

Washington State Judicial Branch

2025-2027 Biennial Budget

Support Court Management and Operations

Agency: Administrative Office of the Courts

Decision Package Code/Title: BF – Support Court Mgmt. and Operations

Agency Recommendation Summary Text:

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) requests 3.0 FTEs and \$1.166 million ongoing to improve AOC's court business support model which provides education, training, analysis, and implementation of laws, policies, court rules, best practices, and technology in Washington courts. Courts' core business is in a constant state of change: technology grows more complex, new laws are enacted and implemented, and fresh research informs new policy and best practice guiding court programs for court-involved individuals. (General Fund-State)

Fiscal Summary:

| | FY 2026 | FY 2027 | Biennial | FY 2028 | FY 2029 | Biennial |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Staffing | | | | | | |
| FTEs | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 |
| Operating Expenditures | | | | | | |
| Fund 001-1 | \$586,000 | \$580,000 | \$1,166,000 | \$580,000 | \$580,000 | \$1,160,000 |
| Total Expenditures | | | | | | |
| | \$586,000 | \$580,000 | \$1,166,000 | \$580,000 | \$580,000 | \$1,160,000 |

Package Description:

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) court support model is a program helping Washington courts administer justice fairly, openly, and efficiently by:

- Analyzing and implementing the law, policies, court rules, best practices, and technology.
- Educating and training judicial officers and court personnel.

This request will fund new staff: one senior-level business analyst, one case management business analyst, and one law and charge data management business analyst. The assignments will expedite business analysis for new technology projects and lead less experienced and new court technology business analysts to more efficiently complete projects, manage law tables, and implement new, 2024 traffic camera legislation.

Court Technology Business Staff

Today, AOC's court technology business analysis staff are mentored and trained by their supervisors and peers. These staff already manage full workloads – serving as supervisors, developing business requirements, and documenting business processes for complex information technology projects. Dedicating adequate time to mentoring is not feasible. Developing and orienting a business analyst in their full scope of duties can take up to a year. The new senior-level business analyst will develop and implement an onboarding program and apply advanced knowledge of court business and technology principles, concepts, and practices when working on complex information technology projects.

Implementation of Engrossed Substitute House Bill (ESHB) 2384 (Chapter 307, Laws of 2024)

The 2024 Legislature passed a new law, ESHB 2384, expanding the use of traffic safety cameras to more jurisdictions, reducing penalties for certain registered owners, and changing the distribution of certain photo enforced traffic infractions. Implementing these changes in the Judicial Information Systems (JIS System) requires both one-time and

ongoing law table updates and court onboarding and support. The 2024 supplemental budget included one-time funding, but did not address the ongoing staff required to implement the legislation.

Law and Charge Data Management. AOC is responsible for designing and operating statewide court case management systems, which includes maintaining the law tables created by AOC to catalog the laws and ordinances enacted by state and local governments in these statewide systems and sharing the law tables with the public and justice partners. Other state agencies, such as Washington State Patrol (WSP) and Department of Licensing (DOL), rely on AOC law table entries to populate their computer systems which ensure laws are recorded consistently for a person's criminal history and driving record.

An additional business analyst is needed for law and charge data management. This position will build capacity to manage and update the many, individual law entries in AOC's trial court case management systems and the Enterprise Data Repository. Most critically, this business analyst will complete the law table work required to comply with new traffic camera violations legislation (ESHB 2384). Implementing the bill requires AOC to enter each city and county's traffic laws in the law tables to support local violations. This is an ongoing workload. As local governments change their laws and introduce new photo enforcement violations, AOC must update the law table entries. Additionally, this position will support the Statewide Electronic Collision and Ticket Online Record (SECTOR) project (See Attachment A) for initial parking law code set-up and ongoing changes to the parking law codes sent to WSP for use in SECTOR. This project will automate the collision and traffic ticket reporting process for a law enforcement officer by transmitting ticket data to AOC to and sending case dispositions back to law enforcement.

