(c) Court Organization and Management

(1) General Management. The general management of the Courts shall be vested in the Presiding Judge under policy established by the Judges at regular and special meetings.

(A) Executive Committee

(1) The Executive Committee shall consist of the immediate past Presiding Judge, Presiding Judge, and acting Presiding Judge. The Court may elect one (1) additional Judge to serve on the Executive Committee.

(2) The Executive Committee will act in an advisory capacity to the Presiding Judge in the daily management of the Court, in accordance with the general policy established by the majority vote of the Judges at the regular or special meetings; and have such other duties assigned by the Presiding judge or conferred by the court.

(2) Meetings

(A) The Judges shall meet regularly each Wednesday during the noon hour unless a majority of the judges waive said meeting. The Presiding Judge may schedule one meeting each calendar quarter as a one-half day meeting in lieu of a noon hour meeting. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2001, Amended effective Sept. 1, 2009)

(B) Special meetings shall be called by the Presiding judge as deemed necessary by Presiding, with timely notice to all Judges.

(C) A quorum consists of a simple majority of Judges and shall be required at all meetings.

(3) Election of Presiding Judge. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2002.)

(A) The Presiding Judge shall be elected for a term of two (2) years pursuant to the provisions of General Rule 29. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2002.)

(B) The Presiding Judge and Assistant Presiding Judge shall be elected by a majority vote of the Judges. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2002.)

(C) In the event the Presiding Judge or Assistant Presiding Judge is unwilling or unable to fulfill the duties of such office, the vacancy or position will be filled by majority vote of the Judges. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2002.)

(4) Duties of Presiding Judge. The Presiding Judge shall:

(A) Perform all the duties required by General Rule 29; (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2002.)

(B) Implement all policies established by the Judges and pursuant to said policies, exercise general management of the Court including but not limited to personnel matters, judicial assignments fiscal matters and supervision of Court Commissioners;

(C) Assign duties to the Court Administrator as deemed necessary; (Amended effective Sept. 1, 1998)

(D) Act as spokesperson for the Court after seeking advice and counsel from the Judges where appropriate;

(E) Preside at all Judges' meetings and shall call special meetings as necessary;

(F)Make docket and case assignments, including ex parte and conflict cases, which are not assigned to existing departments, and assign dockets as necessary, provided that the preference of the judges by seniority shall be given priority in any docket assignments; and (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2001)

(G) Appoint committees to study and make recommendations concerning the subject matter assigned and allow the committee to take necessary action when authorized by the Judges.

(5) Court Commissioner

(A) Selection. Upon a vacancy for Court Commissioner, the Court may advertise the vacancy and accept applications. A Personnel Committee of not less than three (3) Judges shall screen the written applications. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 1997. Sept. 1, 1999.)

The Personnel Committee shall decide which candidates to interview, conduct interviews and make recommendations to the Judges. Any Judge of this Court may attend, participate and vote as a member of the Personnel Committee for the selection process. The selection shall be by majority vote of the Judges present at a regularly scheduled Judges' meeting or a meeting called by the Presiding Judge for this purpose. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 1998, Sept. 1, 1999.)

(B) Termination. A Court Commissioner shall serve at the pleasure of the Judges and shall be terminated by a majority vote of Judges at a Judges' meeting.

(C) Attorney-Commissioner - Authority and Jurisdiction. A lawyer appointed Commissioner of this Court shall have such power, authority and jurisdiction in criminal and civil matters as the appointing Judges possess unless otherwise restricted by court rule, statute or case law.

(D) Non-Attorney Commissioner. Court employees qualified to act as a judicial officer under Supreme Court General Rule 8 (GR 8) may be appointed Court Commissioner by a majority of the Judges. The appointee shall perform such duties as authorized by the Judges, in addition to the duties of his or her regular position. The appointment and designation of Court Commissioner shall be for a period prescribed by the Judges.

(E) A Pro-Tempore Judicial Officer shall receive the necessary orientation and training before assignment. The Pro-Tempore Judicial Officer will be assigned only to a calendar on which they have received training and orientation.

(1) The regularly appointed Court Commissioner shall be first utilized for judicial calendars and only in their absence or unavailability shall Pro-Tempore Judicial Officers be used on a judicial calendar.

(2) The Judicial Operations Manager shall notify and schedule the Pro-Tempore Judicial Officers. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2002.)

(F) The Pro-Tempore Judicial Officers shall be administered the Oath of Office as required in section 3.34.080 of the Revised Code of Washington only by the Judicial Operations Manager, the Presiding Judge or the Acting Presiding judge in the absence or unavailability of Presiding judge. No other person shall be authorized to administer the Oath of Office on behalf of the Court. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2002.)

(6) Court Administrator. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2002.)

(A) Selection. Upon a vacancy, the Presiding Judge and not less than two (2) additional Judges selected in a Judges' meeting shall act as a Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee shall take the necessary step to obtain qualified applicants. The Committee shall screen the written applications, conduct interviews, and make recommendations to the Judges. Any Judge may attend, participate, and vote as a member of the Personnel Committee. Selection of the Court Administrator shall be by majority vote of Judges present at a regularly scheduled Judges' meeting.

(B) Termination. The Court Administrator shall serve at the pleasure of the Judges and shall be terminated by a majority vote of judges at a regularly scheduled Judges' meeting.

(7) Duties of Court Administrator. The Court Administrator shall assist the Presiding Judge in his or her administrative responsibilities. Subject to the general supervision of the Presiding Judge, the Administrator's duties shall include but not be limited to those duties set forth in the job description for the Court Administrator. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 1998.)

(8) Departmental Employees. Departmental employees are those employees assigned to a Judge, or Judges, and shall include, but are not limited to Judicial Assistants and Judicial Secretaries. The Judicial Operations Manager shall be the immediate supervisor of the Judicial Assistants and Judicial Secretaries with such duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Judges. Departmental Employees shall be selected and serve at the pleasure of the Judges in accordance with policies approved by the Court and procedures contained in the District Court Employee Handbook. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2008.)

(9) Employer-Employee Relations. The Court shall issue an employee handbook which will set forth the general employment policies and practices of the Court, and a code of conduct for all employees. Except as otherwise provided in the Local Rules of the Spokane County District Court, and the Policies adopted by the District Court, all employees of the Spokane County District Court shall comply with the provisions of th e handbook. (Adopted effective Sept. 1, 1997, Adopted effective Sept. 1, 2009)

(10) Courtrooms. The Court shall have its main facility at the Spokane County Courthouse site located at the Public Safety Building, the Courthouse Annex and the Broadway Center Building. The Court shall sit from time to time at the branch sites including the City of Spokane Valley, Cheney, and such other location designated by the County Legislative authority. Only those types of cases specifically approved by the Court shall be heard at branch sites. (Amended effective Sept. 1, 2008. Amended effective Sept. 1, 2009, Amended effective Sept 1, 2012)