
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 2235 (Pacheco) - The Judicial Home Security Act

Version: July 2, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: JUD. 13 - 0, PUB. S. 6 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Bob Franzoia

Bill Summary: AB 2235 would establish the Judicial Home Security Act (JHSA), to be administered by the Attorney General, to allow judicial officers and their families to shield their home addresses from public disclosure.

Fiscal Impact: Estimated \$3.2 million in FY 2026-27 and \$2 million in FY 2027-28 and \$1.85 million annually to the Department of Justice (DOJ) to establish a program for judicial officers to shield their home address and request an alternate mailing address. (fees, General Fund)

The Attorney General may assess an annual fee to a program participant in an amount to defray the actual costs of maintaining this program and to reimburse the General Fund for any amounts expended from that fund for the purposes of the JHSA. If 2,000 judicial officers choose to participate in the program, fees could range between \$1,600 and \$925 depending on the year.

Background: Safe at Home is an address confidentiality program. The program was created in 1998 to allow victims of domestic violence or stalking to obtain an alternate confidential address to be used in public records. Under the program, SOS is responsible for providing a substitute address to program participants while protecting their actual residential addresses and also acts as the participants' agent for service of process, and forwards mail received at the substitute address. A participant must be certified by the enrolling office and may stay in the program for four years unless recertified. Their Safe at Home address is also accepted by California state, county, and city government agencies in lieu of a residential or other mailing address. The program has been repeatedly expanded over time to include additional groups, such as survivors of other crimes, including sexual assault, human trafficking, stalking, and elder or dependent adult abuse, as well as providers of certain health care services, including reproductive health care and gender-affirming care

Proposed Law: This bill would require the Attorney General to establish the Judicial Home Security Program under which a judicial officer, including a current or imminent, current, or former superior court judge or district court judge, or an adult household member of a judicial officer who is domiciled in California may request their home address in public records to be shielded or substituted with an alternate mailing address.

The bill would require the Attorney General to approve an application to the program if it is filed in the manner and on the form prescribed by the Attorney General and contains prescribed information, including documentation showing the household contains an

individual who is a judicial officer and a signed statement that the applicant fears for their safety or the safety of a household member of the applicant due to the employment as of the judicial officer. The bill would require the application to be dated and signed and would make knowingly providing false or incorrect information in the application a misdemeanor. The bill would require the Attorney General to commence accepting applications under the program on April 1, 2027.

The bill would require, when disclosing or releasing records or information that would otherwise contain the home address of a program participant in any format or medium, a state or local agency to substitute the participant's alternate mailing address for any reference to the participant's home address. The bill would require, when disclosing or releasing records or information that would otherwise contain the situs of the home address of a program participant in any format or medium, a county assessor's office to substitute the program participant's alternate mailing address for the situs of the home address on assessment rolls, maps, property ownership statements and records, and any other records containing the home address of a program participant.

The bill would require, when disclosing or releasing, in any format or medium, records or information that would otherwise contain the situs of the home address of a program participant, who requests shielding, a county assessor's office and a county recorder's office to shield the participant's public record, including real property deeds, real estate records, and any other records containing the home address of a program participant. In this regard, the bill would require a program participant to submit a request containing a list of documents to be shielded, a sworn statement attesting to the accuracy of the information provided, and payment of a fee, as specified. The bill would authorize a program participant to submit a request to update the list of documents to be shielded, as specified. The bill would require the county assessor's office and county recorder's office to validate and shield any requested records within 5 business days of receipt of a request for shielding. The bill would authorize making any original documents available only to specified persons or in specified circumstances.

The bill would authorize the Attorney General to adopt guidance to facilitate the administration of the act by state and local agencies.

By imposing new duties on local agencies, expanding the scope of the crime of perjury, and creating a crime, this bill would create a state-mandated local program.

Related Legislation: SB 489 (Alpert) Chapter 1005/1998 established the "Address Confidentiality for Victims of Domestic Violence" program, now referred to as the "Safe at Home" program after a 2000 administrative public facing name change. This was based on the Legislature's finding that persons attempting to escape from actual or threatened violence frequently establish new names or addresses in order to prevent their assailants or probable assailants from finding them.

Over the years, the program has been expanded to include victims of other crimes as well as certain vulnerable groups. The Safe at Home program is now available to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, child abduction, and elder or dependent adult abuse as well as designated health care service providers, employees, volunteers, and patients and even public entity employees and contractors, as provided.

AB 2624 (Bonta) would expand the Safe at Home address confidentiality program by adding immigration support services providers, employees, volunteers, clients, and their family members as a new protected participant group. (The cost is an estimated \$290,000 in FY 2026-27 and \$154,000 annually thereafter to fund staffing, outreach, training, policies, application processing, and partnerships with immigration support service organizations within the existing Safe at Home program infrastructure.) AB 2624 is pending in this committee.

Staff Comments: While there may be a separation of powers consideration to be made to house judicial branch security with an executive branch law enforcement agency, rather than the SOS and Safe at Home, the cost is concerning. The JHSP does propose stronger protection around real property records as Safe at Home does not have a reliable shielding mechanism where the JHSP places direct obligations on county recorders and assessors with a defined compliance window for substitution the alternate address,

For eligibility, Safe at Home relies on authorized enrolling agents, for example, domestic violence shelters, district attorney victim advocates, etc. to certify victim status for a qualifying crime. Safe at Home has an enrolling-agent pathway for public entity employees that could potentially be extended to judicial officers but would need to be adjusted as that category requires the applicant to show they've experienced actual violence, threats of violence, or harassment. Judicial officers can qualify under that category, but only if they meet that threshold, professional position alone isn't sufficient.

The JHSP provides a judicial officer or household member qualifies by virtue of the role and a sworn statement of fear, with no need to show a prior incident. That is a threshold to qualify for the program given the threats experienced by judicial officers. However, it may be possible to integrate the higher levels of security sought by the JHSP into Safe at Home and mitigate the cost of establishing an entirely new program.