Case Management System Court Onboarding. Today, the AOC is required to onboard courts to the vehicle-related violation system to get photo tickets into the JIS System. This requires AOC to review and approve all photo ticket language, and to add new city and county court jurisdictions into AOC supported case management systems.

ESHB 2384 places additional responsibilities on AOC by expanding the number of jurisdictions using traffic safety cameras. AOC must onboard more courts to the AOC supported systems. Each onboarding requires coordination with the court, their vehicle-related violation system vendor, AOC's Law and Charge Data Management team, legal staff, and WaTech. Additionally, AOC is currently replacing the legacy JIS System with a new case management system (Enterprise Justice). Each court using the legacy JIS System will now have to transition photo tickets to the new case management system at the same time as they go-live in Enterprise Justice. An additional business analyst is needed to complete this new work.

Fully describe and quantify expected impacts on state residents.

Funding this request would positively impact Washingtonians by adding additional, skilled business staff that will enhance business practices and technology systems in the trial courts. The result will be faster and more accurate solutions for court technology systems, data issues, and system and data enhancements, which will in turn increase the efficiency of the courts and reduce the time people spend appearing in court hearings.

Below are a few examples of how inadequate court business support negatively impacts Washingtonians, justice partners, and the courts:

- **Court Case Parties/Participants:** If a case management system is down for an extended period and cannot produce case or public safety-related documents (protection orders, warrants, etc.), the courts will either wait for the system to be fixed or spend time manually creating documents, manually applying judicial officer signatures, and manually e-mailing or mailing documents to the case party and their attorney. Once the system is back up and running, the court will then enter the missing data and upload documents to the system. This

scenario highlights the need for business staff to be trained and have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to address issues quickly or anticipate issues and avoid them, saving time and effort at the trial court level.

- **Justice Partners:** The WSP, Health Care Authority (HCA), DOL, and Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) rely on accurate person and case data for data exchanges. Oftentimes, justice partners will contact the AOC and ask for specific or specialized reports. Responding to these requests requires significant research and data validation from experienced court business staff who understand court data for all court levels. This is an existing gap. Now, supervisors spend time completing the research. Also, as more courts of limited jurisdiction send their case and personal data to the central data repository, there will be many more instances of personal record issues that will need to be analyzed and addressed. AOC is required to address all person record and law table issues so that all records are merged into one person record. This ensures each person has a single global party record and the courts are using the correct laws.
- **General Public:** The case management systems display data on public-facing websites and viewers. The general public can view all current and historical cases and personal information. If this automated service is down, courts experience increased calls for assistance or information. The courts then have to share information via telephone or e-mail until the issue is resolved.
- **Courts:** The courts rely on AOC customer service to address technology, training, business process changes or best practice improvements, and legal analysis. In 2023, the AOC processed over 24,000 documented calls for assistance. Having knowledgeable and adequate court business support is critical.

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

AOC considered using existing business staff to meet the needs of the court, public, case parties/participants, and justice partners. However, the overall level of support that courts need is growing and AOC does not have capacity to meet it. More technology and services are being requested and offered. New court business processes are also being introduced that require additional resources to manage the increasingly complex workload.

What are the consequences of not funding this request?

If this request is not funded, AOC will not have the skilled business resources necessary to support the courts, case parties/participants, justice partners, and Washingtonians. This jeopardizes AOC's ability to adequately support the courts; hindering the ability of courts and justice partners to operate effectively. Also, law table management will not be timely. That could slow the process of filing cases in the case management systems or leave outdated laws in AOC case management systems.

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

The AOC would be improving the services provided to the courts, case parties/participants, justice partners, and Washingtonians by increasing court business and data support.

Decision Package expenditure, FTE and revenue assumptions:

Staffing Assumptions

Senior Business Analyst. Beginning July 1, 2025 and ongoing, AOC requires salary, benefits, and associated standard costs for 1.0 FTE to provide organizational business analysis expertise for major systems used by courts, justice partners, case participants/parties, and Washingtonians. The position will mentor other business analysis staff on the business analysis fundamentals and coordinate business analyst work to define, determine, and represent court business priorities, objectives, and goals.

