

Senate Bill No. 1277

CHAPTER 177

An act to amend Sections 2924b, 2924h, 2924j, 2924l, 2934a, 2945, 2945.1, 2945.3, and 2945.4 of the Civil Code, relating to mortgages.

[Approved by Governor July 19, 2004. Filed with
Secretary of State July 20, 2004.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1277, Ackerman. Mortgages: foreclosure.

(1) Existing law requires a person recording a notice of default of a mortgage or deed of trust to perform specified actions.

This bill would specify that those actions apply to the recording of a notice of default or sale, and define who is authorized to make those recordings, as specified. The bill would also make nonsubstantive, technical changes to those provisions.

(2) Existing law regulates the procedures for the foreclosure of a mortgage or deed of trust, and requires specified notice to persons with recorded interests in real property that are sold at a trustee's sale.

This bill would provide that certain persons are not liable for providing specified information to owner's related to foreclosure sales and consultants.

(3) Existing law defines the term "trustee" for the purpose of a trustee under a deed of trust who is named in an action or proceeding in which that deed of trust is the subject.

This bill would provide that that term include substituted trustees and agents of a beneficiary or trustee.

(4) Existing law sets forth the procedures for the substitution of trustees under a deed of trust upon real property or an estate for years, given to secure an obligation to pay money, by the beneficiary or beneficiaries under the trust deed who hold more than 50% of the record beneficial interest of a series of notes secured by the same real property or of undivided interests in a note secured by real property equivalent to a series transaction. Existing law requires a copy of a substitution effected after a notice of default has been recorded but prior to the recording of the notice of sale, to be mailed prior to that recording.

This bill would permit that copy of substitution to be mailed prior to, or concurrently with, the recording thereof. The bill would also provide that once recorded that substitution constitutes conclusive evidence of the authority of the substituted trustee to act pursuant with the law, as specified. The bill would further set forth similar notice procedures for



a substitution that is executed prior to or concurrently with the recording of a notice of default.

(5) Existing law regulates the business of foreclosure consultant service agreements. Existing law defines the term “foreclosure consultant” to be a person who for compensation offers or purports to offer, among other things, to stop or postpone a foreclosure sale, with specified exceptions for persons of certain occupations or professions. A violation of specified provisions by foreclosure consultants constitutes a crime.

This bill would expand the definition of “foreclosure consultant” to mean a person who assists or arranges for an owner to obtain the remaining proceeds from a disclosure sale of the owner’s residence, unless the owner’s attorney. The bill would further require foreclosure consultants to provide additional notice to an owner about foreclosure sales, as specified, and also make certain findings and declarations in that regard. By adding to those provisions, the bill would expand the definition of a crime, thereby imposing a state-mandated local program.

(6) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 2924b of the Civil Code is amended to read:

2924b. (a) Any person desiring a copy of any notice of default and of any notice of sale under any deed of trust or mortgage with power of sale upon real property or an estate for years therein, as to which deed of trust or mortgage the power of sale cannot be exercised until these notices are given for the time and in the manner provided in Section 2924 may, at any time subsequent to recordation of the deed of trust or mortgage and prior to recordation of notice of default thereunder, cause to be filed for record in the office of the recorder of any county in which any part or parcel of the real property is situated, a duly acknowledged request for a copy of the notice of default and of sale. This request shall be signed and acknowledged by the person making the request, specifying the name and address of the person to whom the notice is to be mailed, shall identify the deed of trust or mortgage by stating the names of the parties thereto, the date of recordation thereof, and the book and page where the deed of trust or mortgage is recorded or the recorder’s number, and shall be in substantially the following form:



“In accordance with Section 2924b, Civil Code, request is hereby made that a copy of any notice of default and a copy of any notice of sale under the deed of trust (or mortgage) recorded _____, _____, in Book _____ page _____ records of _____ County, (or filed for record with recorder’s serial number _____, _____ County) California, executed by _____ as trustor (or mortgagor) in which _____ is named as beneficiary (or mortgagee) and _____ as trustee be mailed to

_____ at _____.
 Name Address

NOTICE: A copy of any notice of default and of any notice of sale will be sent only to the address contained in this recorded request. If your address changes, a new request must be recorded.

Signature _____”

Upon the filing for record of the request, the recorder shall index in the general index of grantors the names of the trustors (or mortgagor) recited therein and the names of persons requesting copies.

(b) The mortgagee, trustee, or other person authorized to record the notice of default or the notice of sale shall do each of the following:

(1) Within 10 business days following recordation of the notice of default, deposit or cause to be deposited in the United States mail an envelope, sent by registered or certified mail with postage prepaid, containing a copy of the notice with the recording date shown thereon, addressed to each person whose name and address are set forth in a duly recorded request therefor, directed to the address designated in the request and to each trustor or mortgagor at his or her last known address if different than the address specified in the deed of trust or mortgage with power of sale.

(2) At least 20 days before the date of sale, deposit or cause to be deposited in the United States mail an envelope, sent by registered or certified mail with postage prepaid, containing a copy of the notice of the time and place of sale, addressed to each person whose name and address are set forth in a duly recorded request therefor, directed to the address designated in the request and to each trustor or mortgagor at his or her last known address if different than the address specified in the deed of trust or mortgage with power of sale.

(3) As used in paragraphs (1) and (2), the “last known address” of each trustor or mortgagor means the last business or residence address actually known by the mortgagee, beneficiary, trustee, or other person authorized to record the notice of default. The beneficiary shall inform the trustee of the trustor’s last address actually known by the beneficiary.



