assure any racial identifying information is sufficiently removed;
 - c) Only using a prosecutor without knowledge of the redacted facts to make the initial charging decision;

- d) After the initial charging decision is made, i.e. whether at least one crime has been determined to have been committed, then the case may proceed to a second review where the previously redacted information is revealed;
- e) At the second review stage, specific charges and enhancements may be considered and charged;
- f) Documenting the following:
 - i) Whether the initial charging decision determined that no charges be filed, but the second review determined a charge be filed;
 - ii) Whether the initial charging decision determined a charge be filed, but the second review determined no charge be filed; and,
 - iii) An explanation for the charging decision under these circumstances.
- 5) Stated that any documentation or explanation for the change between the initial charging evaluation and the second review must be released or disclosed upon request after sentencing or dismissal of all charges filed, subject to applicable laws.
- 6) Required, in cases where race-blind initial charging did not occur, the prosecution agency to document and retain the reason for such occurrence and to make it available upon request.
- 7) Provided that the county shall collect the data from the race-blind charging process and make such data available for research purposes.
- 8) Authorized a prosecuting agency to remove certain offenses or factual circumstances from race-blind charging, including:
 - a) Homicide;
 - b) Hate crimes;
 - c) Physical confrontations captured on video;
 - d) Domestic violence and sex crimes;
 - e) Gang crimes;
 - f) Financial crimes where redacting voluminous documentation is impractical;
 - g) Offenses involving public integrity such as conflict of interest;
 - h) Cases directly investigated by the prosecuting agency, or in which the prosecution agency assisted; and,
 - i) Cases charged by way of grand jury indictment or investigation.

According to the Author

"We've seen it time and time again where a person of color is given a harsher punishment for the same crime a non-person of color commits. Creating a system where a person's race is unknown during the time of initial charging is imperative. It is long past time we start addressing the issue of punishing a person based on the crime and not the color of their skin."

Arguments in Support

According to the Yolo County District Attorney's Office, "In recent years, the increasing availability of data regarding criminal justice has raised legitimate questions regarding racial disparities in how cases are investigated, charged, and prosecuted. In particular, studies suggest that unknowing or 'unconscious' bias may infect many decisions within the criminal justice system, despite what may be the best intentions of the actors involved. (Baughman *et al. Blinding Prosecutors to Defendants' Race: A Policy Proposal to Reduce Unconscious Bias in the Criminal Justice System* (Dec. 2015) Behavioral Science & Policy, 70.) One method to address bias is to "acknowledge its existence and create institutional procedures to prevent bias from influencing important decisions." *id.* 71) In other contexts, such as science, employment, or academia, the 'blinding' of evaluators assists in dispelling concerns of discrimination or bias in decision making, (*id.* 71-72)

"In 2021, our office partnered with the Stanford Computational Policy lab to develop a program to find and redact race data from police reports in order that an initial charging determination could be performed 'race blind.' We became the first office in the state to incorporate this process into our case management system, which uses the same initial (redacted) and secondary (unredacted) processes to charge our cases, with a few exceptions, *e.g.*, hate crimes. While the road to race blind charging had its challenges, we feel we have now "paved the way" and removed operational obstacles for other offices to do the same.

"AB 2778 would help decrease the specter of racial bias in one of its most prominent places in the criminal justice system - the initial charging assessment. By stripping police reports of all race-related data of the suspect, victim, or witness, it reduces the potential for unconscious bias and increases community confidence in the charging process by having the initial charging assessment done 'race-blind.' "

Arguments in Opposition

None submitted.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- 1) *DOJ*: The DOJ reports costs of \$559,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2022-23, 984,000 in FY 2023-24 and approximately \$3 million annually thereafter to the DOJ in additional staff and infrastructure to develop and publish race-blind charging guidelines and implement a process to review cases for charging based on information, from which any means of identifying the race of the suspect, victim or witness have been removed or redacted (General Fund).
- 2) *Local Reimbursements*: Unknown, potentially reimbursable costs, possibly in the millions of dollars annually additional staff and possible third party IT vendor contracts for county district attorney offices to independently develop and execute a process based on the process created by the DOJ to review and redact certain information about a suspect, witness or

victim information reports before charging anyone (Local Funds, General Fund). Costs may also include additional staff and IT infrastructure to collect data from a race-blind charging process and document why a DA office did not use a race-blind charging process in any case. General Fund costs will depend on whether this bill imposes a state-mandated local program as determined by the Commission on State Mandates.

VOTES:

ASM PUBLIC SAFETY: 7-0-0

YES: Jones-Sawyer, Lackey, Mia Bonta, Bryan, Quirk, Santiago, Seyarto

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 16-0-0

YES: Holden, Bigelow, Bryan, Calderon, Carrillo, Megan Dahle, Davies, Mike Fong, Fong, Gabriel, Eduardo Garcia, Levine, Quirk, Robert Rivas, Akilah Weber, Wilson

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 72-0-6

YES: Aguiar-Curry, Arambula, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Bigelow, Bloom, Boerner Horvath, Bryan, Calderon, Carrillo, Cervantes, Chen, Choi, Cooley, Cooper, Cunningham, Megan Dahle, Daly, Davies, Flora, Mike Fong, Fong, Friedman, Gabriel, Gallagher, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Gipson, Gray, Grayson, Haney, Holden, Irwin, Jones-Sawyer, Kalra, Lackey, Lee, Levine, Low, Maienschein, Mathis, McCarty, Medina, Mullin, Muratsuchi, Nazarian, Nguyen, Patterson, Petrie-Norris, Quirk, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Reyes, Luz Rivas, Robert Rivas, Rodriguez, Salas, Santiago, Seyarto, Smith, Stone, Ting, Valladares, Villapudua, Voepel, Waldron, Ward, Akilah Weber, Wicks, Wilson, Wood, Rendon

