

# Washington State Judicial Branch

## 2025-27 Biennial Budget

### Fully Support the Courts of Limited Jurisdiction-Case Management System Project (CLJ-CMS)

**Agency:** Administrative Office of the Courts

**Decision Package Code/Title:** CD – Fully Support CLJ-CMS Project

#### Agency Recommendation Summary Text:

This request is for \$5.4 million and 11.0 FTEs to increase the number of courts that can go-live simultaneously on the new Courts of Limited Jurisdiction-Case Management System (CLJ-CMS). It will also allow Administrative Office of the Courts to purchase and deploy the most up-to-date software functionality for the Courts of Limited Jurisdiction and their probation offices. The CLJ-CMS project and its full implementation are a priority. Changes have been made to the project's implementation schedule because of lessons learned during pilot and early adopter go-lives in 2023 and 2024. Those changes require additional staff to fully support courts as they move onto the new case management system. (General Fund – State)

#### Fiscal Summary:

	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennial	FY 2028	FY 2029	Biennial
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001-1	\$2,766,000	\$2,600,000	\$5,366,000	\$2,750,000	\$2,450,000	\$5,200,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>						
	\$2,766,000	\$2,600,000	\$5,366,000	\$2,750,000	\$2,450,000	\$5,200,000

#### Package Description:

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) recognizes that replacing a major legacy system is a multi-year effort and requires a multi-million-dollar investment. To increase the number of courts moving onto the new case management system in calendar years 2025, 2026, and 2027, additional staffing will be needed. Originally, the Courts of Limited Jurisdiction-Case Management System project (CLJ-CMS) planned a Pilot Court phase (4 courts) followed by 6 additional go-lives. These go-lives were organized regionally with 22 to 32 courts in each go-live. Lessons learned from the Pilot Court phase (adjusted to a 2-court pilot) and Early Adopter phase (nine courts) show that large go-lives are riskier than small ones. And, the experience taught us that current staffing levels will only support 10 courts per go-live.

Since current staffing levels can only support 10 courts per go-live, the original project plan would expand to about twice the number of go-lives. There would be approximately 11 go-lives versus the 6 previously planned. At 2 events per year, the project schedule would extend another 6 years. By increasing staffing levels, go-lives can run simultaneously with a target to have all courts implemented in calendar year 2027.

Additionally, as more courts begin using the system, new development projects will pop-up and require Tyler Technologies to make system changes to meet court needs.

The Pilot Court phase of the project was completed in March 2024. The next phase of the project, known as Early Adopters, will be complete by the end of December 2024. After that, 11 phases remain and will be completed in calendar year 2027. Calendar year 2028 is planned for final, project closeout activities.

- Pilot Courts: Tacoma Municipal Court and Fircrest-Ruston Municipal Court
- Early Adopters (plus all associated probation departments):
  - Asotin County District Court
  - Colfax Municipal Court
  - Douglas County District Court
  - Franklin County District Court
  - Whitman County District Court I & II
  - Cheney Municipal Court
  - Columbia County District Court
  - East Wenatchee Municipal Court
  - Garfield County District Court

**Fully describe and quantify expected impacts on state residents.**

The CLJ-CMS Project is implementing software that will be used by a wide range of users. This software replaces the legacy system DISCIS/JIS case management system currently provided by AOC. This system is nearing its end-of-life after almost 40 years in service. From indigent filers eFiling a Small Claims case for the first time, to attorneys and judges balancing ever growing caseloads, to case workers checking status of a probationer's work program, everyone with ties to the judicial system will ultimately be impacted by the implemented of a modern case management system. A key benefit of an integrated case management system is the efficiency of the system – everything from filing documents in the Document Management System to requesting a hearing to contest a parking violation can be done online, and is immediately shared across all jurisdictions. Going to court is also more efficient – not only can more documents be drafted and docketed before court starts than before, but hearing reminders can be automatically sent to participants which reduces Failure to Appear rates.

**Explain what alternatives were explored by the agency and why this was the best option chosen.**

Funding this request would expand the resources available to the project. An alternative to adding project staff would be to extend the project schedule. A longer timeline would extend existing staffing costs and result in higher vendor costs – more than \$1.5 million each year.

**What are the consequences of not funding this request?**

If this request is not funded, AOC would not have sufficient funding to staff the CLJ-CMS project to a capacity that aligns with the timeline objectives. Not funding this request would delay efforts to modernize and improve existing court systems as implementations are drawn out over 6 more years. Additionally, until all courts of limited jurisdiction are implemented in the new case management systems, the legacy systems will need continued maintenance and support.