However, the trustee shall incur no liability for failing to send any notice to the last address unless the trustee has actual knowledge of it.

(4) A “person authorized to record the notice of default or the notice of sale” shall include an agent for the mortgagee or beneficiary, an agent of the named trustee, any person designated in an executed substitution of trustee, or an agent of that substituted trustee.

(c) The mortgagee, trustee, or other person authorized to record the notice of default or the notice of sale shall do the following:

(1) Within one month following recordation of the notice of default, deposit or cause to be deposited in the United States mail an envelope, sent by registered or certified mail with postage prepaid, containing a copy of the notice with the recording date shown thereon, addressed to each person set forth in paragraph (2), provided that the estate or interest of any person entitled to receive notice under this subdivision is acquired by an instrument sufficient to impart constructive notice of the estate or interest in the land or portion thereof which is subject to the deed of trust or mortgage being foreclosed, and provided the instrument is recorded in the office of the county recorder so as to impart that constructive notice prior to the recording date of the notice of default and provided the instrument as so recorded sets forth a mailing address which the county recorder shall use, as instructed within the instrument, for the return of the instrument after recording, and which address shall be the address used for the purposes of mailing notices herein.

(2) The persons to whom notice shall be mailed under this subdivision are:

(A) The successor in interest, as of the recording date of the notice of default, of the estate or interest or any portion thereof of the trustor or mortgagor of the deed of trust or mortgage being foreclosed.

(B) The beneficiary or mortgagee of any deed of trust or mortgage recorded subsequent to the deed of trust or mortgage being foreclosed, or recorded prior to or concurrently with the deed of trust or mortgage being foreclosed but subject to a recorded agreement or a recorded statement of subordination to the deed of trust or mortgage being foreclosed.

(C) The assignee of any interest of the beneficiary or mortgagee described in subparagraph (B), as of the recording date of the notice of default.

(D) The vendee of any contract of sale, or the lessee of any lease, of the estate or interest being foreclosed which is recorded subsequent to the deed of trust or mortgage being foreclosed, or recorded prior to or concurrently with the deed of trust or mortgage being foreclosed but subject to a recorded agreement or statement of subordination to the deed of trust or mortgage being foreclosed.



(E) The successor in interest to the vendee or lessee described in subparagraph (D), as of the recording date of the notice of default.

(F) The Office of the Controller, Sacramento, California, where, as of the recording date of the notice of default, a “Notice of Lien for Postponed Property Taxes” has been recorded against the real property to which the notice of default applies.

(3) At least 20 days before the date of sale, deposit or cause to be deposited in the United States mail an envelope, sent by registered or certified mail with postage prepaid, containing a copy of the notice of the time and place of sale addressed to each person to whom a copy of the notice of default is to be mailed as provided in paragraphs (1) and (2), and addressed to the office of any state taxing agency, Sacramento, California, which has recorded, subsequent to the deed of trust or mortgage being foreclosed, a notice of tax lien prior to the recording date of the notice of default against the real property to which the notice of default applies.

(4) Provide a copy of the notice of sale to the Internal Revenue Service, in accordance with Section 7425 of the Internal Revenue Code and any applicable federal regulation, if a “Notice of Federal Tax Lien under Internal Revenue Laws” has been recorded, subsequent to the deed of trust or mortgage being foreclosed, against the real property to which the notice of sale applies. The failure to provide the Internal Revenue Service with a copy of the notice of sale pursuant to this paragraph shall be sufficient cause to rescind the trustee’s sale and invalidate the trustee’s deed, at the option of either the successful bidder at the trustee’s sale or the trustee, and in either case with the consent of the beneficiary. Any option to rescind the trustee’s sale pursuant to this paragraph shall be exercised prior to any transfer of the property by the successful bidder to a bona fide purchaser for value. A rescision of the trustee’s sale pursuant to this paragraph may be recorded in a notice of rescision pursuant to Section 1058.5.

(5) The mailing of notices in the manner set forth in paragraph (1) shall not impose upon any licensed attorney, agent, or employee of any person entitled to receive notices as herein set forth any duty to communicate the notice to the entitled person from the fact that the mailing address used by the county recorder is the address of the attorney, agent, or employee.

(d) Any deed of trust or mortgage with power of sale hereafter executed upon real property or an estate for years therein may contain a request that a copy of any notice of default and a copy of any notice of sale thereunder shall be mailed to any person or party thereto at the address of the person given therein, and a copy of any notice of default and of any notice of sale shall be mailed to each of these at the same time



and in the same manner required as though a separate request therefor had been filed by each of these persons as herein authorized. If any deed of trust or mortgage with power of sale executed after September 19, 1939, except a deed of trust or mortgage of any of the classes excepted from the provisions of Section 2924, does not contain a mailing address of the trustor or mortgagor therein named, and if no request for special notice by the trustor or mortgagor in substantially the form set forth in this section has subsequently been recorded, a copy of the notice of default shall be published once a week for at least four weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the property is situated, the publication to commence within 10 business days after the filing of the notice of default. In lieu of publication, a copy of the notice of default may be delivered personally to the trustor or mortgagor within the 10 business days or at any time before publication is completed, or by posting the notice of default in a conspicuous place on the property and mailing the notice to the last known address of the trustor.