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Business Analyst (Law Table Management). Beginning July 1, 2025 and ongoing, AOC requires salary, benefits, and associated standard costs for 1.0 FTE to review and analyze statewide and local laws and make required updates to law entries in the seven law tables for AOC's trial court case management systems and the Enterprise Data Repository. This position will also complete the law table work supporting new traffic camera violations legislation (ESHB 2384) and the SECTOR parking ticket project.

Business Analyst (Case Management). Beginning July 1, 2025 and ongoing, AOC requires salary, benefits, and associated standard costs for 1.0 FTE to coordinate, elicit, and update, information technology and business processes through requirements, documentation, and standards. This position will contribute business perspective and analysis towards solutions and business needs for managing and processing case data and documents. This position will be crucial for gathering requirements and implementing the photo enforcement legislation (ESHB 2384) and the SECTOR parking ticket project.

| Expenditures by Object | <u>FY 2026</u> | <u>FY 2027</u> | <u>FY 2028</u> | <u>FY 2029</u> | <u>FY 2030</u> | <u>FY 2031</u> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A Salaries and Wages | 336,000 | 336,000 | 336,000 | 336,000 | 336,000 | 336,000 |
| B Employee Benefits | 104,000 | 104,000 | 104,000 | 104,000 | 104,000 | 104,000 |
| E Goods and Services | 18,000 | 18,000 | 18,000 | 18,000 | 18,000 | 18,000 |
| G Travel | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| J Capital Outlays | 12,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| T Intra-Agency Reimbursements | 110,000 | 110,000 | 110,000 | 110,000 | 110,000 | 110,000 |
| Total Objects | 586,000 | 580,000 | 580,000 | 580,000 | 580,000 | 580,000 |

Staffing

| Job Class | Salary | <u>FY 2026</u> | <u>FY 2027</u> | <u>FY 2028</u> | <u>FY 2029</u> | <u>FY 2030</u> | <u>FY 2031</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| SENIOR BUSINESS ANALYST | 120,000 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| BUSINESS ANALYST | 108,000 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| Total FTEs | | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |

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

Having current and accurate law table data ensures the courts are using the correct laws when managing their cases. If the laws are not correct or are no longer in effect, this could impact the administration of justice.

Commitment to Effective Court Management

Adding business analysts will contribute to effective court management by meeting the reporting needs of the data consumers who rely on court data to make informed decisions. Adding a senior business analyst will also

contribute to effective court management by mentoring and training new and existing business analysts and leading business analysis or large and complex information technology projects. This will ensure the courts receive the best service delivery possible from the team responsible for providing business support on information technology solutions and court business processes.

Sufficient Staffing and Support

Increased staffing levels will better meet the business and data needs of Washington courts. AOC will be better suited to meet the increasing business analysis, customer services, and data management demands to better serve justice partners, case parties/participants, and Washingtonians.

How does the package impact equity in the state?

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

This package will make court hearings and processes more efficient, thereby reducing the time impact on people appearing in court.

Describe the how the agency conducted community outreach and engagement.

AOC continuously reviews processes and conducts surveys to determine the impact of changes to the court systems and technologies.

Consider which target populations or communities would be disproportionately impacted by this proposal.

Explain why and how these equity impacts will be mitigated.

No populations or communities would be disproportionately impacted by this proposal.

Are there impacts to other governmental entities?

This request will impact other state agencies, primarily the Office of Public Defense, WSP, and DOL. This request will also benefit the trial courts, prosecutors, and public defenders.

Stakeholder response:

Attorneys, self-represented litigants, case parties/participants, the media, and the general public would support:

- Easier, more reliable, and more efficient access to the courts, cases, case decision documents, and case data.
- Access to accurate and timely case data and documents via public-facing websites.

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

Implementation of ESHB 2384 requires AOC to complete the work in the AOC supported case management systems and the law tables.

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?

None

Are there information technology impacts?

There are no information technology impacts with this request.

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