**Is this an expansion or alteration of a current program or service?**

The CLJ-CMS project is a replacement for the current case management system provided to courts of limited jurisdiction, and it also expands the services provided by AOC to these courts. This project is the result of years of close partnerships with the courts of limited jurisdiction, legal community, and the Legislature. The goal of this project is to deliver the technology and process upgrades that the courts sorely need so that they can meet the ever-evolving needs of our community.

Our limited jurisdiction courts handle roughly 2 million cases each year, or approximately 87 percent of the state's judicial caseload. The legacy system can no longer support the emerging needs of the courts as it pertains to court data access, document management, eFiling capabilities, complex financial transactions, and probation and supervision needs. These emerging needs, which can be fulfilled through more current technology, can help support the efficient operations of the courts in the administration of justice. This request would expand capacity and close current gaps in the project and help ensure that the courts of limited jurisdiction have current technologies to support their mission.

**Decision Package expenditure, FTE and revenue assumptions:**

**Staffing Assumptions**

Beginning July 1, 2025 and ongoing through the first part of the 2027-29 biennium, AOC requires salary, benefits, and associated standard costs to perform the following types of work.

*IT Project Manager.* The program manager overseeing all aspects of the project including vendor relations and performance. (1.0 FTE)

*Business Analyst.* Responsible for supporting courts migrating from legacy systems into the new case management systems, including supporting with business process consulting, data review, configuration, and testing. (5.0 FTE)

*Senior Data Management Specialist.* Responsible for maintaining and expanding data exchanges with business partners, supporting data review activities, and testing the system. (1.0 FTE)

*Senior Software Developer.* Responsible for software development supporting and related to the CLJ-CMS project, including work to support the AOC Enterprise Integration Platform, as well as the ongoing maintenance and support of existing integrations such as those with DOL, WSP, etc. (2.0 FTE)

*Software Quality Assurance Tester.* Responsible for software quality assurance of the case management systems and supporting applications. Responsible for verifying software releases from the vendor and from internal partners. (2.0 FTE)

**Other Non-Standard Costs**

**Contracts (Object C)**

Costs include planned additional development contracts for Tyler Technologies as AOC deploys software functionality and addresses development needs for the courts.

Expenditures by Object	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031	
Salaries and Wages	1,245,000	1,245,000	1,245,000	1,245,000	1,245,000	1,245,000	
Employee Benefits	387,000	387,000	387,000	387,000	387,000	387,000	
Personal Service Contract	550,000	450,000	600,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	
Goods and Services	66,000	66,000	66,000	66,000	66,000	66,000	
Travel	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	
Capital Outlays	88,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000	
Intra-Agency Reimbursements	408,000	408,000	408,000	408,000	408,000	408,000	
Total Objects	2,766,000	2,600,000	2,750,000	2,450,000	2,450,000	2,450,000	
Staffing							
Job Class	Salary	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
BUSINESS ANALYST	108,000	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
IT PROJECT MANAGER	129,000	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
SENIOR DATA MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST	120,000	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
SENIOR SOFTWARE DEVELOPER	120,000	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
SENIOR QUALITY ASSURANCE TESTER	108,000	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Total FTEs	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0

Explanation of standard costs by object:

A - Salary estimates are current biennium actual rates at Step L.

B - Benefits are the agency average of 31.10% of salaries.

E - Goods and Services are the agency average of \$5,800 per direct program FTE.

G - Travel is the agency average of \$2,000 per direct program FTE.

J – Ongoing Equipment is the agency average of \$1,900 per direct program FTE.

J – One-time IT Equipment is \$5,900 for the first fiscal year per direct program FTE.

Agency Indirect is calculated at a rate of 24.98% of direct program salaries and benefits.

**How does the package relate to the Judicial Branch principal policy objectives?**

**Fair and Effective Administration of Justice**

This package directly advances one Judicial Branch policy objective: Commitment to Effective Court Management. The funding in this request will be used to continue CLJ-CMS project which will streamline processes and improve the efficiency of the Courts of Limited Jurisdiction by using current technologies and modernizing case management and probation systems in addition to eFile capabilities that have already been funded on an ongoing basis.

