

THE SUPREME COURT OF WASHINGTON

ORDER RENEWING THE WASHINGTON)
STATE MINORITY AND JUSTICE)
COMMISSION)
_____)

ORDER

NO. 25700-B-654

1. *Equal Justice Before the Courts.* The Washington State Supreme Court recognizes the need for all persons to be treated equally before the courts of this state. The Court recognizes that for any system of justice to be responsible, it must be examined continuously to ensure it is meeting the needs of all persons who constitute the diverse populations we serve, with particular concern for the needs of persons of color who represent various racial, ethnic, cultural and language groups.

2. *Establishment of Minority and Justice Commission.* The Court on October 4, 1990 established the Washington State Minority and Justice Commission to identify problems and make recommendations to ensure fair and equal treatment in the state courts for all parties, attorneys, court employees and other persons. The Commission advances equal treatment of all without regard to race and ethnicity through research and implementation of recommended improvements to court operations, practices and procedures and through educational and outreach programs provided to court, youth and justice system-related groups.

3. *Renewal of Minority and Justice Commission.* The Minority and Justice Commission was established on October 4, 1990 for a period of five (5) years, subject to renewal for additional years as may be determined by the Court. It was renewed for additional periods of five (5) years by orders of this Court on July 15, 1995, December 2, 1999, September 13, 2005,

September 8, 2010, and January 6, 2016. Upon review of the activities of the Commission since its creation, the Court now determines that the Commission should be renewed for an additional period of five (5) years, subject to further renewal as may be determined by this Court.

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4. *Order Renewing Minority and Justice Commission.* By this order the Washington State Supreme Court now renews and continues the Washington State Minority and Justice Commission for a period of five (5) years, subject to further renewal in year 2025 for additional years as may be determined by this Court. The Commission shall continue its operation without interruption and shall proceed according to its established organization and program.

5. *Membership of Commission.* The Washington State Minority and Justice Commission shall continue with up to thirty-five (35) members, appointed by this Court, and shall be comprised of judges from all levels of courts, including a justice of this Court, tribal courts, members of the Washington State Bar Association, the Administrator for the Courts, trial court administrators, college or university professors, and non-lawyer representatives from the general population. Appointments to the Commission shall reflect racial, ethnic, gender, cultural, geographic, and other appropriate diversity.

6. *Leadership of Commission.* A justice of this Court appointed to the Commission and designated by the Chief Justice, shall serve as its chair, or, in the event the Commission chooses to select a co-chair, as co-chair. The Commission may select one of its members to serve as co-chair for such period as the Commission determines.

7. *Terms of Appointment to Commission.* Appointments to the Commission shall be for terms of four (4) years, unless otherwise stated in the Commission's Bylaws, staggered according to the tenure established under the October 4, 1990 Order. Justices of this Court

appointed to the Commission shall serve at the pleasure of this Court. Vacancies on the Commission shall be filled by the Supreme Court upon recommendation of the Commission.

8. Budget of Commission. The budget of the Commission shall be provided in the budget of the Supreme Court or the budget of the Administrative Office of the Courts as agreed upon between them.

9. Administrator for the Courts. The Administrator for the Courts, with the advice of the Commission and subject to budget considerations, shall provide staff to support the Commission.

10. Annual Report. The Commission shall prepare and file an annual report with the Governor, Legislature, Supreme Court and the Administrator for the Courts concerning its activities and shall recommend appropriate action to promote equal justice for racial, ethnic, cultural and language minorities in the state judicial system. This shall include continuing education on cultural diversity for judges and other court personnel.

11. Authorization to Seek Funds. The Commission is authorized to seek funding from private and public sectors and is authorized to receive funds in its own name.

Dated at Olympia, Washington this 8th day of January, 2021, effective *nunc pro tunc* to January 1, 2021.

 _____ Madsen, J.	 _____ Stephen C. J.
 _____ Owen S. J.	 _____ Garry McLeod, Jr.
 _____ Gonzalez, J.	 _____ Lu, J.
	 _____ M. J. J.
	 _____ Whitener J.