

LA County judge indicates willingness to grant subpoena for courthouse surveillance

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*Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge
Norman Shapiro*

LOS ANGELES -- A superior court judge indicated he was ready to grant a subpoena for five years' worth of police department records outlining surveillance operations within the main Los Angeles criminal courthouse after public defenders successfully argued Wednesday the files may show a history of outrageous government conduct.

Judge Norman J. Shapiro said the order was contingent upon the outcome of an in camera meeting with Los Angeles Deputy City Attorney Francine A. Ricks, who objected to the defense's motion on grounds that exposing operations would jeopardize open criminal cases.

Shapiro also appointed Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge William C. Ryan as a special master in the case. Ryan will be given recordings made by the Los Angeles Police Department, which may have picked up a conversation between one of the public defenders and a defendant in the associated case.