

Mendocino Unified School District

Business and Non-instructional Operations

Claims and Actions against the District

Claim Presentation Requirements

California law requires that prior to filing a complaint against the Mendocino Unified School District or its employees, the claimant must present a claim under the California Tort Claims Act. (Government Code 911 et seq.)

Time Limitations To Present Claim

Claims for money or damages relating to a cause of action for death or for injury to person, personal property or growing crops shall be presented to the Governing Board no later than six months after the accrual of the cause of action. (Government Code 905, 911.2)

1. Pursuant to Government Code 935, claims for money or damages that are listed as exceptions in Government Code 905 shall be presented not later than six months after the accrual of the cause of action. Such claims include:

(a) Claims under the Revenue and Taxation Code or other statute prescribing procedures for the refund, rebate, exemption, cancellation, amendment, modification, or adjustment of any tax, assessment, fee, or charge or any portion thereof, or of any penalties, costs, or charges related thereto;

(b) Claims in connection with which the filing of a notice of lien, statement of claim, or stop notice is required under any law relating to liens of mechanics, laborers, or material men;

(c) Claims by public employees for fees, salaries, wages, mileage, or other expenses and allowances;

(d) Claims for which the workers' compensation authorized by Division 4 (commencing with Section 3200) of the Labor Code is the exclusive remedy;

(e) Applications or claims for any form of public assistance under the Welfare and Institutions Code or other provisions of law relating to public assistance programs, and claims for goods, services, provisions, or other assistance rendered for or on behalf of any recipient of any form of public assistance;

(f) Applications or claims for money or benefits under any public retirement or pension system; Claims for principal or interest upon any bonds, notes, warrants, or other evidences of indebtedness;

(g) Claims that relate to a special assessment constituting a specific lien against the property assessed and that are payable from the proceeds of the assessment, by offset of a claim for damages against it or by delivery of any warrant or bonds representing it;

(h) Claims by the state or by a state department or agency or by another local public entity or by a judicial branch entity;

(i) Claims arising under any provision of the Unemployment Insurance Code, including, but not limited to, claims for money or benefits, or for refunds or credits of employer or worker contributions, penalties, or interest, or for refunds to workers of deductions from wages in excess of the amount prescribed;

(j) Claims for the recovery of penalties or forfeitures made pursuant to Article 1 (commencing with Section 1720) of Chapter 1 of Part 7 of Division 2 of the Labor Code;

(k) Claims governed by the Pedestrian Mall Law of 1960 (Part 1 (commencing with Section 11000) of Division 13 of the Streets and Highways Code);

(l) Claims made pursuant to Section 340.1 of the Code of Civil Procedure for the recovery of damages suffered as a result of childhood sexual abuse. This subdivision shall apply only to claims arising out of conduct occurring on or after January 1, 2009;

(n) Claims made pursuant to Section 701.820 of the Code of Civil Procedure for the recovery of money pursuant to Section 26680; and

(o) Claims made pursuant to Section 49013 of the Education Code for reimbursement of pupil fees for participation in educational activities. (Government Code 905, 911.2, 935)

2. Claims for money or damages as authorized in Government Code 905 and not included in paragraph #1 or paragraph #2 above, including claims for damages to real property, shall be presented not later than one year after the accrual of the cause of action. (Government Code 905, 911.2)

Claims against the District shall further be subject to the provisions of Government Code 945.4 relating to the prohibition of suits in the absence of the presentation of claims and action thereon by the District.

Late Claims

Any person presenting a claim under item #1 or #2 above later than six months after the accrual of the cause of action shall present, along with the claim, an application to file a late claim. Such claim and application to file a late claim shall be filed not later than one year after the accrual of the cause of action. (Government Code 911.4)

If a claim under item #1 or #2 is filed late and is not accompanied by an application to file a late claim, the Governing Board or Superintendent (collectively referred to as the "Board") shall, within 45 days, give written notice that the claim was not filed timely and that it is being returned without further action.

