



news

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Fourth Judicial District Probate Court to hold open house Friday, Sept. 21

COLORADO SPRINGS – The Fourth Judicial District announced today that its Probate Court will host an open house to celebrate its updated courtroom, which has been designed to meet the special needs of many probate litigants.

The open house will be held on Friday, Sept. 21, 2012, from 3 to 5 p.m. in Division W, Courtroom W150 of the El Paso County Judicial Building (270 S. Tejon). Refreshments will be served and a presentation about the Court's operation will be made at 4 p.m. Media and the public are invited to attend. Cameras are welcome.

"I am thrilled with the new design of the courtroom and I hope people in the community will come out to see what we have done," said the Honorable Robin Chittum, the magistrate who presides over the Probate Court docket. "We have gone to great lengths to ensure that senior citizens and special needs adults have easier access and accommodations when coming to court."

Some of the changes to the courtroom include:

- A lowered bench, so court participants have an easier time seeing the judicial officer.
- Removal of the courtroom's bar to provide easier access for wheelchairs to and from the gallery and well of the courtroom.
- Semi-circular litigants' tables to provide a more conversational setting during court proceedings.
- Additional, designated wheelchair seating.
- A floor-level witness stand.
- An improved phone system and sound amplifiers for the hearing impaired.

Improvements outside the courtroom include redesigned security procedures and signage to make security screening easier and more efficient, a probate information booth at the courthouse entrance and improved signage directing people to the courtroom.

In addition to Magistrate Chittum and other judicial officers from the Fourth Judicial District, the open house will be attended by court administration, representatives from the Office of the State Court Administrator, probate attorneys, care-givers, non-profit support organizations, professional guardians and conservators, case workers and law enforcement.

The Probate Court has exclusive jurisdiction over all matters of probate, settlements of estates of deceased persons, appointment of guardians, conservators and administrators, and settlement of their accounts, the adjudication of the mentally ill, and such other jurisdiction as may be provided by law.