
Spokane County Superior Court

LAR 0.2
COURT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

(a) 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.

(b) Meetings. The judges shall meet regularly on Thursday of each week during the noon hour. Special meetings may be called by the presiding judge as deemed necessary on timely notice. A written agenda shall be provided in advance of all meetings. A majority of the judges shall constitute a quorum.

(c) Presiding Court. The presiding judge and Assistant Presiding Judge shall serve a two year term and shall be selected by election by a majority of the judges in accordance with GR 29. In the absence of the presiding judge, presiding duties shall be performed by the Assistant Presiding Judge.

Amended effective 9/2/14

(d) Vacancies.

Effective 06/20/2017

(1) Presiding Judge. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Presiding Judge prior to the completion of the two-year term of the Presiding Judge, the Assistant Presiding Judge shall serve as Presiding Judge for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Effective 06/20/2017

(2) Assistant Presiding Judge. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Assistant Presiding Judge prior to the completion of the two-year term of the Presiding Judge, a new Assistant Presiding Judge shall be elected at the next regularly scheduled Judges Meeting for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Effective 06/20/17

(3) Removal. The Presiding and Assistant Presiding Judge may be removed by a majority vote of the Judges after noting the issue on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Judges Meeting.

Effective 06/20/2017

(e) Duties of the Presiding Judge.

Effective 06/20/2017

(1) Supervise all business of the court and implement all policies established by the judges;

(2) Supervise the court commissioners, the court administrator, court employees not assigned to a particular department, and employees assigned to a particular department in the absence of the departmental judge;

(3) Oversee the assignment of cases and caseflow management, with the assistance of the court administrator;

Amended effective 1/18/00

(4) Select and utilize jurors, with the assistance of the court administrator;

(5) Preside at all judges' meetings and call special meetings as required;

(6) Act as spokesperson for the court, seeking advice and counsel from the judges where appropriate;

(7) Assign cases and other duties to the judges and court commissioners;

(8) Hear such ex parte civil and probate matters as are not assigned to other departments or court commissioners;

(9) Appoint standing and special committees, with the approval of the judges.

(f) Criminal Department. The criminal department shall consist of one Chief Criminal Judge, the Presiding Judge and three Criminal Trial Judges. The Chief Criminal Judge shall be responsible to manage the entire criminal docket from arraignment through plea setting or trial assignment. He or she shall preside at arraignments, decide continuance issues, hold scheduling hearings and pretrial (omnibus) hearings, and shall hear or assign all criminal motions, all probation violations, violations of conditions of sentence, and shall assign all criminal trials. The Presiding Judge will hear criminal pleas and sentencings. Additional hearings, pleas and sentencings will be assigned to the other judges by the Chief Criminal Judge as needed to keep the docket current. Judges will serve on assignment as Criminal Trial Judges for a month at a time, pursuant to a schedule established by the Court Administrator. The Chief Criminal Judge shall be selected from among the judges, other than the Presiding Judge and the Juvenile Judge, to serve for a one year term.

Amended effective 3/23/00 Amended effective 06/20/2017

(1) Drug Court. The Presiding Judge or designee will be responsible to manage the Drug Court program, including primary responsibility to determine eligibility of defendants and revocation for violation of program rules.

Amended effective 3/23/00

(2) Court Commissioners qualified under Article 4, Section 23 of the Washington Constitution are authorized to preside over, and consider all matters in adult felony proceedings specified under RCW 2.24.040, with the limitation that they may not accept guilty pleas in matters involving felony charges under RCW 9A.44 (Sexual Offenses) or 9.68A (Sexual Exploitation of Children).

Effective 6/8/00

(g) Duties of the Court Administrator. The court administrator shall assist the presiding judge in administrative responsibilities. Subject to the general supervision of the presiding judge, the court administrator's duties shall include:

Effective 06/20/2017

- (1) Administrative control of all nonjudicial activities of the court;
 - (2) Supervision of all court employees other than court commissioners, juvenile court employees, and departmental employees;
 - (3) Case setting and trial calendar management;
 - (4) Juror selection and utilization;
 - (5) Preparation and administration of the budget;
 - (6) Coordination with the state court administrator and with the visiting judge program;
 - (7) Assisting the presiding judge in dealing with county government, bar association, news media, and other public and private groups having a reasonable interest in the administration of justice;
 - (8) Attendance of judges' meetings and preparation of the agenda for and minutes of those meetings;
 - (9) Preparation of such reports and compilation of such statistics as may be required by the judges or state court administrator;
 - (10) Making recommendations to the judges for the improvement of the administration of the court.
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