(e) Any person required to mail a copy of a notice of default or notice of sale to each trustor or mortgagor pursuant to subdivision (b) or (c) by registered or certified mail shall simultaneously cause to be deposited in the United States mail, with postage prepaid and mailed by first-class mail, an envelope containing an additional copy of the required notice addressed to each trustor or mortgagor at the same address to which the notice is sent by registered or certified mail pursuant to subdivision (b) or (c). The person shall execute and retain an affidavit identifying the notice mailed, showing the name and residence or business address of that person, that he or she is over the age of 18 years, the date of deposit in the mail, the name and address of the trustor or mortgagor to whom sent, and that the envelope was sealed and deposited in the mail with postage fully prepaid. In the absence of fraud, the affidavit required by this subdivision shall establish a conclusive presumption of mailing.

(f) No request for a copy of any notice filed for record pursuant to this section, no statement or allegation in the request, and no record thereof shall affect the title to real property or be deemed notice to any person that any person requesting copies of notice has or claims any right, title, or interest in, or lien or charge upon the property described in the deed of trust or mortgage referred to therein.

(g) “Business day,” as used in this section, has the meaning specified in Section 9.

SEC. 2. Section 2924h of the Civil Code is amended to read:

2924h. (a) Each and every bid made by a bidder at a trustee’s sale under a power of sale contained in a deed of trust or mortgage shall be deemed to be an irrevocable offer by that bidder to purchase the property being sold by the trustee under the power of sale for the amount of the



bid. Any second or subsequent bid by the same bidder or any other bidder for a higher amount shall be a cancellation of the prior bid.

(b) At the trustee's sale the trustee shall have the right (1) to require every bidder to show evidence of the bidder's ability to deposit with the trustee the full amount of his or her final bid in cash, a cashier's check drawn on a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state, or a cash equivalent which has been designated in the notice of sale as acceptable to the trustee prior to, and as a condition to, the recognizing of the bid, and to conditionally accept and hold these amounts for the duration of the sale, and (2) to require the last and highest bidder to deposit, if not deposited previously, the full amount of the bidder's final bid in cash, a cashier's check drawn on a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state, or a cash equivalent which has been designated in the notice of sale as acceptable to the trustee, immediately prior to the completion of the sale, the completion of the sale being so announced by the fall of the hammer or in another customary manner. The present beneficiary of the deed of trust under foreclosure shall have the right to offset his or her bid or bids only to the extent of the total amount due the beneficiary including the trustee's fees and expenses.

(c) In the event the trustee accepts a check drawn by a credit union or a savings and loan association pursuant to this subdivision or a cash equivalent designated in the notice of sale, the trustee may withhold the issuance of the trustee's deed to the successful bidder submitting the check drawn by a state or federal credit union or savings and loan association or the cash equivalent until funds become available to the payee or endorsee as a matter of right.

For the purposes of this subdivision, the trustee's sale shall be deemed final upon the acceptance of the last and highest bid, and shall be deemed perfected as of 8 a.m. on the actual date of sale if the trustee's deed is recorded within 15 calendar days after the sale, or the next business day following the 15th day if the county recorder in which the property is located is closed on the 15th day. However, the sale is subject to an automatic rescission for a failure of consideration in the event the funds are not "available for withdrawal" as defined in Section 12413.1 of the Insurance Code. The trustee shall send a notice of rescission for a failure of consideration to the last and highest bidder submitting the check or



alternative instrument, if the address of the last and highest bidder is known to the trustee.

If a sale results in an automatic right of rescission for failure of consideration pursuant to this subdivision, the interest of any lienholder shall be reinstated in the same priority as if the previous sale had not occurred.

(d) If the trustee has not required the last and highest bidder to deposit the cash, a cashier's check drawn on a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state, or a cash equivalent which has been designated in the notice of sale as acceptable to the trustee in the manner set forth in paragraph (2) of subdivision (b), the trustee shall complete the sale. If the last and highest bidder then fails to deliver to the trustee, when demanded, the amount of his or her final bid in cash, a cashier's check drawn on a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state, or a cash equivalent which has been designated in the notice of sale as acceptable to the trustee, that bidder shall be liable to the trustee for all damages which the trustee may sustain by the refusal to deliver to the trustee the amount of the final bid, including any court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

If the last and highest bidder willfully fails to deliver to the trustee the amount of his or her final bid in cash, a cashier's check drawn on a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state, or a cash equivalent which has been designated in the notice of sale as acceptable to the trustee, or if the last and highest bidder cancels a cashier's check drawn on a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state, or a cash equivalent that has been designated in the notice of sale as acceptable to the trustee, that bidder shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500).

In the event the last and highest bidder cancels an instrument submitted to the trustee as a cash equivalent, the trustee shall provide a



new notice of sale in the manner set forth in Section 2924f and shall be entitled to recover the costs of the new notice of sale as provided in Section 2924c.

(e) Any postponement or discontinuance of the sale proceedings shall be a cancellation of the last bid.

(f) In the event that this section conflicts with any other statute, then this section shall prevail.

(g) It shall be unlawful for any person, acting alone or in concert with others, (1) to offer to accept or accept from another, any consideration of any type not to bid, or (2) to fix or restrain bidding in any manner, at a sale of property conducted pursuant to a power of sale in a deed of trust or mortgage. However, it shall not be unlawful for any person, including a trustee, to state that a property subject to a recorded notice of default or subject to a sale conducted pursuant to this chapter is being sold in an “as-is” condition.