The "Board" shall grant or deny the application to file a late claim within 45 days after it is presented. This 45-day period may be extended by written agreement of the claimant and the "Board" provided that such agreement is made before the expiration of the 45-day period. (Government Code 911.6)

The “Board” shall grant the application to file a late claim under any one of the following circumstances: (Government Code 911.6)

1. The failure to present the claim was through mistake, inadvertence, surprise or excusable neglect and the district was not prejudiced in its defense of the claim by the failure to present the claim within the time limit.
2. The person who sustained the alleged injury, damage or loss was a minor during all of the time specified for presentation of the claim.
3. The person who sustained the alleged injury, damage or loss was physically or mentally incapacitated during all of the time specified for presentation of the claim and the disability was the reason he/she failed to present the claim.
4. The person who sustained the alleged injury, damage or loss died before the expiration of the time specified for the presentation of the claim.

If the application to present a late claim is denied, the claimant shall be given notice in the form set forth in Government Code 911.3. (Government Code 911.3) If the “Board” does not take action on the application to file a late claim within 45 days, the application shall be deemed to have been denied on the 45th day unless such time period has been extended, in which case it shall be denied on the last day of the period specified in the extension agreement. (Government Code 911.6)

Delivery and Form of Claim

A claim, any amendment thereto, or an application for leave to present a late claim shall be deemed presented when delivered to the office of the Superintendent or deposited in a post office, subpost office, substation, or mail chute or other like facility maintained by the U.S. Government in a sealed envelope properly addressed to the district office with postage paid. (Government Code 915, 915.2)

Claims must be submitted on the district claim form. The “Board” may return a claim not using the district’s claim form. (Government Code 910.4). The required Claim Form is attached to this administrative regulation.

Notice of Claim Insufficiency

The Superintendent or designee shall review all claims for sufficiency of information.

If the claim is found insufficient or found not to satisfy the form requirements under Government Code 910.4, the “Board” may, within 20 days of receipt of the claim, either personally deliver or mail to the claimant, at the address stated in the claim form, a notice stating with particularity the defects or omission in the claim. (Government Code 910.8, 915.4)

If such a notice is delivered or sent to the claimant, the “Board” shall not act upon the claim until at least 15 days after such notice is given. (Government Code 910.8)

Amendments to Claim

Claims may be amended within the time limits provided under section entitled “Time Limitations” above or prior to final action by the “Board,” whichever is later, if the claim, as amended, relates to the same transaction or occurrence which gave rise to the original claim. (Government Code 910.6)

Action on Claim

Within 45 days after the presentation or amendment of a claim, the “Board” may take action on the claim. This time limit may be extended by written agreement before the expiration of the 45- day period or before legal action is commenced or barred by legal limitations. (Government Code 912.4)

The “Board” may act on the claim in one of the following ways: (Government Code 912.6)

1. If the “Board” finds that the claim is not a proper claim against the district or its employees, the claim shall be rejected.
2. If the “Board” finds that the claim is a proper claim against the district and is for an amount justly due, the claim shall be allowed.
3. If the “Board” finds that the claim is a proper claim against the district but is for an amount greater than is justly due, the “Board” shall either reject the claim or allow it in the amount justly due and reject it as to the balance.
4. If legal liability of the district or the amount justly due is disputed, the “Board” may reject or compromise the claim.

If the “Board” allows the claim in whole or in part or compromises the claim and the claimant accepts the amount allowed or offered to settle the claim, the “Board” may require the claimant to accept it in settlement of the entire claim. (Government Code 912.6)

The Superintendent or designee shall transmit to the claimant written notice of action taken or inaction which is deemed rejection. The notice shall be in the form set forth in Government Code 913 and shall either be personally delivered or mailed to the address stated in the claim form. (Government Code 913, 915.4)

If no action is taken within the prescribed time limits, the claim shall be deemed to have been rejected. (Government Code 912.4, 945.6)

All claimants are encouraged to promptly seek the advice of an attorney so as to protect their legal rights with respect to any claim or potential claim.

NCSIG 2016