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| **WSCCR Research**  **Project Prioritization Policy**    Adopted by the WSCCR Strategic Oversight Committee on April 2, 2018. |

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# Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria to ensure Washington State Center for Court Research (WSCCR) projects are aligned with the policies, goals, and objectives of the judicial branch and to provide clear guidance.

The Washington State Center for Court Research Strategic Oversight Committee (WSOC) needs a consistent and structured process for court associations and judicial branch entities to submit research requests related to projects, court operations, grant applications, programs, and initiatives.

Research project prioritization policy provides the framework by which project decisions are made, communicated, and implemented.

# Authority

The Washington State Supreme Court Order establishing the Washington State Center for Court Research (WSCCR) was amended on November 6, 2014 to clarify the purpose of WSCCR and the role of the Advisory Board, and to create a Strategic Oversight Committee to set priorities for research requests submitted to WSCCR.

# Criteria

It is the policy of the WSCCR Strategic Oversight Committee (WSOC) to establish clear guidance for the submission of a request for WSCCR to undertake a research project.

In considering research requests and determining the priority of projects, the WSOC will consider the following criteria:

1. Whether the research request is essential to meet a constitutional or statutory mandate.
2. Whether the research request is necessary to implement judicial branch policy or improve court operations or programs.
3. The scope of the project, including but not limited to: funding, timeline, staff, and technology resource demands.

The authority to submit research requests is vested in judicial branch associations and entities listed in Appendix A. The authority to authorize and prioritize projects is vested in the WSOC. The WSOC will establish priorities and make decisions relating to the final selection and authorization of research requests, initiatives, and projects.

The WSOC delegates to the State Court Administrator, the Manager of WSCCR, and the Chair of the WSOC the responsibility to conduct an initial review of proposed projects to determine whether the project meets the criteria and the authority to decide whether WSCCR can proceed given the current workload, staff availability, and skills, as well as other necessary resources, without the prior approval of the WSOC. The State Court Administrator and the Chair of the WSOC shall report on all decisions made under this delegation at regularly scheduled quarterly WSOC meetings.

The WSOC shall take action on research requests on a quarterly basis, or as needed, with meetings scheduled to coincide with the legislative budget cycle. The WSOC may review research requests that are of an emergency nature or that are mandated by the Legislature on a more frequent basis.

# Maintenance

The Research Prioritization Policy and framework will operate without changes for one year. Thereafter, the WSOC will review its Research Prioritization Policy and framework as appropriate.

# Appendix A

1. Superior Court Judges Association on behalf of the superior courts, the Association of Washington Superior Court Administrators (AWSCA) and Washington Association of Juvenile Court Administrators (WAJCA).
2. District and Municipal Court Judges Association on behalf of courts of limited jurisdiction and the District and Municipal Courts Management Association (DMCMA).
3. Board for Judicial Administration.
4. Washington State Legislature.
5. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) (for AOC and the Supreme Court Commissions, as well as research group partnerships).
6. Office of Public Defense.
7. Office of Civil Legal Aid.
8. Appellate Court Executive Committee.

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