In addition to any other remedies, any person committing any act declared unlawful by this subdivision or any act which would operate as a fraud or deceit upon any beneficiary, trustor, or junior lienor shall, upon conviction, be fined not more than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or imprisoned in the county jail for not more than one year, or be punished by both that fine and imprisonment.

SEC. 3. Section 2924j of the Civil Code is amended to read:

2924j. (a) Unless an interpleader action has been filed, within 30 days of the execution of the trustee’s deed resulting from a sale in which there are proceeds remaining after payment of the amounts required by paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 2924k, the trustee shall send written notice to all persons with recorded interests in the real property as of the date immediately prior to the trustee’s sale who would be entitled to notice pursuant to subdivisions (b) and (c) of Section 2924b. The notice shall be sent by first-class mail in the manner provided in paragraph (1) of subdivision (c) of Section 2924b and inform each entitled person of each of the following:

- (1) That there has been a trustee’s sale of the described real property.
- (2) That the noticed person may have a claim to all or a portion of the sale proceeds remaining after payment of the amounts required by paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 2924k.
- (3) The noticed person may contact the trustee at the address provided in the notice to pursue any potential claim.
- (4) That before the trustee can act, the noticed person may be required to present proof that the person holds the beneficial interest in the obligation and the security interest therefor. In the case of a promissory note secured by a deed of trust, proof that the person holds the beneficial interest may include the original promissory note and assignment of



beneficial interests related thereto. The noticed person shall also submit a written claim to the trustee, executed under penalty of perjury, stating the following:

(A) The amount of the claim to the date of trustee's sale.

(B) An itemized statement of the principal, interest, and other charges.

(C) That claims must be received by the trustee at the address stated in the notice no later than 30 days after the date the trustee sends notice to the potential claimant.

(b) The trustee shall exercise due diligence to determine the priority of the written claims received by the trustee to the trustee's sale surplus proceeds from those persons to whom notice was sent pursuant to subdivision (a). In the event there is no dispute as to the priority of the written claims submitted to the trustee, proceeds shall be paid within 30 days after the conclusion of the notice period. If the trustee has failed to determine the priority of written claims within 90 days following the 30-day notice period, then within 10 days thereafter the trustee shall deposit the funds with the clerk of the court pursuant to subdivision (c) or file an interpleader action pursuant to subdivision (e). Nothing in this section shall preclude any person from pursuing other remedies or claims as to surplus proceeds.

(c) If, after due diligence, the trustee is unable to determine the priority of the written claims received by the trustee to the trustee's sale surplus of multiple persons or if the trustee determines there is a conflict between potential claimants, the trustee may file a declaration of the unresolved claims and deposit with the clerk of the superior court of the county in which the sale occurred, that portion of the sales proceeds that cannot be distributed, less any fees charged by the clerk pursuant to this subdivision. The declaration shall specify the date of the trustee's sale, a description of the property, the names and addresses of all persons sent notice pursuant to subdivision (a), a statement that the trustee exercised due diligence pursuant to subdivision (b), that the trustee provided written notice as required by subdivisions (a) and (d) and the amount of the sales proceeds deposited by the trustee with the court. Further, the trustee shall submit a copy of the trustee's sales guarantee and any information relevant to the identity, location, and priority of the potential claimants with the court and shall file proof of service of the notice required by subdivision (d) on all persons described in subdivision (a).

The clerk shall deposit the amount with the county treasurer subject to order of the court upon the application of any interested party. The clerk may charge a reasonable fee for the performance of activities pursuant to this subdivision equal to the fee for filing an interpleader action pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 26820) of



Division 2 of Title 3 of the Government Code. Upon deposit of that portion of the sale proceeds that cannot be distributed by due diligence, the trustee shall be discharged of further responsibility for the disbursement of sale proceeds. A deposit with the clerk of the court pursuant to this subdivision may be either for the total proceeds of the trustee's sale, less any fees charged by the clerk, if a conflict or conflicts exist with respect to the total proceeds, or that portion that cannot be distributed after due diligence, less any fees charged by the clerk.

(d) Before the trustee deposits the funds with the clerk of the court pursuant to subdivision (c), the trustee shall send written notice by first-class mail, postage prepaid, to all persons described in subdivision (a) informing them that the trustee intends to deposit the funds with the clerk of the court and that a claim for the funds must be filed with the court within 30 days from the date of the notice, providing the address of the court in which the funds were deposited, and a telephone number for obtaining further information.

Within 90 days after deposit with the clerk, the court shall consider all claims filed at least 15 days before the date on which the hearing is scheduled by the court, the clerk shall serve written notice of the hearing by first-class mail on all claimants identified in the trustee's declaration at the addresses specified therein. Where the amount of the deposit is twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or less, a proceeding pursuant to this section is a limited civil case. The court shall distribute the deposited funds to any and all claimants entitled thereto.

(e) Nothing in this section restricts the ability of a trustee to file an interpleader action in order to resolve a dispute about the proceeds of a trustee's sale. Once an interpleader action has been filed, thereafter the provisions of this section do not apply.

(f) "Due diligence," for the purposes of this section means that the trustee researched the written claims submitted or other evidence of conflicts and determined that a conflict of priorities exists between two or more claimants which the trustee is unable to resolve.

(g) To the extent required by the Unclaimed Property Law, a trustee in possession of surplus proceeds not required to be deposited with the court pursuant to subdivision (b) shall comply with the Unclaimed Property Law (Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 1500) of Title 10 of Part 3 of the Code of Civil Procedure).