ABS, ABST OR NV: Berman, Mia Bonta, Kiley, Mayes, O'Donnell, Blanca Rubio

SENATE FLOOR: 39-0-1

YES: Allen, Archuleta, Atkins, Bates, Becker, Borgeas, Bradford, Caballero, Cortese, Dahle, Dodd, Durazo, Eggman, Glazer, Gonzalez, Hertzberg, Hueso, Hurtado, Jones, Kamlager, Laird, Leyva, Limón, McGuire, Melendez, Min, Newman, Nielsen, Ochoa Bogh, Pan, Portantino, Roth, Rubio, Skinner, Stern, Umberg, Wieckowski, Wiener, Wilk

ABS, ABST OR NV: Grove

UPDATED

VERSION: June 21, 2022

CONSULTANT: Mureed Rasool / PUB. S. / (916) 319-3744

FN: 0004472



C A L I F O R N I A
DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE

D I V I S I O N O F C R I M I N A L L A W

RACE-BLIND CHARGING GUIDELINES

Penal Code Section 741

JANUARY 1, 2024



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GUIDELINES FOR RACE-BLIND CHARGING PURSUANT TO PENAL CODE SECTION 741

The California Department of Justice is issuing the following Race-Blind Charging Guidelines in accordance with Penal Code section 741, subdivision (a). These Guidelines address the specific statutory requirements listed in Penal Code section 741, as well as provide practical guidance as to how to implement those requirements.¹ Studies have shown that unconscious bias may infect decisions within the criminal justice system, despite the best intentions of the actors involved.² These Guidelines are intended to operate in accordance with the spirit, goal, and legislative intent behind Penal Code section 741, which is namely to reduce the potential for unconscious bias to influence the initial charging decision in a case.

I. Redaction of Cases Received from Law Enforcement Agencies and Suspect Criminal History Documentation; General Statement of Purpose and Scope

- (a) Redaction Requirement: Effective January 1, 2025, Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b) (1) requires prosecution agencies to redact all case materials received from law enforcement agencies, including police reports and suspect criminal history documentation, to remove direct means of identifying the suspect(s)', victim(s)', and witness(es)' race in order to be used for a race-blind initial charging evaluation, which shall precede the ordinary charging evaluation.
- (b) Method of Redaction: The redaction process may occur in a separate version of the documents and may be done mechanically, by hand, by personnel not associated with the charging of the case, or by automation using computer software. The method used for redaction must reasonably ensure correct redaction. The redaction may be applied to the entire report or only to the "narrative" portion of the report, so long as the portion submitted for initial review is sufficient for that review and the unredacted portions are not part of the initial charging evaluation. (§ 741, subd. (b)(1).)
- (c) Research supports the notion that implicit bias is most likely to occur in situations where prosecutors are making a high volume of quick decisions.³ Accordingly, when implementing race-blind charging procedures, prosecution agencies should be especially mindful of these Guidelines when handling these routine cases.

1 The Department of Justice contemplates these Guidelines applying, at a minimum, to all criminal cases. The language of Penal Code section 741 does not appear to apply to juvenile cases.

2 Assem. Bill No. 2778 (Stats. 2022, ch. 806, § 1), citing Baughman et al., *Blinding Prosecutors to Defendants' Race: A Policy Proposal to Reduce Unconscious Bias in the Criminal Justice System* (Dec. 2015) *Behavioral Science & Policy*, 70.

3 See Smith, Robert J., and Justin D. Levinson, *The Impact of Implicit Racial Bias on the Exercise of Prosecutorial Discretion* (2011) *Seattle UL Rev.* 35, 795; Singh, Balbir, et al., *When Practice Fails to Reduce Racial Bias in the Decision to Shoot: The Case of Cognitive Load* (2020) *Social Cognition* 38.6, 555-570; Kleider-Offutt, Heather M., Amanda M. Clevinger, and Alesha D. Bond, *Working Memory and Cognitive Load in the Legal System: Influences on Police Shooting Decisions, Interrogation and Jury Decisions* (2016) *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition* 5.4, 426-433.

II. Race-Blind Initial Charging Evaluation; Purpose and Scope

- (a) (1) Penal Code section 741, subdivision (b) requires a two-step process for charging cases— (1) a “race-blind initial charging evaluation” based only on redacted reports, and then (2) the “ordinary charging evaluation” based on unredacted reports and all available evidence. The initial charging evaluation is intended to perform a gate-keeping and recording function prior to the actual charging process, rather than the more thorough second review to determine individual charges or decide charges with certainty. Accordingly, the initial charging evaluation shall determine only whether a case should be charged or not be charged against a particular defendant and shall not determine individual charges. (§ 741, subd. (b)(2).)
- (2) A case “should be charged” for purposes of this section if the reviewing prosecutor determines, based on redacted material, that a charge, of any type, should be alleged in the case. A case “should not be charged” for the purposes of this section if the reviewing prosecutor determines that no charge, of any type, should be alleged in the case.
- (3) A “case” for these purposes means the collection of charges as they would appear in a single criminal complaint. Other evidence may be considered as part of this initial charging evaluation, so long as the other evidence does not reveal redacted facts. (§ 741, subd. (b)(2).) The initial charging evaluation shall be performed by a prosecutor who does not have knowledge of the redacted facts for that case. (§ 741, subd. (b)(2).)
- (4) The prosecutor performing the initial charging evaluation shall use some means, handwritten or electronic, to record the decision of the initial charging evaluation for each case (i.e., “should be charged” or “should not be charged” or words to that effect).
- (b) (1) The initial charging evaluation shall be based solely on redacted information, including redacted reports, criminal histories, and narratives. (§ 741, subd. (b)(2).)
- (2) At a minimum, for the initial charging evaluation, the prosecution agency must rely on the redacted narrative portion of the police reports received by the prosecution agency from a law enforcement agency. (§ 741, subd. (b)(1).) The prosecution agency may, at its option, consider for the initial charging evaluation all materials received, including the entire police report(s) and the criminal history of the suspect, so long as all materials have been redacted to remove direct means of identifying the race of the suspect(s), victim(s), and witness(es). (§ 741, subds. (b)(1) & (2).) Subsequent “supplemental” reports, received after an initial charging evaluation for a case has already been made, need not be redacted and no second or subsequent race-blind review is required.
- (3) Only the materials used by the prosecution agency to make the initial charging evaluation must be redacted as provided below.

