



Advocacy for Youth

April 29, 2010

Sent via email to Camilla.Faulk@courts.wa.gov

Ronald Carpenter, Clerk
Washington State Supreme Court
PO Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504

Re: Support for Proposed GR 34 Waiver of Court and Clerk Fees and Charges in Civil Matters on the Basis of Indigence

Dear Mr. Carpenter,

On behalf of TeamChild, I write to urge adoption of proposed GR 34 concerning waiver of court and clerk fees in civil matters. Adoption of proposed GR 34 is a step towards ensuring access to justice for all of Washington's citizens.

TeamChild provides civil legal advocacy to young people who are at risk for juvenile court involvement to ensure that their basic needs are met. On a daily basis, our clients face inequities arising from poverty, disability, neglect and abuse, racism and discrimination. The current system for waiver of fees is inconsistent across the state, and is often a barrier for access to the justice system, especially for low income youth and their families. The creation of statewide uniform standards for qualifying for fee waivers and a streamlined process for clients of qualified legal service providers to receive these waivers will ensure that fees are not a barrier to this population accessing the justice system.

We concur with the comments submitted by Columbia Legal Services and the Northwest Justice Project. The comments to the rule should provide further clarification as to which "other costs" are eligible for waiver to ensure that the current inconsistent practices do not continue county by county.

TeamChild urges the adoption of proposed GR 34. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Anne Lee
Executive Director

Offices in King ♦ Pierce ♦ Snohomish ♦ Spokane ♦ Yakima Counties

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