



U.S. Bankruptcy Court Central District of California

Kathleen J. Campbell, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court

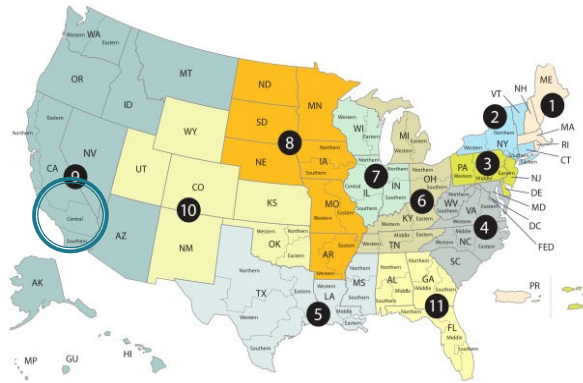
Welcome, we are glad you are here. I am looking forward to telling you a little about our Court here in the Central District of CA



The 94 U.S. judicial districts are organized into 12 regional circuits, each of which has a United States court of appeals. A court of appeals hears appeals from the district courts located within its circuit, as well as appeals from decisions of federal administrative agencies.

About Us

- The Central District of California Court is in the Ninth Circuit.
- Court's Annual Budget: \$15.4 Million



The eleven "numbered" circuits and the [D.C. Circuit](#) are geographically defined. The thirteenth court of appeals is the [United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit](#), which has nationwide jurisdiction over certain appeals based on their subject matter. All of the courts of appeals also hear appeals from some administrative agency decisions and rulemaking, with by far the largest share of these cases heard by the D.C. Circuit. The Federal Circuit hears appeals from specialized trial courts, primarily the [United States Court of International Trade](#) and the [United States Court of Federal Claims](#), as well as appeals from the district courts in [patent](#) cases and certain other specialized matters.

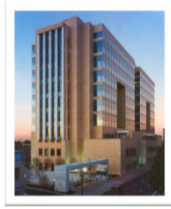
The Central District of California



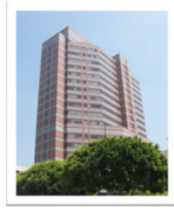
- 40,000 square miles
- 7 counties
- 19,098,335 people
- 91 languages spoken

Riverside, Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo

Five Divisional Offices



Santa Ana
(Orange County)



Los Angeles
(Headquarters)



San Fernando Valley
(Woodland Hills)



Northern
(Santa Barbara)



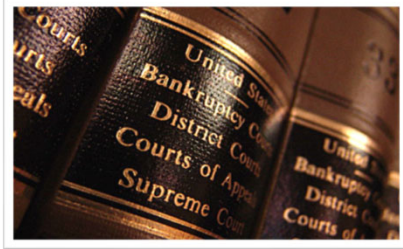
Riverside
(Inland Empire)

Our Court has five divisions, with our Headquarters in Los Angeles



The Court's Mission statement, developed by the Judges of the Court

Bankruptcy Law



- Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution authorizes Congress to enact “uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies.”
- Bankruptcy laws help people get a “fresh start” and help repay creditors in an orderly manner.
- Bankruptcy laws also protect troubled businesses.

Federal courts have exclusive jurisdiction over bankruptcy cases. This means that a bankruptcy case cannot be filed in a state court. [More on bankruptcy cases.](#)

Bankruptcy laws help people who can no longer pay their creditors get a fresh start – by liquidating assets to pay their debts or by creating a repayment plan. Bankruptcy laws also protect troubled businesses and provide for orderly distributions to business creditors through reorganization or liquidation.

Most cases are filed under the three main chapters of the Bankruptcy Code – [Chapter 7](#), [Chapter 11](#), and [Chapter 13](#)

Bankruptcy Fees

Chapter	Description	Filing Fee
7	Liquidation Under the Bankruptcy Code	\$338
11	Reorganization Under the Bankruptcy Code	\$1,738
13	Individual Debt Adjustment	\$313

Chapter 7 of the Bankruptcy Code provides for "liquidation" (the sale of a debtor's nonexempt property and the distribution of the proceeds to creditors). While creditors may be paid from the assets of the bankruptcy estate, bankruptcy is not meant to take everything from the debtor. Rather, the idea is for the debtor to be able to move forward with a fresh start, and exemption laws provide protection so that the debtor is not left penniless.