**Accessibility**

There is more than one court filing for every three citizens in Washington. The CLJ-CMS project will help make Washington court data available to all, either during a trial or by removing the need to physically travel to a court location for information. AOC will modernize legacy systems which will allow for faster access to core court information while ensuring that the system is easier to update. In particular, the CLJ-CMS courts will have increased access to court information, reduced delays and a reduced strain on judicial decision-makers who have been impacted by the loss of judicial officers and staff as a result of current economic difficulties throughout government.

**Commitment to Effective Court Management**

The current CLJ Management Information System (DISCIS) was implemented in the 1980s and is obsolete. While it still performs as intended and was considered state of the art at the time of implementation, court business and technology needs have evolved. Emerging needs include electronic filing, electronic document storage, end-to-end case management, and better data sharing with supervision systems. The CLJ courts have a vision which includes desired functions intended to address the needs of the courts and offers business improvement. The improved and expanded capabilities will assist the courts in meeting their business needs by providing improved capabilities involving data management, access, and distribution; more robust calendar management and statistical reporting capabilities; enhanced business process automation and management; and improved service to judicial partners and the public.

**Sufficient Staffing and Support**

Courts ensure that basic rights and protections are available to Washington citizens. Supporting these rights efficiently through the provision of modern infrastructure and systems ensures that those basic rights and protections occur and remain at the core of how the Washington courts function.

**How does the package impact equity in the state?**

**Address any target populations or communities that will benefit from this proposal.**

Not applicable.

**Describe the how the agency conducted community outreach and engagement.**

Not applicable.

**Consider which target populations or communities would be disproportionately impacted by this proposal. Explain why and how these equity impacts will be mitigated.**  
Not applicable.

**Are there impacts to other governmental entities?**

This project impacts trial and appellate courts by providing a replacement technology system that increases access to case files, gives details of cases to judges in order to make informed decisions on cases, and provides a reliable and accurate repository for decisions that can be used to guide future judgements.

In addition to serving as the statewide court case management system, the existing Judicial Information System (JIS) provides essential information to several state agencies, local law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, criminal justice partners, and the public. The JIS is also responsible for accurately tracking, recording and distributing state and local court revenues (excluding restitution and other “trust” monies).

The new CLJ-CMS provides:

- Enhanced data sharing capabilities
- Cost avoidance through the elimination of redundant data entry
- Error reduction through training, standardization of business practices, and value-limited data entry fields
- Flexibility to meet new and emerging business needs
- Improved tracking and analysis capabilities

Other state programs are benefiting through enhanced efficiency and effectiveness. AOC and courts exchange information and depend on the systems of other agencies. We provide essential information to the Washington State Patrol, Department of Corrections, and Office of the Secretary of State, Sentencing Guidelines Commission, Department of Licensing, local law enforcement agencies, Federal government, prosecutors and defense attorneys. As the CLJ-CMS is implemented in additional jurisdictions, positive impacts will be observed in more governmental entities.

**Stakeholder response:**

The primary stakeholders of this project are the district and municipal courts of Washington; more specifically, the judicial officers, court administrators and managers, and court and probation staff who eagerly await a modern case management system with integrated tools to ease the organizational burden of working in an outdated system. As these jurisdictions vary widely in terms of budgetary support from their city or county councils, these courts work unequally to address the same issues facing all statewide CLJs - standardized data capture, protection of the public, and reduction in administrative workload.

Less obvious but no less important beneficiaries of the project's work are the individuals called to appear before those courts, and the justice partners with whom all courts work together to benefit their communities. Courts that have implemented the new case management systems have benefited enormously from a standardized process, easier intake of payments, and faster accounting processes. These courts have been able to attract and train new court staff who can more easily work within a modern CMS. Courts of limited jurisdiction across the state are eager to implement the new case management systems as it eases the budgetary burden of piecemealing technical solutions at each court. Increased staffing would allow us to implement more courts faster.

**Are there legal or administrative mandates that require this package to be funded?**

There are no legal or administrative mandates that require that this package be funded.

**Does current law need to be changed to successfully implement this package?**

No changes to current law are required to successfully implement this package.

**Are there impacts to state facilities?**

This request does not impact any state facilities.

**Are there other supporting materials that strengthen the case for this request?**

Not applicable.

**Are there information technology impacts?**

This decision package will fund additional staff to support concurrent go-lives for the remainder of the project and address court needs as they are identified with new system functionality or additional development beyond the primary contract with Tyler Technologies. As more courts go-live and begin to use the system, additional development projects will be identified requiring Tyler Technologies to enhance the system to further meet the needs of the CLJ courts.

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