

THE SUPREME COURT OF WASHINGTON

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF)
THE WASHINGTON STATE CENTER FOR)
COURT RESEARCH)
_____)

**A M E N D E D
O R D E R**

NO. 25700-B-663

WHEREAS, the Washington State Constitution establishes the judicial system as an equal, independent branch of government;

WHEREAS, preserving the independence of the judicial branch requires that the judiciary develop and adopt policies based upon informed, independent, and empirical research;

WHEREAS, informed, independent, and empirical research enables the judiciary to analyze and improve court operations, processes, and programs to ensure equal justice, and participate as an equal partner in government affairs;

WHEREAS, the Administrative Office of the Courts, pursuant to statute, is required to "compile statistical and other data and make reports of the business transacted by the courts" and "examine the administrative methods and systems employed in the offices of the judges, clerks, stenographers, and employees of the courts and make recommendations, through the chief justice, for the improvement of the same;"

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court and other judicial branch leaders rely upon informed, independent, and empirical research to reach major policy decisions;

WHEREAS, there is a need to recognize the value of independent judicial branch research that is conducted by the Washington State Center for Court Research as an integral function of the judicial branch;

WHEREAS, there is a need to provide for a mechanism to evaluate and respond to executive and legislative branch research affecting the operation of the judicial branch;

Now, therefore, it is hereby

ORDERED:

That a Washington State Center for Court Research, within the Administrative Office of the Courts, is hereby established to provide informed, independent, and empirical research for the judicial branch to improve equal administration of justice by conducting research necessary to analyze court operations, processes, and programs; by facilitating strategic planning and the adoption and implementation of Board for Judicial Administration resolutions; by communicating research findings to the judicial branch; and by reviewing and commenting on court system related research conducted by the legislative and executive branches.

That the chief justice shall appoint a court judicial officer as judiciary research advocate responsible for monitoring the progress of the Center's projects and programs, promoting connection and communication between the Center and the judiciary. To ensure continuity the judiciary research advocate shall be appointed to a term of six years.

That a strategic oversight committee for the Washington State Center for Court Research shall be established to meet annually to set priorities for research projects. Additional meetings shall be scheduled at the request of the judiciary research advocate. The chief justice of the Washington Supreme Court shall appoint the members of the oversight committee and designate the chair of the committee from among the members. The chief justice shall designate the term for the oversight committee members. Members of the strategic oversight committee shall include:

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (1)

Current Superior Court Judges' Association President (1)

Current District and Municipal Court Judges' Association President (1)

State Court Administrator (1)

Judicial Information System Committee Chair (1)

Commission on Children in Foster Care Co-Chair (1)

Gender and Justice Commission Co-Chair (1)

Minority and Justice Commission Co-Chair (1)

Interpreter Commission Chair (1)

WSSCR Judiciary Research Advocate (1)

Court Administrator (1)

DATED at Olympia, Washington this 11th day of March, 2021.

Johnson, J.
Madsen, J.
Owens, J.
Stephens, J.

Corzales, C.J.
Healy, M. J.
Lu, J.
Montgomery, J.
Whitener, J.