

From: [OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK](#)
To: [Linford, Tera](#)
Cc: [Tracy, Mary](#)
Subject: FW: Comments Re: Suggested Changes to Superior Court Criminal Rule 3.4 and Criminal Rule for Courts of Limited Jurisdiction 3.4
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 8:05:55 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

From: Stephanie Schoo [mailto:stephanie.schoo@farestart.org]
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 5:47 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Comments Re: Suggested Changes to Superior Court Criminal Rule 3.4 and Criminal Rule for Courts of Limited Jurisdiction 3.4

To whom it may concern,

FareStart supports the Washington Defender Association's (WDA) suggested changes to CrR 3.4 8 and CrRLJ 3.4 that would allow criminal defendants to appear through their attorneys for some of the hearings they are currently required to attend in person. For nearly 30 years, [FareStart](#) has helped people facing barriers to employment gain job skills so they can escape the cycle of poverty and build a new life for themselves and for their families. Last year, 78% of the students who came through FareStart's Adult Culinary Program reported having a history with the criminal justice system. We know through our support of students how challenging it is to navigate this system while defendants provide for their families and find employment or remain employed – juggling work schedules, childcare, eldercare and transportation among other activities. More than 80% of our students report they are experiencing homelessness or unstable housing, which makes their and their family's situation even more precarious. Under WDA's proposal, people accused of crimes would still have to attend some court dates, such as trials, but they could choose to have just their attorney appear at other hearings (e.g. procedural matters or scheduling) unless a judge specifically orders otherwise based on a good reason. Limiting the number of times a defendant would need to attend a hearing could reduce the potential hardship on the accused and the accused's family.

Sincerely,

STEPHANIE SCHOO
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