



Administrative Report

H.19., File # 20-1583

Meeting Date: 10/20/2020

To: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

From: MICHAEL W. WEBB, CITY ATTORNEY
MELANIE CHAVIRA, CITY PROSECUTOR
ANASTASIA PAPADAKIS, SENIOR DEPUTY CITY PROSECUTOR
JOY ABAQUIN, QUALITY OF LIFE PROSECUTOR

TITLE

APPROVE THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES AND CITY OF REDONDO BEACH AGREEMENT #2020-030(B) FOR ENHANCED ACCESS PRIVILEGES TO DESIGNATED STAIRWELLS AND/OR STAFF ELEVATORS FOR THE DURATION OF THE PANDEMIC CAUSED BY COVID-19

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Los Angeles Superior Court, Torrance branch, is allowing special access to its employee stairwell and staff elevator for use by its Non-County Justice Partners, including the Redondo Beach City Attorney's Office. The recommended action will authorize the Mayor to sign the Memorandum of Understanding allowing for the City to pay the pro-rated costs associated with rekeying the Torrance court employee stairwell doors, duplication of keys, and any incidental costs associated with this action at the Torrance courthouse.

BACKGROUND

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, Los Angeles Superior Court buildings have been particularly affected by the necessity to remain open for court proceedings that typically involve many people coming into the courthouse on any given day. These individuals include criminal defendants, attorneys, court staff, county sheriff deputies, witnesses, victims, and other various members of the public. Social distancing must remain in effect and is enforced with respect to all areas of public court access, including the main entrance to the building and elevator access to the various floors, hallways, and courtrooms.

Access to the courthouse, specifically the Torrance courthouse, has been affected in every way due to Covid-19. Currently, only Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputies have access to the main stairwell; court staff including judges, court reporters, clerks, judicial assistants, and administrators are considered County of Los Angeles employees and they are the only employees allowed access to the private employee elevator and stairwell of the Torrance courthouse. All other justice partners,

including prosecutors with the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office, attorneys with the Los Angeles Public Defender's Office, attorneys with the Los Angeles Alternate Public Defender's office, prosecutors with the Torrance City Attorney's Office, and prosecutors with the Redondo Beach City Attorney's Office must go through the main entrance and main elevator system at Torrance courthouse with the general public.

Currently, all justice partners must go through the main entrance of the courthouse, often standing in lines to get inside, then subsequently stand in the main elevator line to access the public elevators where only 2-4 people are allowed at one time. It often takes ten to fifteen minutes to get to designated courtroom in crowded areas. The Los Angeles Superior Court has made an exception for the above listed justice partners in order to allow access to the private employee elevator and stairwell to further effectuate social distancing and safety precautions with access to the building.

This agreement would allow prosecutors with the Redondo Beach City Attorney's Office the ability to access the courthouse building from the significantly less trafficked rear employee entrance. Furthermore, the rear employee entrance and key access would allow prosecutors with the Redondo Beach City Attorney's Office to access the much less trafficked employee stairwell and employee elevator (when available). This is an exceptional accommodation being given to the above justice partners for the sake of Los Angeles County Superior Court's commitment to safety and social distancing. It would significantly reduce the exposure to crowds of people that the prosecutors face when going to court every day in accessing and leaving the building at the beginning of the day and after lunch.

COORDINATION

None.

FISCAL IMPACT

The City of Redondo Beach would be responsible for 7.3% of the total cost of rekeying and four keys for the Redondo Beach City Attorney prosecutors as well as additional janitorial costs for cleaning and maintenance, which will be paid from the current FY 20-21 City Attorney's Budget.

ATTACHMENTS

- MOU between Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles and Cities of Redondo Beach and Torrance