



Superior Court Case Management System

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Q1: WHAT IS SC-CMS?

A: The term 'SC-CMS' is short for the Superior Court Case Management System. This project is a partnership between the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the Superior Court and County Clerk communities. In July 2013, AOC contracted with [Tyler Technologies, Inc.](#) to implement their commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) case management system called Odyssey. [Back to top](#)

Q2: WHY IS AOC DOING THIS PROJECT?

A: The current Superior Court Management Information System (SCOMIS) was developed in 1977; one year after Apple and Commodore first introduced mass-market computers. At the time it was developed, SCOMIS was state of the art technology. However, business and technology needs have evolved considerably in the last four decades. SCOMIS is difficult to change, costly to maintain, and has limited ability to integrate with some newer, innovative applications. A modern, more flexible solution will provide support for current and future business and technology needs of the Superior Courts and County Clerks.

Background

In February 2010, the Superior Court Judges' Association (SCJA), Washington State Association of County Clerks (WSACC), and the Association of Washington Superior Court Administrators (AWSCA) jointly requested the [Judicial Information System Committee](#) (JISC) provide them with a modern case management system that enhances their ability to:

- Efficiently direct and monitor court case progress.
- Schedule case events.
- Enforce court business rules.
- View case plans/schedules, status, progress, and case party information.
- Communicate court schedules and orders.
- Maintain the existing functionality for County Clerks while leveraging new technology to offer efficiencies not available in a 1977 case management system.

The request was approved by the JISC in May 2010.

A [feasibility study](#) for a new case management system was conducted in 2011. After thoroughly reviewing the feasibility study, the JISC approved the development of a Request for Proposal (RFP) to obtain a new Superior Court and County Clerk's office case management system COTS solution on the condition that it meet the business requirements of Superior Courts and County Clerks' offices in all 39 Washington counties. In December 2011, after multiple on-site Superior Court and County Clerk's office visits by AOC and six full-day sessions with stakeholders, the JISC received a signed letter from each of the association presidents affirming the documented business requirements met the needs of all the Superior Courts and County Clerks' offices in Washington State. The RFP to acquire a new COTS case management system for the Superior Courts and County Clerks was developed in 2012.

On June 22, 2012, the JISC approved the release of the [RFP](#) to the vendor community. Vendor proposals were submitted to AOC on August 28, 2012 and evaluations conducted from October 2012 through February 2013. On March 22, 2013, the JISC approved the Project Steering Committee's recommendation to move into contract negotiations with [Tyler Technologies, Inc.](#) (Tyler). In a special

meeting held Friday, July 19, 2013, the JISC unanimously approved the Project Steering Committee's recommendation to execute the contract with Tyler to implement the Odyssey case management system in Superior Courts and County Clerks' offices statewide. The contract became effective July 25, 2013 and Tyler began work on September 9, 2013. [Back to top](#)

Q3: IS ODYSSEY GOING TO FULLY REPLACE SCOMIS?

A: Yes. The complete rollout of the Odyssey system will eventually lead to the retirement of SCOMIS; however, the retirement of SCOMIS is not within the scope of this project. [Back to top](#)

Q4: HOW LONG IS IT GOING TO TAKE TO IMPLEMENT ODYSSEY?

A: SC-CMS is a large, complex, long-term project that will be completed over the course of several years. The Project Team expects to implement the Odyssey system in the SC-CMS Pilot site –Lewis County - in June 2015, followed by three early adopter sites in November 2015 (Thurston, Yakima, and Franklin counties). Snohomish and Spokane counties will be implemented in May and November 2016, respectively. Implementation in the remaining 31 counties across the state is expected to be complete by 2018. AOC will provide updates to these timelines as necessary. [Back to top](#)

Q5: WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE SC-CMS PROJECT?

A: Efforts are focused on developing Odyssey system functionality prioritized as critical to meet the business needs of the pilot and early adopter sites. Additionally, development is underway to ensure case data in Odyssey is available in SCOMIS throughout the statewide implementation and person data in both the Odyssey and JIS systems remain in synch. [Back to top](#)

Q6: THE AOC HAS TRIED TO IMPLEMENT A CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM BEFORE. WHAT'S DIFFERENT THIS TIME?

A: This SC-CMS Project is different from previous attempts in several ways. First, the AOC is using lessons learned from other states, as well as our own previous efforts, to better position this project for success. The scope of the SC-CMS Project is not as broad as it was in the previous effort and presents a reasonable timeline. Additionally, the Project Team consists of highly qualified individuals with extensive experience in managing large and complex projects. Detailed plans are being used to manage all aspects of the project planning and implementation. Rigorous project governance processes are in place to ensure that decisions can be made as quickly as possible but with broad stakeholder participation.

AOC is also paying close attention to the "people" side of this change. This is a huge change and those affected by it must have an opportunity to provide input. The Project Team is engaging key stakeholders from numerous associations with a comprehensive communications effort and outreach activities. In addition, the Project Team is actively seeking to keep stakeholders informed of progress and provide effective feedback channels. The Project Management Team and Project Sponsors plan to use lessons learned during each project phase to make improvements going forward. [Back to top](#)

Q7: WHAT OTHER SYSTEM ALTERNATIVES WERE CONSIDERED?

A: In 2011, AOC hired MTG Management Consulting to conduct a Superior Court Management Feasibility Study to look into potential benefits, costs, and risks associated with the implementation of the Superior Court Case Management System (SC-CMS). Four Alternatives were analyzed in the study:

Alternative 1: Use the Pierce County Legal Information Network Exchange (LINX) application as a statewide superior court Case Management System, hosted centrally at AOC and at Pierce County.