There are several alternatives to chapter 7 relief. For example, debtors who are engaged in business, including corporations, partnerships, and sole proprietorships, may prefer to remain in business and avoid liquidation. Such debtors should consider filing a petition under chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code.

Under chapter 11, the debtor may seek an adjustment of debts, either by reducing the debt or by extending the time for repayment, or debtor may seek a more comprehensive reorganization.

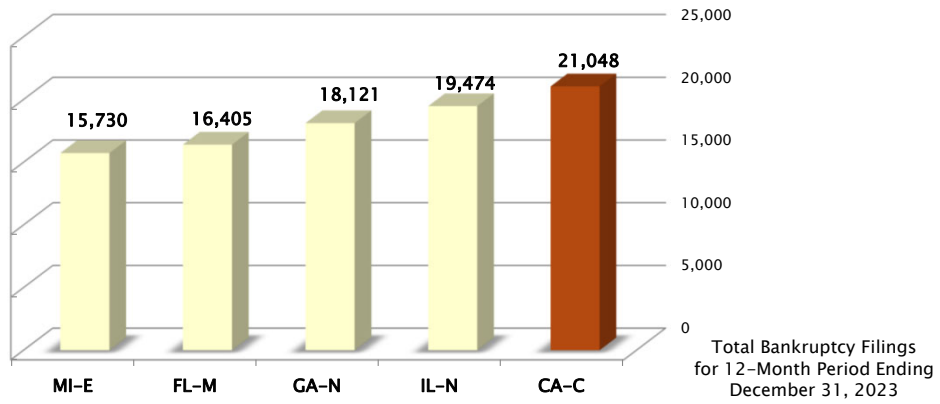
Sole proprietorships may be eligible for relief under chapter 13 of the Bankruptcy Code. Chapter 13 of the Bankruptcy Code provides (generally) for reorganization, usually involving a corporation or partnership. (A chapter 11 debtor usually proposes a plan of reorganization to keep its business alive and pay creditors over time. People in business or individuals can also seek relief in chapter 11.)

In addition, individual debtors who have regular income may seek an adjustment of debts under chapter 13 of the Bankruptcy Code. A particular advantage of chapter 13 is that it provides individual debtors with an opportunity to save their homes from foreclosure by allowing them to "catch up" on past due payments through a payment plan. Moreover, the court may dismiss a chapter 7 case filed by an individual whose debts are primarily consumer rather than business debts if the court finds that the granting of relief would be an abuse of chapter 7. 11 U.S.C. § 707(b).

A chapter 13 bankruptcy is also called a wage earner's plan. It enables individuals with regular income to develop a plan to repay all or part of their debts. Under this chapter, debtors propose a repayment plan to make installments to creditors over three to five years. If the debtor's current monthly income is less than the applicable state median, the plan will be for three years unless the court approves a longer period "for cause." (1) If the debtor's current monthly income is greater than the applicable state median, the plan generally must be for five years. In no case may a plan provide for payments over a period longer than five years. 11 U.S.C. §1322(d). During this time the law forbids creditors from starting or continuing collection efforts.

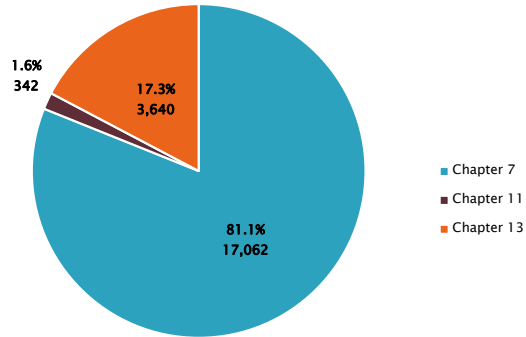
Workload of the Central District

- The Central District of California is the largest bankruptcy court and currently leads the nation in filings.