III. Redaction Process for Initial Charging Evaluation

- (a) Each prosecution agency must create a redaction process for the materials used for the initial charging evaluation to ensure that the “direct means” of identifying the race of the suspect(s), victim(s), and/or witness(es) have been removed or redacted, as required by Penal Code section 741, subdivision (a). Personnel not associated with evaluating or charging the case shall perform the redaction, either manually or through automation, so long as the method used reasonably ensures correct redaction. (§ 741, subd. (b)(1).)

- (b) For purposes of this section, the “direct means” for identifying the race of the suspect(s), victim(s) and witness(es) are (1) the stated race or ethnicity, (2) the first or last name, and (3) the skin color or complexion. In addition, the prosecution agency may redact other information that provides an indirect means for identifying the race of the suspect(s), victim(s), and/or witness(es).
- (c) For purposes of this section, “redaction” means that, by way of removal or obliteration, the prosecutor performing the initial charging evaluation would not be privy to facts revealing race as they would have been contained in the materials reviewed for the initial charging evaluation. The charging prosecutor, at the initial charging evaluation stage, should also not be privy to any other evidence that could reveal the race of any suspect, victim or witness including, but not limited to, photographs, recordings, surveillance videos, or cell phone data.
- (d) A prosecution agency may use any appropriate means to effectively and efficiently locate the direct means for identifying race within a document, to redact that information, and to produce the resulting material for review by the prosecutor performing the initial charging evaluation. The method used must reasonably ensure correct redaction. (§ 741, subd. (b)(1).) Examples of redaction processes that would satisfy the statute include, but are not limited to the following:
 - (1) The police reports from the investigating agency are received by the prosecution agency, and the narrative portions of the reports are separated from the complete reports and the criminal history information. Those narrative portions are then reviewed by staff, and the direct means of identifying race are redacted by hand. The redacted narrative portions are then provided to the prosecutor performing the initial charging evaluation for review. The decision from the initial charging evaluation is hand recorded in a log for later comparison to the second review.
 - (2) The police reports from the investigating agency are received by the prosecution agency as scanned files (e.g., a PDF) which may be opened using a standard commercial computer program for reviewing scanned files (e.g., Adobe Acrobat). The narrative is then separated from the complete file and redacted using that same program. After the narrative is separated and redacted, it is provided to the prosecutor performing the initial charging evaluation for review. The decision from the initial charging evaluation is recorded in a spreadsheet on a computer.
 - (3) The police reports from the investigating agency are received by the prosecution agency as scanned files to which Optical Character Recognition (OCR) is performed on the narrative portion of the police reports using a commercial document image program (e.g., Adobe Acrobat). An application, which may or may not be incorporated into the prosecution agency’s case management system, is then applied to the OCR’d narrative which locates (using a predetermined list) and automatically redacts the direct means of identifying race, producing a redacted version of the document. The redacted narrative is then provided to the prosecutor performing the initial charging evaluation. The decision from the initial charging evaluation is recorded in the office’s case management system.
 - (4) The prosecution agency, either internally or working with a third-party vendor, develops a “batched” process to replicate each of the steps in example (3) above automatically upon receipt of scanned police reports from investigating agencies. The decision from the initial charging evaluation is recorded in the office’s case management system.

- (e) The method of redaction used should reasonably ensure correct redaction. (§ 741, subd. (b) (1).) Where software is used, it should be validated before implementation. The software selected should also have appropriate safeguards to prevent unauthorized access to the sensitive information.
- (f) Software appropriate for review and redaction of materials includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - (1) Adobe Acrobat Pro DC: Adobe Acrobat Pro DC allows users to redact sensitive information from PDF documents by permanently removing the selected text, images, or metadata. To use this software, the document is opened in Acrobat Pro DC and the user employs the “Redact” tool from the “Protect” tab. The user then highlights the sensitive information to be redacted, and the software will replace the selected information with a black box.
 - (2) Foxit PhantomPDF: Foxit PhantomPDF is a PDF editor that allows users to redact sensitive information from PDF documents. To use this software, the document is opened in Foxit PhantomPDF and then the user employs the “Redaction” tool from the “Protect” tab. The user then highlights the sensitive information to be redacted, and the software will replace the selected information with a black box.
 - (3) PDFsam Basic: PDFsam Basic is a free, open-source PDF editor that allows users to redact sensitive information from PDF documents. To use this software, the document is opened in PDFsam Basic, the user then employs the “Redact” tool. The user then highlights the sensitive information to be redacted, and the software will replace the selected information with a black box.
 - (4) ABBYY FlexiCapture: ABBYY FlexiCapture is a data capture and document processing software that can be used to redact sensitive information from documents. To use this software, the document is uploaded into ABBYY FlexiCapture, the user then employs the “Redaction” tool. The user then highlights the sensitive information to be redacted, and the software will replace the selected information with a black box.
- (g) When redacting case materials describing multiple suspects, victims or witnesses, multiple names or other descriptors should be replaced with a generic term that allows the reviewing prosecutor to distinguish between multiple suspects, victims, or witnesses. For example, replace “John Doe” with “Person 1,” or replace “dark complexion” with “complexion 1.”
 - (1) As a further example, an original version of a narrative would read as follows: “John Smith, who was robbed, identified his attacker as a Black male wearing jeans shorts and a red tank top. Joe Doe, a Black male, was later detained by police wearing jean shorts and a red tank top and Joe Doe is a male with dark complexion and long black hair. Later, John Smith was brought to the scene of Joe Doe’s detention and identified Joe Doe as his robber.”
 - (2) The redacted version could read as follows: “[Person 1], who was robbed, identified his attacker as a [race] male wearing jeans shorts and a red tank top. [Person 2] was later detained by police wearing jean shorts and a red tank top and [Person 2] is a male with [complexion 1] and long black hair. Later, [Person 1] was brought to the scene of [Person 2’s] detention and identified [Person 2] as his robber.”