Alternative 2: Acquisition of a commercial application focused solely on calendaring, scheduling, and case-flow management for the superior courts.

Alternative 3: Acquisition and Centrally Hosted – Full Feature court commercial Case Management System.

Alternative 4: Acquisition and Local Implementation – Full Feature Court Commercial Case Management System.

The study determined that Alternative 3 - the acquisition of a centrally hosted, full feature commercial case management application would best meet the requirements of the Superior Courts and County Clerks' offices, would be the most cost-effective solution, and would present the least amount of risk to deploy. [Back to top](#)

Q8: HOW IS ODYSSEY GOING TO HELP MY COURT AND COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE?

A: A new case management system is expected to benefit Superior Courts and County Clerks' offices in several ways, including:

- Increased ability to direct the progress of cases through the court process based upon business rules.
- Enhanced calendaring and scheduling capabilities.
- Enhanced ability to view case history.

Any change of this magnitude requires some getting used to, and there may be a high learning curve as the system is implemented throughout the Superior Courts and County Clerks' offices. Although users may spend more time initially, the new system is expected to save time and increase efficiencies in the long run. [Back to top](#)

Q9: HOW WILL DOCUMENTS BE MANAGED IN THE NEW SYSTEM?

A: The JISC has approved a recommendation from the Superior Court Judges' Association (SCJA), Washington State Association of County Clerks (WSACC), and Association of Washington State Court Administrators (AWSCA) for two document management options:

- The use of Odyssey's integrated document management system; and
- The use of a "Link-only", or "Pointer" approach. Clerks' offices selecting to use the "link-only" approach would continue to use their current document management system to scan, review, and save images. An application program interface (API) developed by Tyler Technologies would be utilized to provide a link in Odyssey allowing view-only access to those documents. [Back to top](#)

Q10: WILL EXISTING TILLS AND RECEIPT PRINTERS WORK WITH THE NEW SYSTEM?

A: Yes; tills and receipt printers have been tested and will work with Odyssey. [Back to top](#)

Q11: IT'S BEEN REPORTED THAT SOME COURT BUSINESS PROCESSES MAY NEED TO BE CHANGED BEFORE ODYSSEY IS IMPLEMENTED. WHAT ROLE WILL THE AOC PLAY IN THAT?

A: The AOC has created a Court Business Office (CBO) to facilitate the process of configuring SC-CMS to meet the needs of the Superior Courts and County Clerks' offices. The CBO will also help identify opportunities to change or improve processes that are now possible because of the new case management system. The CBO is a court business-focused section within the Judicial Services Division (JSD) of AOC. The CBO manager reports to the Manager of JSD's Office of Court Business and Technology Integration.

The CBO provides ongoing support to the Superior Court and County Clerk community through its direct interaction with the Court User Work Group (CUWG). The CUWG is comprised of members of the Superior Court Judges' Association; the Washington State Association of County Clerks; the Association of Washington State Court Administrators; the Association of Juvenile Court Administrators (WAJCA); the District and Municipal Court Management Association (DMCMA); the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA); and the Access to Justice Board (ATJ).

The CUWG provides subject matter expertise to, and decision making on, court business processes, ensuring processes and requirements are complete and accurate. The CUWG will also provide insight on potential impacts, opportunities, and constraints associated with the transition to the Odyssey system.

CUWG members are responsible to advocate for agreed-upon process changes, innovation, and standardization and communicate these decisions to their staff, colleagues, associations, and co-workers. [Back to top](#)

Q12: WILL THERE BE JUST ONE CONFIGURATION OF ODYSSEY, OR WILL THE CAPABILITY EXIST TO TAILOR THE CONFIGURATION TO FIT SPECIFIC NEEDS OF A COURT AND COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE?

A: There will be one baseline model of the new case management system. However, within that model, AOC expects there will be some configuration options. As an analogy, think of the SC-CMS configuration options as you would cable television packages. The CBO is going to work with the CUWG to develop and validate the baseline SC-CMS configuration package (Basic Cable) as well as a few other configuration options packages (Expanded Basic Cable). Details about SC-CMS configuration options will be made available as soon as AOC has more information. [Back to top](#)

Q13: SOME CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM VENDORS CLAIM THEY CAN FILL THE NEEDS OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OR COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE IN SIX MONTHS. WHY WAIT FOR ODYSSEY?

A: Waiting for SC-CMS will:

- Give Superior Courts and County Clerks' offices throughout Washington a standardized, integrated case management system.

- Enable Judicial Officials to see critical information from a neighboring county or any other county in the state.
- Provide County Clerks with additional system functionality not available in the current case management system.
- Allow Superior Courts and County Clerks' offices to capitalize on items negotiated in the contract with Tyler Technologies at no extra cost to the county, including integrated document management and financials capabilities, comprehensive system maintenance, and 24/7 operation assistance.

Under [JISCR 13](#), courts and County Clerks' offices can request approval to use their own system providing that system can integrate with data exchange facilities to report mandatory information to the statewide court data repository and justice partners. [Back to top](#)

Q14: How can I find out more about the SC-CMS Project?

A: We encourage you to visit the project website at www.courts.wa.gov/SC-CMS or e-mail the project team at SCCMSProject@courts.wa.gov. [Back to top](#)