JIS Information Technology Governance Policy

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Table of Contents

Purpose 1
Authority 1
Scope 2
Policy 2
Maintenance 4
Appendix A: Endorsing Groups 5
Appendix B: Court Level User Groups 5
Appendix C: JIS Delegation Matrix 6

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Judicial Information System (JIS) information technology (IT) resource investments are aligned with business objectives, add value to the IT portfolio (see JIS Policy 2000 – P1), mitigate risk, and deliver projects and services in a cost-effective manner.

The Judicial Information System Committee (JISC) needs a consistent and structured process for its IT governing bodies, so it can: make effective IT investment decisions; process IT requests associated with projects, applications, and services; and address IT governance challenges. The development and implementation of an ITG Framework for JIS applications and services will address this need.

IT governance provides the framework by which IT investment decisions are made, communicated, and overseen. IT governance focuses on the alignment of IT decisions with the overall organizational strategy and the delivery of the greatest value from those decisions.

Authority

RCW 2.68.010 gives the JISC the authority to “determine all matters pertaining to the delivery of services available from the judicial information system.” JISC Rule 1 provides for AOC to operate the Judicial Information System (JIS) under the direction of the JISC and with the approval of the Supreme Court pursuant to RCW 2.56.

Scope

For purposes of this policy, "IT governance" is defined as a structure for the JIS governing bodies to classify requests and apply criteria and thresholds to deliver the most value for IT investment decisions. IT governance includes, but is not limited to, policies, processes, tools, and templates to identify, evaluate, prioritize, and authorize IT requests, and to communicate the status of those requests to the user communities affected. IT governance applies to all persons, organizations, or agencies that operate, manage, or use the portfolio of IT products and services provided by AOC (see JIS Portfolio Management Policy 2000 – P1).

Policy

1. It is the policy of the Judicial Information System Committee that the AOC implement a set of IT governance standards and processes that are driven by the JIS Business Plan and IT strategy, and provide clear guidance, repeatable processes, and measurable outcomes. The standards must address:

    - Maximizing business value and benefit
    - Minimizing impact of potential risks
    - Providing a cost-benefit analysis and the best return on investment
    - Leveraging existing IT portfolio assets and technology expertise
    - Aligning with enterprise architecture and other technology-related standards
    - Aligning with the JIS Business Plan and IT Strategy

2. The AOC shall implement an IT governance framework that is used to process all requests for IT investments. The framework shall contain a workflow that includes five steps:

    - Initiate an incident or project request.
    - Endorse – Affirm that the request is reasonable and viable.
    - Analyze – Assess the request prior to review by recommending bodies.
    - Recommend – Filter and score against pre-defined criteria to create and integrate with a prioritized list of IT requests.
    - Schedule – Compare all recommended requests to determine the scheduling of action, subject to delegated authority, resource availability, and approved budget.

3. The authority to initiate and endorse a request shall be vested in the court user community through the existing Endorsing Groups listed in Appendix A.

4. The authority to recommend requests to the JISC for scheduling shall be vested in the court user community through the establishment of Court Level User Groups (see Appendix B) representing the constituencies listed in Appendix A.

5. The Court Level User Groups shall adopt individual charters describing their composition, and rules of operation, provided that the charters adopted by the court level user groups shall state that requests may only be denied upon a unanimous vote of the membership and all other requests will move forward with either a unanimous or majority/minority recommendation for scheduling to the JISC.

6. A copy of the Court Level User Group charters shall be provided to the JISC.

7. The IT governance framework must meet these expectations:

    a) Governance processes align with the business priorities and strategic direction of the JISC and the AOC.

    b) The IT governance process is as clear and simple as possible.

    c) The IT governance process supports the business needs of Washington courts.

    d) Decision makers and stakeholders understand their roles in the governance process and the roles of others.

    e) AOC takes ownership of the governance model and tools, and facilitates future reviews and improvements.

    f) Standards, policies, and procedures are created in collaboration with all affected stakeholder groups, based on acceptance of minimum AOC IT governance standards.

    g) A designated IT governance authority and governance structures establish priorities, manage key issues, and make decisions relating to the selection and management of requests, initiatives, and projects.

    h) Stakeholders, providers, and users participate in the development and adoption of the IT governance framework.

    i) AOC will provide staff support and management for initiatives, requests, or projects arising from stakeholder communities subject to delegated authority, resource availability, and approved budget.

    j) The JISC will prioritize requests so that AOC may schedule and manage requests, initiatives and projects subject to resource availability and approved budget.

k) The JISC will promote stabilization of governance efforts by carefully considering impacts of reprioritization of projects on current work and resource efforts.

l) The governance bodies and other participants in the governance process operate in a clear and transparent way to promote trust in the process for managing requests and any resulting initiatives or projects.

m) Participants are informed through each step of the process, equipping them with the appropriate information, tools, and resources needed to take each step.

n) There is communication throughout the governance process to ensure greater visibility into the decision-making process.

o) The range of participants and level of participation evolve over time as the IT governance framework is established.