IV. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools for Redaction

- (a) Incorporating AI tools for redaction can greatly improve the efficiency and accuracy of the redaction process. However, it is important to ensure that the AI system used is validated before implementation and that appropriate safeguards are in place to prevent unauthorized access to sensitive information.
- (b) AI tools can use natural language processing (NLP) algorithms to identify sensitive information in the document. The AI system can be trained on a large set of examples to recognize specific types of information, such as names or complexion, that need to be redacted.
- (c) Once the information to be redacted has been identified, the AI system can automatically redact the information by removing it or replacing it with generic terms discussed in these guidelines. The AI system may be trained on a set of examples to know the preferred method of redaction for specific types of information.
- (d) The AI system's performance should be monitored to ensure the accuracy of the redaction. In cases where the AI system creates an error, a human reviewer can manually review the document and make any necessary corrections.

V. Second Review for Charging

- (a) After completion of the race-blind initial charging evaluation, the case shall proceed to a second, complete review for charging using unredacted reports and all available evidence, i.e., whatever available evidence the charging prosecutor deems appropriate in the normal course of charging a case. (§ 741, subd. (b)(3).) During the second review, the prosecutor may consider and charge in a criminal complaint any applicable charges and enhancements, or the case may be submitted to a grand jury. (§ 741, subd. (b)(3).)
- (b) The second review is intended to be the ordinary charging process for the prosecution agency without limitation on the information or evidence that a charging prosecutor may consider, the methodologies used, or the timeframe in which this charging consideration is performed.
- (c) The prosecutor performing the second review for charging must be the same prosecutor who performed the initial charging review. If the prosecutor who performed the initial charging review is no longer available, the race-blind initial charging review must be performed anew by a different prosecutor, who will then also ultimately perform the second review for charging.
- (d) It is expected that the second complete review using all available evidence will sometimes result in prosecutors changing their determination from the initial charging evaluation.

VI. Documentation of Charging Decision

- (a) The prosecution agency should document all charging decisions—both the initial charging evaluation and the second, complete review. This includes documenting either of the following circumstances as part of the case record for a case:
 - (1) The initial charging evaluation determined that the case should not be charged, and the second review determined that a charge, of any type, shall be filed, or
 - (2) the initial charging evaluation determined that the case should be charged, and the second review determined that no charge, of any type, would be filed (§ 741, subd. (b)(4)(A)(i)-(ii).

- (b) The prosecution agency shall also document the explanation for an occurrence of either of the above two circumstances as part of the case record or within the case management system. (§ 741, subd. (b)(4)(B).) The charging prosecutor should specifically explain why the change described in (a)(1) or (a)(2) occurred.
- (c) If this explanation is being documented within a case management system or captured using a form, each prosecution agency may develop and utilize any number of predefined explanations (e.g., review of video revealed a legal defense; awaiting additional evidence/rejected for follow-up; important evidence not collected (e.g., third-party statements); suspect eligible for pre-filing diversion; suspect provided proof of status (e.g., driver's license, program completion); suspect's custody status/existing sentence affected charging decision; suspects probation or parole status affected charging decision; victim's concerns or requests affected charging decision; race redaction made mistake(s) that affected charging decision), so long as an "other" category (with space for explanation) also exists for any explanation not covered by the predefined choices.
- (d) The documented change between the result of the initial charging evaluation and the second review, as well as the explanation for the change, must be disclosed, upon request, after sentencing in the case or dismissal of all charges comprising the case, subject to Penal Code section 1054.6 or any other applicable law. Responses to such requests shall be governed by the terms of the California Public Records Act (Government Code section 7920, et seq.). (§ 741, subd. (b)(4)(C).)

VII. Inability to Conduct Race-Blind Initial Charging Evaluation

- (a) If a prosecution agency was unable to put a case through a race-blind initial charging evaluation, the reason for that inability must be documented and retained by the agency. (§ 741, subd. (b)(5).)
- (b) If such an explanation is being documented within a case management system, or captured using a form, each prosecution agency may develop any number of predefined explanations (e.g., redaction process failed to account for term revealing race), so long as an "other" category (with space for explanation) also exists for any explanation not covered by the predefined choices.
- (c) A list of cases in which the race-blind initial charging evaluation was unable to be performed, and the explanation for why the evaluations were not able to be performed shall be made available to the public upon request. (§ 741, subd. (b)(5).) The information may be redacted to the extent necessary to protect core attorney work product under Penal Code section 1054.6. Responses to such requests shall be governed by the terms of the California Public Records Act (Government Code section 7920 et seq.).

VIII. Collection of Data and Availability for Research Purposes

- (a) Each county in which a prosecution agency resides must, on an annual basis, collect the data resulting from the race-blind initial charging evaluation process as described in these guidelines (§ 741, subd. (b)(6)), except as such information is protected by privilege including, but not limited to, that found in Penal Code section 1054.6. Each county must ensure that the data is collected, stored and transmitted in a way appropriate to protect sensitive information.