(h) The trustee, beneficiary, or counsel to the trustee or beneficiary, is not liable for providing to any person who is entitled to notice pursuant to this section, information set forth in, or a copy of, subdivision (h) of Section 2945.3.

(i) Prior to July 1, 2000, the Judicial Council shall adopt a form to accomplish the filing authorized by this section.



SEC. 4. Section 2924*l* of the Civil Code is amended to read:

2924*l*. (a) In the event that a trustee under a deed of trust is named in an action or proceeding in which that deed of trust is the subject, and in the event that the trustee maintains a reasonable belief that it has been named in the action or proceeding solely in its capacity as trustee, and not arising out of any wrongful acts or omissions on its part in the performance of its duties as trustee, then, at any time, the trustee may file a declaration of nonmonetary status. The declaration shall be served on the parties in the manner set forth in Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 1010) of Title 14 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

(b) The declaration of nonmonetary status shall set forth the status of the trustee as trustee under the deed of trust that is the subject of the action or proceeding, that the trustee knows or maintains a reasonable belief that it has been named as a defendant in the proceeding solely in its capacity as a trustee under the deed of trust, its reasonable belief that it has not been named as a defendant due to any acts or omissions on its part in the performance of its duties as trustee, the basis for that knowledge or reasonable belief, and that it agrees to be bound by whatever order or judgment is issued by the court regarding the subject deed of trust.

(c) The parties who have appeared in the action or proceeding shall have 15 days from the service of the declaration by the trustee in which to object to the nonmonetary judgment status of the trustee. Any objection shall set forth the factual basis on which the objection is based and shall be served on the trustee.

(d) In the event that no objection is served within the 15-day objection period, the trustee shall not be required to participate any further in the action or proceeding, shall not be subject to any monetary awards as and for damages, attorneys' fees or costs, shall be required to respond to any discovery requests as a nonparty, and shall be bound by any court order relating to the subject deed of trust that is the subject of the action or proceeding.

(e) In the event of a timely objection to the declaration of nonmonetary status, the trustee shall thereafter be required to participate in the action or proceeding.

Additionally, in the event that the parties elect not to, or fail to, timely object to the declaration of nonmonetary status, but later through discovery, or otherwise, determine that the trustee should participate in the action because of the performance of its duties as a trustee, the parties may file and serve on all parties and the trustee a motion pursuant to Section 473 of the Code of Civil Procedure that specifies the factual basis for the demand. Upon the court's granting of the motion, the trustee shall thereafter be required to participate in the action or proceeding, and



the court shall provide sufficient time prior to trial for the trustee to be able to respond to the complaint, to conduct discovery, and to bring other pretrial motions in accordance with the Code of Civil Procedure.

(f) Upon the filing of the declaration of nonmonetary status, the time within which the trustee is required to file an answer or other responsive pleading shall be tolled for the period of time within which the opposing parties may respond to the declaration. Upon the timely service of an objection to the declaration on nonmonetary status, the trustee shall have 30 days from the date of service within which to file an answer or other responsive pleading to the complaint or cross-complaint.

(g) For purposes of this section, “trustee” includes any agent or employee of the trustee who performs some or all of the duties of a trustee under this article, and includes substituted trustees and agents of the beneficiary or trustee.

SEC. 5. Section 2934a of the Civil Code is amended to read:

2934a. (a) (1) The trustee under a trust deed upon real property or an estate for years therein given to secure an obligation to pay money and conferring no other duties upon the trustee than those which are incidental to the exercise of the power of sale therein conferred, may be substituted by the recording in the county in which the property is located of a substitution executed and acknowledged by: (A) all of the beneficiaries under the trust deed, or their successors in interest, and the substitution shall be effective notwithstanding any contrary provision in any trust deed executed on or after January 1, 1968; or (B) the holders of more than 50 percent of the record beneficial interest of a series of notes secured by the same real property or of undivided interests in a note secured by real property equivalent to a series transaction, exclusive of any notes or interests of a licensed real estate broker that is the issuer or servicer of the notes or interests or of any affiliate of that licensed real estate broker.

(2) A substitution executed pursuant to subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) is not effective unless all the parties signing the substitution sign, under penalty of perjury, a separate written document stating the following:

(A) The substitution has been signed pursuant to subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1).

(B) None of the undersigned is a licensed real estate broker or an affiliate of the broker that is the issuer or servicer of the obligation secured by the deed of trust.

(C) The undersigned together hold more than 50 percent of the record beneficial interest of a series of notes secured by the same real property or of undivided interests in a note secured by real property equivalent to a series transaction.



(D) Notice of the substitution was sent by certified mail, postage prepaid, with return receipt requested to each holder of an interest in the obligation secured by the deed of trust who has not joined in the execution of the substitution or the separate document.

The separate document shall be attached to the substitution and be recorded in the office of the county recorder of each county in which the real property described in the deed of trust is located. Once the document required by this paragraph is recorded, it shall constitute conclusive evidence of compliance with the requirements of this paragraph in favor of substituted trustees acting pursuant to this section, subsequent assignees of the obligation secured by the deed of trust and subsequent bona fide purchasers or encumbrancers for value of the real property described therein.

(3) For purposes of this section, “affiliate of the licensed real estate broker” includes any person as defined in Section 25013 of the Corporations Code that is controlled by, or is under common control with, or who controls, a licensed real estate broker. “Control” means the possession, direct or indirect, of the power to direct or cause the direction of management and policies.

