

PRINCIPAL POLICY GOALS OF THE WASHINGTON STATE JUDICIAL BRANCH

“Justice in all cases shall be administered openly, and without unnecessary delay.”
Washington State Constitution, Article I, Section 10.

Washington State’s judicial branch is a constitutionally separate, independent and co-equal branch of government. It is the duty of the judicial branch to protect rights and liberties, uphold and interpret the law, and resolve disputes peacefully through the open and fair administration of justice in the state.

The judicial branch in Washington State is a local and state partnership where local courts, court managers and court personnel work in concert with statewide courts, judicial branch agencies and support systems.

The judicial branch maintains effective relations with the executive and legislative branches of state and local governments, which are grounded in mutual respect.

The Principal Policy Goals of the Washington State Judicial Branch

1. **Fair and Effective Administration of Justice.** Washington courts will openly, fairly, efficiently and effectively administer justice in all cases, consistent with constitutional mandates and the judiciary’s duty to maintain the highest level of public trust and confidence in the courts. Washington courts will affirmatively identify and eliminate bias-based practices and procedures that deny fair treatment for persons due to their race, gender, ability or other personal characteristics unrelated to the merits of their cases.
2. **Accessibility.** Washington courts, court facilities and court systems will be open and accessible to all participants regardless of income, language, culture, ability, or other access barrier.
3. **Access to Necessary Representation.** Constitutional and statutory guarantees of the right to counsel shall be effectively implemented. Litigants with important interests at stake in civil judicial proceedings should have meaningful access to legal representation.
4. **Commitment to Effective Court Management.** Washington courts will employ and maintain systems and practices that enhance effective court management.
5. **Sufficient Staffing and Support.** Washington courts will be appropriately staffed and effectively managed, and court personnel, court managers and court systems will be effectively supported and trained.