- (b) The collected data must be made available for research purposes to bona fide accredited public or private nonprofit educational institutions, or to any other nonprofit bona fide research institution accredited by the United States Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education, for bona fide research purposes.
- (c) Responses to requests for research data shall be governed by the terms of the California Public Records Act (Government Code section 7920 et seq.).
- (d) Only the raw data generated by the process, rendered anonymous for privacy, shall be provided for research; the underlying materials, reports, or criminal history information are not required to be produced by these Guidelines. The raw data would include crimes the prosecution agency included in the race-blind process and crimes the prosecution agency excepted from the race-blind process, statistics regarding both changes and consistent charging decisions between the two stages, information regarding failed attempts to use the race-blind system, and the race information data of the suspects connected to those changes or failures.

IX. Exceptions to the Race-Blind Process

- (a) Prosecution agencies may exclude the crimes listed at Penal Code section 741, subdivision (c) from the race-blind charging process.
- (b) Each prosecution agency may further remove or exclude certain classes of crimes or factual circumstances from a race-blind initial charging evaluation. (§ 741, subd. (c).) “Classes of crimes” refers to subdivisions within particular sections of the Penal Code describing different crimes, e.g., section 368 describes different types of elder abuse, or a generic description that could be subsumed under multiple Penal Code sections, e.g., fraud.
- (c) Prosecuting agencies shall keep a list of crimes or classes of crimes that they do not include in race-blind review and the reasons for their exclusion from that review. This list of exclusions and the reasons for exclusion shall be available upon request to the Department of Justice and members of the public. (§ 741, subd. (c).) Requests for this data shall be governed by the terms of the California Public Records Act (Government Code section 7920 et seq.).

X. Glossary of Terms

- (a) **Race-Blind Initial Charging Evaluation:** The first step discussed in Penal Code section 741 for charging a criminal case, in which the case information and suspect criminal history documentation are redacted to remove the direct means for identifying the race of the suspect(s), victim(s) and witness(es) and used to determine whether, as a general matter, the case should be charged. This evaluation is performed by a prosecutor who does not have knowledge of the redacted information.
- (b) **Redacted:** To censor or conceal specific information in a document or record. In the context of the race-blind process for charging a criminal case as required by Penal Code section 741, the redaction is applied to the case information and suspect criminal history documentation in order to perform the race-blind initial charging evaluation. For purposes of race-blind charging, “redaction” does not require the “black box” style for concealing information. Rather, it encompasses any means of removal or obliteration of the direct means for identifying race, such that the prosecutor performing the initial charging evaluation would not be privy to facts revealing race as they would have been contained in the materials reviewed for the initial charging evaluation.

- (c) **Narrative:** A description or account of an event or situation, often in chronological order. In the context of the race-blind process for charging a criminal case required by Penal Code section 741, the narrative refers to the portion of the report that may be redacted for the purpose of the race-blind initial charging evaluation.
- (d) **Second Review for Charging:** The second step in the race-blind process required by Penal Code section 741 for charging a criminal case, in which the case information and suspect criminal history documentation are reviewed using the unredacted information, along with all available evidence. This review mimics the ordinary criminal charging process that pre-existed the race-blind process, and is used to determine the most applicable individual charges and enhancements.
- (e) **Criminal Complaint:** A written accusation or formal charge made by a prosecutor against a person suspected of committing a crime.
- (f) **Reasonably ensure correct redaction:** This refers to the level of confidence that the redaction process will accurately identify and remove sensitive information from the document without causing harm to the rest of the information contained in the document. The redaction process should have a low error rate and should not cause unintended consequences, such as removing information that should not have been redacted or altering the meaning of the document. Methods employed by prosecution agencies to ensure correct redaction may also include the following:
 - (1) Regularly reviewing a random sample of the redacted documents to ensure that sensitive information has been accurately removed;
 - (2) Conducting user testing to ensure that the redaction process is user-friendly and easy to use;
 - (3) Monitoring the redaction process to ensure that there are no unintended consequences, such as removing information that should not have been redacted or altering the meaning of the document;
 - (4) Keeping a record of the redaction process and documenting any issues or concerns that arise during the process.
- (g) **Validated:** This refers to the process of testing and verifying that the software used for redaction is accurate, reliable, and suitable for the intended purpose. This includes testing the software on a representative set of documents to ensure that it correctly identifies and redacts sensitive information. Methods employed by prosecution agencies to ensure validation of software include the following:
 - (1) Conducting a thorough evaluation of the software's accuracy, reliability, and suitability for the intended purpose;
 - (2) Testing the software on a representative set of documents to ensure that it correctly identifies and redacts sensitive information;
 - (3) Monitoring the software's performance over time to ensure that it remains accurate and reliable;
 - (4) Keeping a record of the software validation process and documenting any issues or concerns that arise during the process;
 - (5) Regularly updating the software to ensure that it remains accurate and up- to-date.

DECLARATION OF SERVICE BY EMAIL

I, the undersigned, declare as follows:

I am a resident of the County of Sacramento and I am over the age of 18 years, and not a party to the within action. My place of employment is 980 Ninth Street, Suite 300, Sacramento, California 95814.

On July 24, 2025, I served the:

- **Current Mailing List dated July 23, 2025**
- **Notice of Complete Test Claim, Schedule for Comments, and Notice of Tentative Hearing Date issued July 24, 2025**
- **Test Claim filed by the City of Sacramento, County of Santa Clara, and County of Sutter on June 10, 2025**

Race-Blind Charging, 24-TC-07

Statutes 2022, Chapter 806, Section 2 (AB 2778); Penal Code Section 741(b), effective January 1, 2023

City of Sacramento, County of Santa Clara, and County of Sutter, Claimants

by making it available on the Commission's website and providing notice of how to locate it to the email addresses provided on the attached mailing list.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed on July 24, 2025 at Sacramento, California.