8. Delegated authority for the State Court Administrator and the AOC Chief Information Officer is shown in the IT Governance Delegation Matrix in Appendix C. The JISC may review, increase, decrease, or revoke any previous delegation regarding acquisition of IT resources. All acquisitions conducted under delegated authority must comply with JIS IT Governance Policy and the JISC IT Governance Standards.

9. The Administrator for the Courts and the AOC CIO shall report to JISC on all decisions made under the delegation matrix at each regularly scheduled JISC meeting.

10. Decisions not to approve recommended requests by the State Court Administrator and the AOC CIO shall state the reasons for the denial and may be appealed to the JISC by the recommending court level user group.

Maintenance

The governance framework will be allowed to operate without changes for one year. The AOC, in collaboration with participants and stakeholders, will review its IT Governance standards and framework at least annually and make appropriate updates after any significant changes in its business or technology environment. Major policy changes will require the approval of the JISC.

Appendix A: Endorsing Groups

1. Court of Appeals Executive Committee
2. Appellate Judges and Clerks
3. Superior Court Judges' Association
4. Washington Association of County Clerks
5. Association of Washington Superior Court Administrators
6. District and Municipal Court Judges' Association
7. District and Municipal Court Managers' Association
8. Misdemeanant Corrections Association
9. SCJA Family and Juvenile Law Committee
10. Washington Association of Juvenile Court Administrators
11. JISC Data Dissemination Committee
12. JISC Data Management Steering Committee
13. JISC Codes Committee
14. State Court Administrator – Endorses for other stakeholder communities

Appendix B: Court Level User Groups

1. Appellate Court Level User Group
2. Superior Court Level User Group
3. Courts of Limited Jurisdiction Level User Group
4. Multiple Court Level User Group

Appendix C: JIS Delegation Matrix

JIS Delegation Matrix

Incident Classifications

Primarily driven by support requests; Preplanned operational activity occurs outside of the matrix

Incident Classification Description	Not-to-Exceed Cost (includes AOC hours)	Stakeholder Community	Court / Supervisor	AOC Staff	ISD Manager	Standing or Ad Hoc Committees	AOC CIO	AOC Administrator
		Ongoing				*As Required*	*Weekly*	*Bi-Weekly*
Application - operational problems such as workflow, business processes, or documentation	$5,000				Authorize		Inform	
	$10,000				Gate		Authorize	Inform
	< $25,000					Gate	Gate	Authorize
Maintenance - changes to existing applications that are mandatory, legislated or critical or have very narrow or limited impact, such as table and cosmetic changes	$10,000	Request	Endorse (may engage with Staff)	Staff	Authorize		Inform	
	$25,000				Gate		Authorize	Inform
	< $50,000					Gate	Gate	Authorize
Infrastructure - assistance with non-business problems such as network issues, password or report locking, access to tools	$50,000				Authorize		Inform	
	$100,000				Gate		Authorize	Inform
	< $250,000					Gate	Gate	Authorize

Project Classifications

Primarily driven by the gated stack-ranked requests and projects named by JIS IT Governance

Project Classification Description	Not-to-Exceed Cost (includes AOC hours)	Stakeholder Community	Court / Supervisor	AOC Staff	ISD Manager	Standing or Ad Hoc Committees	AOC CIO	AOC Administrator
		Ongoing				*As Required*	*Weekly*	*Bi-Weekly*
Enhancement - existing applications that are to be changed in a limited manner that do not require extensive planning and communication	$25,000						Authorize	Inform
	$50,000						Gate	Authorize
	Beyond							Gate
New - applications or functions not currently provided	$50,000						Authorize	Inform
	$100,000	Request	Endorse (may engage with Staff)	Staff		Gate	Gate	Authorize
	Beyond							Gate
Replacement - removing applications or functions currently provided that are to be materially changed or retired, requiring extensive planning and communication	$100,000						Authorize	Inform
	$250,000						Gate	Authorize
	Beyond							Gate