Central District Total Filings by Chapter

Filings by Chapter for the
12-Month Period Ending
December 31, 2023



**Total filings include Chapters 9, 12, & 15*

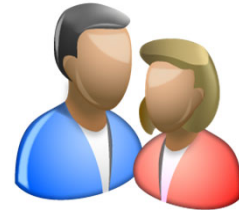
How We Are Organized



21
Judgeships



33
Chambers
Staff



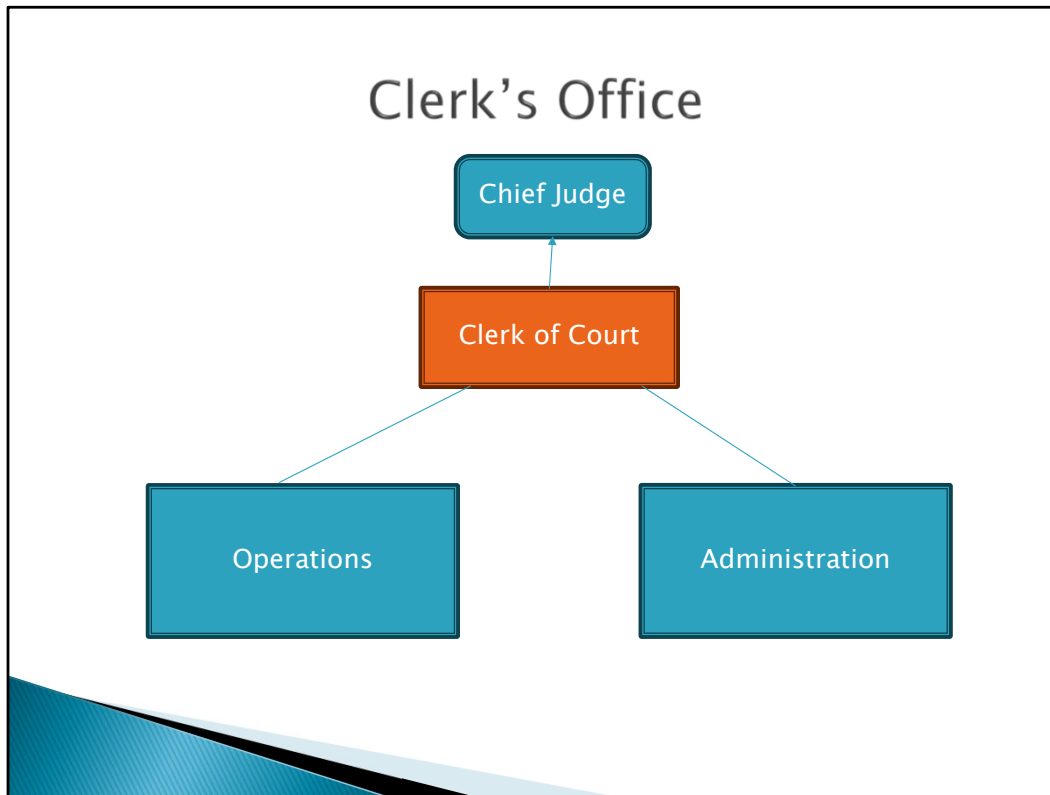
121
Clerk's Office
Staff

Chambers Staff work immediately with the judge, Clerk's Office Staff work to support the Court behind the scenes, take the filings, ensure bills are paid, and provide overall administrative and operational support, as needed.

Bankruptcy Judges of the Central District

[Photo Redacted]

Bankruptcy Judges are judicial officers of the district courts and are appointed by the court of appeals for 14-year terms. Each BK court has a Chief Judge. Our Chief Judge serves a term of four years and is elected by his or her peers. Recall judges are available to assist the court in periods of need.



The Clerk of Court is the primary administrative officer of the court, and manages the court's non-judicial functions in accordance with policies set by the court, and reports directly to the court through the chief judge. The Clerk's Office is divided into two areas, Operations and Administration. Operations processes the petitions filed and provides courtroom support. Administration handles all the non-judicial business of Court. There is an Operations Manager for each division. The Administration area includes: Financial Services, Systems Integration, Network Management, Audio/Visual, IT Help Desk, Administrative Services, and Space & Facilities.

Federal Judiciary's Case Management / Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF)

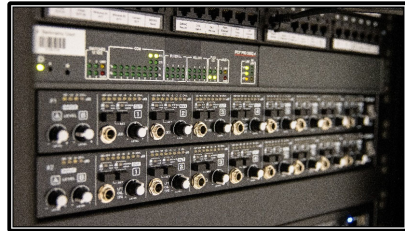
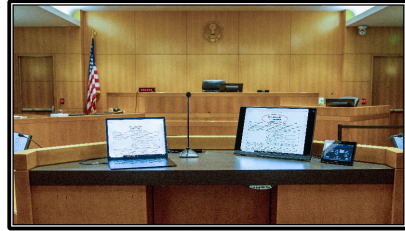


- Available 24 hours – 7 days a week
- Over 41 million cases on CM/ECF judiciary-wide
- More than 700,000 attorneys and others have filed documents electronically
- Development of Case Management Modernization is underway

CM/ECF is the federal courts' case management and electronic case filing system. It provides courts enhanced and updated docket management. It allows courts to maintain case documents in electronic form. And it gives each court the option of permitting case documents - pleadings, motions, petitions - to be filed with the court over the Internet.