(4) The substitution shall contain the date of recordation of the trust deed, the name of the trustor, the book and page or instrument number where the trust deed is recorded, and the name of the new trustee. From the time the substitution is filed for record, the new trustee shall succeed to all the powers, duties, authority, and title granted and delegated to the trustee named in the deed of trust. A substitution may be accomplished, with respect to multiple deeds of trust which are recorded in the same county in which the substitution is being recorded and which all have the same trustee and beneficiary or beneficiaries, by recording a single document, complying with the requirements of this section, substituting trustees for all those deeds of trust.

(b) If the substitution is executed, but not recorded, prior to or concurrently with the recording of the notice of default, the beneficiary or beneficiaries or their authorized agents shall cause notice of the substitution to be mailed prior to or concurrently with the recording thereof, in the manner provided in Section 2924b, to all persons to whom a copy of the notice of default would be required to be mailed by the provisions of Section 2924b. An affidavit shall be attached to the substitution that notice has been given to those persons and in the manner required by this subdivision.

(c) If the substitution is effected after a notice of default has been recorded but prior to the recording of the notice of sale, the beneficiary or beneficiaries or their authorized agents shall cause a copy of the substitution to be mailed, prior to, or concurrently with, the recording



thereof, in the manner provided in Section 2924b, to the trustee then of record and to all persons to whom a copy of the notice of default would be required to be mailed by the provisions of Section 2924b. An affidavit shall be attached to the substitution that notice has been given to those persons and in the manner required by this subdivision.

(d) A trustee named in a recorded substitution of trustee shall be deemed to be authorized to act as the trustee under the mortgage or deed of trust for all purposes from the date the substitution is executed by the mortgagee, beneficiaries, or by their authorized agents. Nothing herein requires that a trustee under a recorded substitution accept the substitution. Once recorded, the substitution shall constitute conclusive evidence of the authority of the substituted trustee or his or her agents to act pursuant to this section.

(e) Notwithstanding any provision of this section or any provision in any deed of trust, unless a new notice of sale containing the name, street address, and telephone number of the substituted trustee is given pursuant to Section 2924f after execution of the substitution, any sale conducted by the substituted trustee shall be void.

(f) This section shall become operative on January 1, 1998.

SEC. 6. Section 2945 of the Civil Code is amended to read:

2945. (a) The Legislature finds and declares that homeowners whose residences are in foreclosure are subject to fraud, deception, harassment, and unfair dealing by foreclosure consultants from the time a Notice of Default is recorded pursuant to Section 2924 until the time surplus funds from any foreclosure sale are distributed to the homeowner or his or her successor. Foreclosure consultants represent that they can assist homeowners who have defaulted on obligations secured by their residences. These foreclosure consultants, however, often charge high fees, the payment of which is often secured by a deed of trust on the residence to be saved, and perform no service or essentially a worthless service. Homeowners, relying on the foreclosure consultants' promises of help, take no other action, are diverted from lawful businesses which could render beneficial services, and often lose their homes, sometimes to the foreclosure consultants who purchase homes at a fraction of their value before the sale. Vulnerable homeowners are increasingly relying on the services of foreclosure consultants who advise the homeowner that the foreclosure consultant can obtain the remaining funds from the foreclosure sale if the homeowner executes an assignment of the surplus, a deed, or a power of attorney in favor of the foreclosure consultant. This results in the homeowner paying an exorbitant fee for a service when the homeowner could have obtained the remaining funds from the trustee's sale from the trustee directly for minimal cost if the homeowner had consulted legal counsel or had sufficient time to receive notices from the



trustee pursuant to Section 2924j regarding how and where to make a claim for excess proceeds.

(b) The Legislature further finds and declares that foreclosure consultants have a significant impact on the economy of this state and on the welfare of its citizens.

(c) The intent and purposes of this article are the following:

(1) To require that foreclosure consultant service agreements be expressed in writing; to safeguard the public against deceit and financial hardship; to permit rescission of foreclosure consultation contracts; to prohibit representations that tend to mislead; and to encourage fair dealing in the rendition of foreclosure services.

(2) The provisions of this article shall be liberally construed to effectuate this intent and to achieve these purposes.

SEC. 7. Section 2945.1 of the Civil Code is amended to read:

2945.1. The following definitions apply to this chapter:

(a) “Foreclosure consultant” means any person who makes any solicitation, representation, or offer to any owner to perform for compensation or who, for compensation, performs any service which the person in any manner represents will in any manner do any of the following:

(1) Stop or postpone the foreclosure sale.

(2) Obtain any forbearance from any beneficiary or mortgagee.

(3) Assist the owner to exercise the right of reinstatement provided in Section 2924c.

(4) Obtain any extension of the period within which the owner may reinstate his or her obligation.

(5) Obtain any waiver of an acceleration clause contained in any promissory note or contract secured by a deed of trust or mortgage on a residence in foreclosure or contained that deed of trust or mortgage.

(6) Assist the owner to obtain a loan or advance of funds.

(7) Avoid or ameliorate the impairment of the owner’s credit resulting from the recording of a notice of default or the conduct of a foreclosure sale.

(8) Save the owner’s residence from foreclosure.

(9) Assist the owner in obtaining from the beneficiary, mortgagee, trustee under a power of sale, or counsel for the beneficiary, mortgagee, or trustee, the remaining proceeds from the foreclosure sale of the owner’s residence.