Jill Magee
Commission on State Mandates
980 Ninth Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 323-3562

COMMISSION ON STATE MANDATES

Mailing List

Last Updated: 7/23/25

Claim Number: 24-TC-07

Matter: Race-Blind Charging

Claimants: City of Sacramento
County of Santa Clara
County of Sutter

TO ALL PARTIES, INTERESTED PARTIES, AND INTERESTED PERSONS:

Each commission mailing list is continuously updated as requests are received to include or remove any party or person on the mailing list. A current mailing list is provided with commission correspondence, and a copy of the current mailing list is available upon request at any time. Except as provided otherwise by commission rule, when a party or interested party files any written material with the commission concerning a claim, it shall simultaneously serve a copy of the written material on the parties and interested parties to the claim identified on the mailing list provided by the commission. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 2, § 1181.3.)

Adaoha Agu, *County of San Diego Auditor & Controller Department*
Projects, Revenue and Grants Accounting, 5530 Overland Avenue, Ste. 410 , MS:O-53, San Diego, CA 92123
Phone: (858) 694-2129
Adaoha.Agu@sdcounty.ca.gov

Scott Allen, *Director of Operations, Orange County District Attorney's Office*
300 North Flower Street, Santa Ana, CA 92703
Phone: (949) 898-0417
scott.allen@ocdapa.org

Rachelle Anema, *Division Chief, County of Los Angeles*
Accounting Division, 500 W. Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: (213) 974-8321
RANEMA@auditor.lacounty.gov

Lili Apgar, *Specialist, State Controller's Office*
Local Reimbursements Section, 3301 C Street, Suite 740, Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone: (916) 324-0254
lapgar@sco.ca.gov

Socorro Aquino, *State Controller's Office*
Division of Audits, 3301 C Street, Suite 700, Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone: (916) 322-7522
SAquino@sco.ca.gov

Aaron Avery, *Legislative Representative, California Special Districts Association*
1112 I Street Bridge, Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (916) 442-7887
Aarona@csda.net

David Bass, Vice Mayor, *City of Rocklin*
3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA 95677
Phone: (916) 663-8504
David.Bass@rocklin.ca.us

Ginni Bella Navarre, Deputy Legislative Analyst, *Legislative Analyst's Office*
925 L Street, Suite 1000, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 319-8342
Ginni.Bella@lao.ca.gov

Nathan Black, Auditor-Controller, *County of Sutter*
Claimant Contact
1160 Civic Center Blvd., Suite D, Yuba City, CA 95993
Phone: (530) 822-7127
nblack@co.sutter.ca.us

Jonathan Borrego, City Manager, *City of Oceanside*
300 North Coast Highway, Oceanside, CA 92054
Phone: (760) 435-3065
citymanager@oceansideca.org

Allan Burdick,
7525 Myrtle Vista Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95831
Phone: (916) 203-3608
allanburdick@gmail.com

Guy Burdick, Consultant, *MGT Consulting*
2251 Harvard Street, Suite 134, Sacramento, CA 95815
Phone: (916) 833-7775
gburdick@mgtconsulting.com

Rica Mae Cabigas, Chief Accountant, *Auditor-Controller*
Accounting Division, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: (213) 974-8309
rcabigas@auditor.lacounty.gov

Evelyn Calderon-Yee, Bureau Chief, *State Controller's Office*
Local Government Programs and Services Division, Bureau of Payments, 3301 C Street, Suite 740,
Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone: (916) 324-5919
ECalderonYee@sco.ca.gov

Sheri Chapman, General Counsel, *League of California Cities*
1400 K Street, Suite 400, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 658-8267
schapman@calcities.org

Kate Chatfield, *California Public Defenders Association*
10324 Placer Lane, Sacramento, CA 95827
Phone: (916) 362-1686
katechatfield@cpda.org

Annette Chinn, *Cost Recovery Systems, Inc.*
705-2 East Bidwell Street, #294, Folsom, CA 95630

Phone: (916) 939-7901
achinnrcs@aol.com

Carolyn Chu, Senior Fiscal and Policy Analyst, *Legislative Analyst's Office*
925 L Street, Suite 1000, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 319-8326
Carolyn.Chu@lao.ca.gov

Michael Coleman, *Coleman Advisory Services*
2217 Isle Royale Lane, Davis, CA 95616
Phone: (530) 758-3952
coleman@muni1.com

Adam Cripps, Interim Finance Manager, *Town of Apple Valley*
14955 Dale Evans Parkway, Apple Valley, CA 92307
Phone: (760) 240-7000
acripps@applevalley.org

Elena D'Agustino, Public Defender, *County of Solano*
Office of the Public Defender, 675 Texas Street, Suite 3500, Fairfield, CA 94533
Phone: (707) 784-6700
edagustino@solanocounty.gov

Thomas Deak, Senior Deputy, *County of San Diego*
Office of County Counsel, 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 355, San Diego, CA 92101
Phone: (619) 531-4810
Thomas.Deak@sdcounty.ca.gov

Charles Denton, Assistant Public Defender, *Alameda County Public Defender*
Law & Motions Division, 1401 Lakeside Drive, 4th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612-4305
Phone: (510) 272-6641
chuck.denton@acgov.org

Tracy Drager, Auditor and Controller, *County of San Diego*
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 166, San Diego, CA 92101
Phone: (619) 531-5413
tracy.drager@sdcounty.ca.gov

Donna Ferebee, *Department of Finance*
915 L Street, Suite 1280, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 445-8918
donna.ferebee@dof.ca.gov

Kevin Fisher, Assistant City Attorney, *City of San Jose*
Environmental Services, 200 East Santa Clara Street, 16th Floor, San Jose, CA 95113
Phone: (408) 535-1987
kevin.fisher@sanjoseca.gov

Tim Flanagan, Office Coordinator, *Solano County*
Register of Voters, 678 Texas Street, Suite 2600, Fairfield, CA 94533
Phone: (707) 784-3359
Elections@solanocounty.com

Amber Garcia Rossow, Legislative Analyst, *California State Association of Counties*
1100 K Street, Suite 101, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 650-8170
arossow@counties.org