Courtroom Technology

- No Court Reporters
- Electronic Exhibit Display System
- Conduct Video Hearings



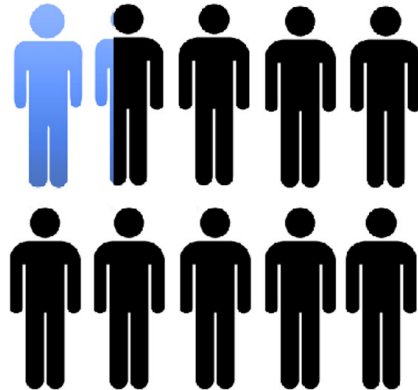
In August of 2022, a three-year effort concluded, known as “The Courtroom of the Future” for all the courtrooms in this building. This included the installation of electronic exhibit display systems to allow for the presentations of electronic documents (pdfs) and paper-based documents on monitors throughout the courtroom. Also, because bankruptcy proceedings do not include court reporters, the audio system is key to preserving the record. To that end a new audio sound system was installed to ensure better clarity and volume levels. This enhanced the digital record being recorded and improved teleconferencing and video conferencing sound. To provide high-definition video conferencing, three strategically placed cameras were installed in each courtroom focusing on the judge, witness stand, and lectern. There were also options put in place for assisted listening abilities and courtroom overflow, which would be attractive if there was a need to keep distance from one another. Participants are now able to appear in-person or remotely.

Self-Represented Debtors

- Nearly 3 in 25 bankruptcy petitions filed in California Central are from self-represented debtors.

12.1%

2,538 *Pro Se* Bankruptcy Filings
During 12-Month Period
Ending December 31, 2023



Self-Represented Debtors represent themselves in court without a lawyer. Usually, they decide to represent themselves due to the costs associated with hiring a lawyer. Historically, our District has had a high percentage of Self-Represented Debtors compared to other Federal Districts.

Pro Bono Assistance Program



Volunteer attorneys work with the Court to assist parties who cannot afford legal counsel. The Central District has pro bono clinics in all five of our court locations. They provide free legal services or refer parties to low cost counsel, depending upon their situation.

Mediation Program

- The Central District, in cooperation with local bar associations, coordinates a mediation program to enable parties in a case to settle their disputes without going to court.



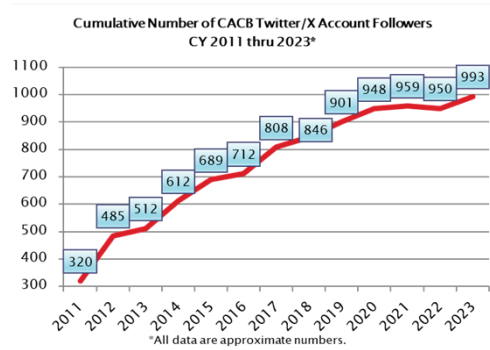
Judge Barry Russell spearheads our program, which uses volunteer mediators from throughout the Central District. Mediation is a process wherein the parties meet with a mediator who assists them in the negotiation of their differences.

Public Outreach

Active Partnerships with Bar Associations, Schools and Community Organizations

In 2011, the Central District began using social media to more widely educate and disseminate bankruptcy information to the public.

Website: www.cacb.uscourts.gov



We are fortunate that many of our judges are involved in the public outreach efforts of the Court. Judges, for example, routinely host girl scouts, elementary school students, law school students, and other events in their courtrooms. Other educational events that our judges participate in include panels and presentations with the attorneys and members of the public. The Court also recently began delivering Junior Attorney Litigation workshops, where newer attorneys gain practice in arguing a case before our bankruptcy judges and receive direct feedback and suggestions to build their skills.



This is a view of downtown from MacArthur Park. We hope you enjoy your stay in Los Angeles and thank you for visiting with us.