(b) A foreclosure consultant does not include any of the following:

(1) A person licensed to practice law in this state when the person renders service in the course of his or her practice as an attorney at law.



(2) A person licensed under Division 3 (commencing with Section 12000) of the Financial Code when the person is acting as a prorater as defined therein.

(3) A person licensed under Part 1 (commencing with Section 10000) of Division 4 of the Business and Professions Code when the person makes a direct loan or when the person (A) engages in acts whose performance requires licensure under that part, (B) is entitled to compensation for the acts performed in connection with the sale of a residence in foreclosure or with the arranging of a loan secured by a lien on a residence in foreclosure, (C) does not claim, demand, charge, collect, or receive any compensation until the acts have been performed or cannot be performed because of an owner's failure to make the disclosures set forth in Section 10243 of the Business and Professions Code or failure to accept an offer from a purchaser or lender ready, willing, and able to purchase a residence in foreclosure or make a loan secured by a lien on a residence in foreclosure on the terms prescribed in a listing or a loan agreement, and (D) does not acquire any interest in a residence in foreclosure directly from an owner for whom the person agreed to perform the acts other than as a trustee or beneficiary under a deed of trust given to secure the payment of a loan or that compensation. For the purposes of this paragraph, a "direct loan" means a loan of a real estate broker's own funds secured by a deed of trust on the residence in foreclosure, which loan and deed of trust the broker in good faith attempts to assign to a lender, for an amount at least sufficient to cure all of the defaults on obligations which are then subject to a recorded notice of default, provided that, if a foreclosure sale is conducted with respect to the deed of trust, the person conducting the foreclosure sale has no interest in the residence in foreclosure or in the outcome of the sale and is not owned, controlled, or managed by the lending broker; the lending broker does not acquire any interest in the residence in foreclosure directly from the owner other than as a beneficiary under the deed of trust; and the loan is not made for the purpose or effect of avoiding or evading the provisions of this article.

(4) A person licensed under Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 5000) of Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code when the person is acting in any capacity for which the person is licensed under those provisions.

(5) A person or his or her authorized agent acting under the express authority or written approval of the Department of Housing and Urban Development or other department or agency of the United States or this state to provide services.



(6) A person who holds or is owed an obligation secured by a lien on any residence in foreclosure when the person performs services in connection with this obligation or lien.

(7) Any person licensed to make loans pursuant to Division 9 (commencing with Section 22000), 10 (commencing with Section 24000), or 11 (commencing with Section 26000) of the Financial Code, subject to the authority of the Commissioner of Corporations to terminate this exclusion, after notice and hearing, for any person licensed pursuant to any of those divisions upon a finding that the licensee is found to have engaged in practices described in subdivision (a) of Section 2945.

(8) Any person or entity doing business under any law of this state, or of the United States relating to banks, trust companies, savings and loan associations, industrial loan companies, pension trusts, credit unions, insurance companies, or any person or entity authorized under the laws of this state to conduct a title or escrow business, or a mortgagee which is a United States Department of Housing and Urban Development approved mortgagee and any subsidiary or affiliate of the above, and any agent or employee of the above while engaged in the business of these persons or entities.

(9) A person licensed as a residential mortgage lender or servicer pursuant to Division 20 (commencing with Section 50000) of the Financial Code, when acting under the authority of that license.

(c) Notwithstanding subdivision (b), any person who provides services pursuant to paragraph (9) of subdivision (a) is a foreclosure consultant unless he or she is the owner's attorney.

(d) "Person" means any individual, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, association or other group, however organized.

(e) "Service" means and includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

(1) Debt, budget, or financial counseling of any type.

(2) Receiving money for the purpose of distributing it to creditors in payment or partial payment of any obligation secured by a lien on a residence in foreclosure.

(3) Contacting creditors on behalf of an owner of a residence in foreclosure.

(4) Arranging or attempting to arrange for an extension of the period within which the owner of a residence in foreclosure may cure his or her default and reinstate his or her obligation pursuant to Section 2924c.

(5) Arranging or attempting to arrange for any delay or postponement of the time of sale of the residence in foreclosure.

(6) Advising the filing of any document or assisting in any manner in the preparation of any document for filing with any bankruptcy court.



(7) Giving any advice, explanation or instruction to an owner of a residence in foreclosure which in any manner relates to the cure of a default in or the reinstatement of an obligation secured by a lien on the residence in foreclosure, the full satisfaction of that obligation, or the postponement or avoidance of a sale of a residence in foreclosure pursuant to a power of sale contained in any deed of trust.

(8) Arranging or attempting to arrange for the payment by the beneficiary, mortgagee, trustee under a power of sale, or counsel for the beneficiary, mortgagee, or trustee, of the remaining proceeds to which the owner is entitled from a foreclosure sale of the owner’s residence in foreclosure. Arranging or attempting to arrange for the payment shall include any arrangement where the owner transfers or assigns the right to the remaining proceeds of a foreclosure sale to the foreclosure consultant or any person designated by the foreclosure consultant, whether that transfer is effected by agreement, assignment, deed, power of attorney, or assignment of claim.

(f) “Residence in foreclosure” means a residence in foreclosure as defined in Section 1695.1.

(g) “Owner” means a property owner as defined in Section 1695.1.

(h) “Contract” means any agreement, or any term thereof, between a foreclosure consultant and an owner for the rendition of any service as defined in subdivision (e).