Juliana Gmur, Executive Director, *Commission on State Mandates*
980 9th Street, Suite 300, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 323-3562
juliana.gmur@csm.ca.gov

Chris Hill, Principal Program Budget Analyst, *Department of Finance*
Local Government Unit, 915 L Street, 8th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 445-3274
Chris.Hill@dof.ca.gov

Tiffany Hoang, Associate Accounting Analyst, *State Controller's Office*
Local Government Programs and Services Division, Bureau of Payments, 3301 C Street, Suite 740,
Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone: (916) 323-1127
THoang@sco.ca.gov

Ken Howell, Senior Management Auditor, *State Controller's Office*
Audits, Compliance Audits Bureau, 3301 C Street, Suite 725A, Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone: (916) 323-2368
KHowell@sco.ca.gov

Linnea Hull, *California District Attorneys Association (CDA)*
2495 Natomas Park Drive, Suite 575, Sacramento, CA 95833
Phone: (916) 443-2017
lhull@cdaa.org

Jason Jennings, Director, *Maximus Consulting*
Financial Services, 808 Moorefield Park Drive, Suite 205, Richmond, VA 23236
Phone: (804) 323-3535
SB90@maximus.com

Angelo Joseph, Supervisor, *State Controller's Office*
Local Government Programs and Services Division, Bureau of Payments, 3301 C Street, Suite 740,
Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone: (916) 323-0706
AJoseph@sco.ca.gov

Anne Kato, Acting Chief, *State Controller's Office*
Local Government Programs and Services Division, 3301 C Street, Suite 740, Sacramento, CA
95816
Phone: (916) 322-9891
akato@sco.ca.gov

Anita Kerezsi, *AK & Company*
2425 Golden Hill Road, Suite 106, Paso Robles, CA 93446
Phone: (805) 239-7994
akcompanysb90@gmail.com

Joanne Kessler, Fiscal Specialist, *City of Newport Beach*
Revenue Division, 100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 90266
Phone: (949) 644-3199
jkessler@newportbeachca.gov

Lisa Kurokawa, Bureau Chief for Audits, *State Controller's Office*
Compliance Audits Bureau, 3301 C Street, Suite 700, Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone: (916) 327-3138
lkurokawa@sco.ca.gov

Government Law Intake, Department of Justice

Attorney General's Office, 1300 I Street, Suite 125, PO Box 944255, Sacramento, CA 94244-2550

Phone: (916) 210-6046

governmentlawintake@doj.ca.gov

Eric Lawyer, Legislative Advocate, California State Association of Counties (CSAC)

Government Finance and Administration, 1100 K Street, Suite 101, Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (916) 650-8112

elawyer@counties.org

Kim-Anh Le, Deputy Controller, County of San Mateo

555 County Center, 4th Floor, Redwood City, CA 94063

Phone: (650) 599-1104

kle@smcgov.org

Fernando Lemus, Principal Accountant - Auditor, County of Los Angeles

Auditor-Controller's Office, 500 West Temple Street, Room 603, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: (213) 974-0324

flemus@auditor.lacounty.gov

Erika Li, Chief Deputy Director, Department of Finance

915 L Street, 10th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (916) 445-3274

erika.li@dof.ca.gov

Everett Luc, Accounting Administrator I, Specialist, State Controller's Office

3301 C Street, Suite 740, Sacramento, CA 95816

Phone: (916) 323-0766

ELuc@sco.ca.gov

Jill Magee, Program Analyst, Commission on State Mandates

980 9th Street, Suite 300, Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (916) 323-3562

Jill.Magee@csm.ca.gov

Darryl Mar, Manager, State Controller's Office

3301 C Street, Suite 740, Sacramento, CA 95816

Phone: (916) 323-0706

DMar@sco.ca.gov

Graciela Martinez, President, California Public Defenders Association

10324 Placer Lane, Sacramento, CA 95827

Phone: (916) 362-1686

gmartinez@pubdef.lacounty.gov

Tina McKendell, County of Los Angeles

Auditor-Controller's Office, 500 West Temple Street, Room 603, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: (213) 974-0324

tmckendell@auditor.lacounty.gov

Michelle Mendoza, MAXIMUS

17310 Red Hill Avenue, Suite 340, Irvine, CA 95403

Phone: (949) 440-0845

michellemendoza@maximus.com

Leyne Milstein, Interim City Manager, City of Sacramento**Claimant Contact**

915 I Street, 5th Floor, Sacramento, CA 98514

Phone: (916) 808-8491
lmilstein@cityofsacramento.org

Jill Moya, Financial Services Director, *City of Oceanside*
300 North Coast Highway, Oceanside, CA 92054
Phone: (760) 435-3887
jmoya@oceansideca.org

Marilyn Munoz, Senior Staff Counsel, *Department of Finance*
915 L Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 445-8918
Marilyn.Munoz@dof.ca.gov

Kaleb Neufeld, Assistant Controller, *City of Fresno*
2600 Fresno Street, Fresno, CA 93721
Phone: (559) 621-2489
Kaleb.Neufeld@fresno.gov

Andy Nichols, *Nichols Consulting*
1857 44th Street, Sacramento, CA 95819
Phone: (916) 455-3939
andy@nichols-consulting.com

Margaret Olaiya, Director of Finance, *County of Santa Clara*
Claimant Contact
70 West Hedding Street, East Wing, 2nd Floor, San Jose, CA 95110
Phone: (408) 299-5201
Margaret.Olaiya@fin.sccgov.org

Erika Opp, Administrative Analyst, *City of St. Helena*
City Clerk, 1480 Main Street, St. Helena, CA 94574
Phone: (707) 968-2743
eopp@cityofsthelena.gov

Patricia Pacot, Accountant Auditor I, *County of Colusa*
Office of Auditor-Controller, 546 Jay Street, Suite #202, Colusa, CA 95932
Phone: (530) 458-0424
ppacot@countyofcolusa.org