SEC. 8. Section 2945.3 of the Civil Code is amended to read:

2945.3. (a) Every contract shall be in writing and shall fully disclose the exact nature of the foreclosure consultant’s services and the total amount and terms of compensation.

(b) The following notice, printed in at least 14-point boldface type and completed with the name of the foreclosure consultant, shall be printed immediately above the statement required by subdivision (c):

“NOTICE REQUIRED BY CALIFORNIA LAW

_____ or anyone working
(Name)

for him or her CANNOT:

(1) Take any money from you or ask you for money
until _____ has
(Name)

completely finished doing everything he or she said he or she would do; and

(2) Ask you to sign or have you sign any lien, deed of trust, or deed.”

(c) The contract shall be written in the same language as principally used by the foreclosure consultant to describe his or her services or to



negotiate the contract; shall be dated and signed by the owner; and shall contain in immediate proximity to the space reserved for the owner's signature a conspicuous statement in a size equal to at least 10-point bold type, as follows: "You, the owner, may cancel this transaction at any time prior to midnight of the third business day after the date of this transaction. See the attached notice of cancellation form for an explanation of this right."

(d) The contract shall contain on the first page, in a type size no smaller than that generally used in the body of the document, each of the following:

(1) The name and address of the foreclosure consultant to which the notice or cancellation is to be mailed.

(2) The date the owner signed the contract.

(e) The contract shall be accompanied by a completed form in duplicate, captioned "notice of cancellation", which shall be attached to the contract, shall be easily detachable, and shall contain in type of at least 10-point the following statement written in the same language as used in the contract:

"NOTICE OF CANCELLATION

(Enter date of transaction) (Date)

You may cancel this transaction, without any penalty or obligation, within three business days from the above date.

To cancel this transaction, mail or deliver a signed and dated copy of this cancellation notice, or any other written notice, or send a telegram to _____

(Name of foreclosure consultant)

at _____
(Address of foreclosure consultant's place of business)

NOT LATER THAN MIDNIGHT OF _____ .
(Date)

I hereby cancel this transaction _____ .
(Date)

(Owner's signature)

(f) The foreclosure consultant shall provide the owner with a copy of the contract and the attached notice of cancellation.



(g) Until the foreclosure consultant has complied with this section, the owner may cancel the contract.

(h) After the 65-day period following the foreclosure sale, the foreclosure consultant may enter into a contract to assist the owner in arranging, or arrange for the owner, the release of funds remaining after the foreclosure sale (“surplus funds”) from the beneficiary, mortgagee, trustee under a power of sale, or counsel for the beneficiary, mortgagee, or trustee. However, prior to entering into that contract, the foreclosure consultant shall do all of the following:

(1) Prepare and deliver to the owner a notice in 14-point boldface type and substantially in the form set forth below.

(2) Obtain a receipt executed by each owner and acknowledged before a notary public, acknowledging a copy of the notice set forth below.

“NOTICE TO OWNER

(Date of Contract)		(Date signed by Owner)	
(Date of Foreclosure Sale)			

You may be entitled to receive all or a portion of the surplus funds generated from the foreclosure sale of your real property located at: _____, California on _____

without paying any fees or costs of any kind to a third party. You should check directly with the trustee or beneficiary who conducted the foreclosure sale of your property to determine the name, address, and telephone number of the party to whom you can direct inquiries regarding filing a claim for surplus funds without paying a fee to a third party. No person or entity may require you to enter into any agreement requiring the payment of a fee to that person or entity in order to receive the surplus funds from the foreclosure sale to which you may be entitled during the 65 days after the date of the trustee’s sale.”

SEC. 9. Section 2945.4 of the Civil Code is amended to read:
2945.4. It shall be a violation for a foreclosure consultant to:

(a) Claim, demand, charge, collect, or receive any compensation until after the foreclosure consultant has fully performed each and every service the foreclosure consultant contracted to perform or represented that he or she would perform.

(b) Claim, demand, charge, collect, or receive any fee, interest, or any other compensation for any reason which exceeds 10 percent per annum



of the amount of any loan which the foreclosure consultant may make to the owner.

(c) Take any wage assignment, any lien of any type on real or personal property, or other security to secure the payment of compensation. That security shall be void and unenforceable.

(d) Receive any consideration from any third party in connection with services rendered to an owner unless that consideration is fully disclosed to the owner.

(e) Acquire any interest in a residence in foreclosure from an owner with whom the foreclosure consultant has contracted. Any interest acquired in violation of this subdivision shall be voidable, provided that nothing herein shall affect or defeat the title of a bona fide purchaser or encumbrancer for value and without notice of a violation of this article. Knowledge that the property was “residential real property in foreclosure,” does not constitute notice of a violation of this article. This subdivision may not be deemed to abrogate any duty of inquiry which exists as to rights or interests of persons in possession of residential real property in foreclosure.

(f) Take any power of attorney from an owner for any purpose, except to inspect documents as provided by law.

(g) Induce or attempt to induce any owner to enter into a contract which does not comply in all respects with Sections 2945.2 and 2945.3.

(h) Enter into an agreement to assist the owner in arranging, or arrange for the owner, the release of surplus funds prior to 65 days after the trustee’s sale is conducted, whether the agreement involves direct payment, assignment, deed, power of attorney, or assignment of claim from an owner to the foreclosure consultant or any person designated by the foreclosure consultant.

SEC. 10. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