Arthur Palkowitz, *Law Offices of Arthur M. Palkowitz*
Claimant Representative
12807 Calle de la Siena, San Diego, CA 92130
Phone: (858) 259-1055
law@artpalk.onmicrosoft.com

Kirsten Pangilinan, Specialist, *State Controller's Office*
Local Reimbursements Section, 3301 C Street, Suite 740, Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone: (916) 322-2446
KPangilinan@sco.ca.gov

Johnnie Pina, Legislative Policy Analyst, *League of Cities*
1400 K Street, Suite 400, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 658-8214
jpina@cacities.org

Trevor Power, Accounting Manager, *City of Newport Beach*
100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660

Phone: (949) 644-3085
tpower@newportbeachca.gov

Jai Prasad, *County of San Bernardino*

Office of Auditor-Controller, 222 West Hospitality Lane, 4th Floor, San Bernardino, CA 92415-0018
Phone: (909) 386-8854
jai.prasad@sbcountyatc.gov

Jonathan Quan, Associate Accountant, *County of San Diego*

Projects, Revenue, and Grants Accounting, 5530 Overland Ave, Suite 410, San Diego, CA 92123
Phone: 6198768518
Jonathan.Quan@sdcounty.ca.gov

Roberta Raper, Director of Finance, *City of West Sacramento*

1110 West Capitol Ave, West Sacramento, CA 95691
Phone: (916) 617-4509
robertar@cityofwestsacramento.org

Jessica Sankus, Senior Legislative Analyst, *California State Association of Counties (CSAC)*

Government Finance and Administration, 1100 K Street, Suite 101, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 327-7500
jsankus@counties.org

Cindy Sconce, Director, *Government Consulting Partners*

5016 Brower Court, Granite Bay, CA 95746
Phone: (916) 276-8807
cindysconcegc@gmail.com

Camille Shelton, Chief Legal Counsel, *Commission on State Mandates*

980 9th Street, Suite 300, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 323-3562
camille.shelton@csm.ca.gov

Carla Shelton, Senior Legal Analyst, *Commission on State Mandates*

980 9th Street, Suite 300, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 323-3562
carla.shelton@csm.ca.gov

Paul Steenhausen, Principal Fiscal and Policy Analyst, *Legislative Analyst's Office*

925 L Street, Suite 1000, , Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 319-8303
Paul.Steenhausen@lao.ca.gov

Kim Stone, Legislation, *California District Attorneys Association*

2495 Natomas Park Drive, Suite 575, Sacramento, CA 95833
Phone: (916) 443-2017
kim@stoneadvocacy.com

Julie Testa, Vice Mayor, *City of Pleasanton*

123 Main Street PO Box 520, Pleasanton, CA 94566
Phone: (925) 872-6517
Jtesta@cityofpleasantonca.gov

Jolene Tollenaar, *MGT Consulting Group*

2251 Harvard Street, Suite 134, Sacramento, CA 95815
Phone: (916) 243-8913
jolenetollenaar@gmail.com

Robert Torrez, Interim Chief Financial Officer, *City of Huntington Beach*
2000 Main Street, Huntington Beach, CA 92648
Phone: (714) 536-5630
robert.torrez@surfcity-hb.org

Gregory Totten, Chief Executive Officer, *California District Attorneys Association*
2495 Natomas Park Drive, Suite 575, Sacramento, CA 95833
Phone: (916) 443-2017
gtotten@cdaa.org

Jessica Uzarski, Consultant, *Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee*
1020 N Street, Room 502, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 651-4103
Jessica.Uzarski@sen.ca.gov

Oscar Valdez, Interim Auditor-Controller, *County of Los Angeles*
Auditor-Controller's Office, 500 West Temple Street, Room 525, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Phone: (213) 974-0729
ovaldez@auditor.lacounty.gov

Renee Wellhouse, *David Wellhouse & Associates, Inc.*
3609 Bradshaw Road, H-382, Sacramento, CA 95927
Phone: (916) 797-4883
dwa-renee@surewest.net

Adam Whelen, Director of Public Works, *City of Anderson*
1887 Howard St., Anderson, CA 96007
Phone: (530) 378-6640
awhelen@ci.anderson.ca.us

R. Matthew Wise, Supervising Deputy Attorney General, *Department of Justice*
Attorney General's Office, 1300 I Street, Suite 125, PO Box 944255, Sacramento, CA 94244-2550
Phone: (916) 210-6046
Matthew.Wise@doj.ca.gov

Jacqueline Wong-Hernandez, Deputy Executive Director for Legislative Affairs, *California State Association of Counties (CSAC)*
1100 K Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 650-8104
jwong-hernandez@counties.org

Elisa Wynne, Staff Director, *Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee*
California State Senate, State Capitol Room 5019, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 651-4103
elisa.wynne@sen.ca.gov

Kaily Yap, Budget Analyst, *Department of Finance*
Local Government Unit, 915 L Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 445-3274
Kaily.Yap@dof.ca.gov

Siew-Chin Yeong, Director of Public Works, *City of Pleasanton*
3333 Busch Road, Pleasanton, CA 94566
Phone: (925) 931-5506
syeong@cityofpleasantonca.gov

Morgan Zamora, Prison Advocacy Coordinator, *Ella Baker Center for Human Rights*
1419 34th Avenue, Suite 202, Oakland, CA 94601

Phone: (510) 428-3940
morgan@ellabakercenter.org

Aly Zimmermann, City Manager, *City of Rocklin*
3970 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, CA 95677
Phone: (916) 625-5585
alyz@rocklin.ca.us

Helmholtz Zinser-Watkins, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, *State Controller's Office*
Local Government Programs and Services Division, Bureau of Payments, 3301 C Street, Suite 700,
Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone: (916) 324-7876
HZinser-watkins@sco.ca.gov