

Administrative Office of the Courts

The mission of the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is to advance the efficient and effective operation of the Washington Judicial System.

AOC, operating under the direction of the Supreme Court, executes the Washington judicial system administrative policies and rules, examines the operations of the court system, and makes recommendations for improvement. This court system includes the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, superior courts (including juvenile departments), and the courts of limited jurisdiction (district and municipal courts).

The AOC's authorizing environment is different than other Washington state agencies. In addition to Supreme Court review and approval, services and systems offered by the AOC are reviewed by at least one of the following policy boards: the Board for Judicial Administration (BJA), the Board for Court Education (BCE), the Court Management Council (CMC), and the Judicial Information System Committee (JISC). Through these boards, the Washington court community builds consensus to guide the AOC's work.

On behalf of the Supreme Court and the courts of the state of Washington, the AOC has prepared the 2025-27 biennial budget request. It reflects the judicial branch's business environment.

For 2025-27, the AOC is focused on:

- Supporting Trial Courts
- Right-Sizing Staffing and Program Operations
- Maintaining IT Infrastructure

Organization

The AOC was established by the Washington State Legislature in 1957 and operates under the direction and supervision of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, pursuant to Chapter 2.56 RCW.

The AOC is organized into the four functional areas described below.

The **Administrative Services Division** provides dependable leadership, effective planning, and exceptional service to the courts. Its operations include:

- Communications and public outreach serving as the central communications office for media and public inquiries and requests concerning Washington's judicial branch.
- The Office of Court Innovation working on the cutting edge of evidence-based practice and access to justice issues by using empirical research, evaluation, and performance reporting.

- Human Resources providing professional advice and consultation to employees and management to ensure that high-quality employees are hired and retained in compliance with laws, rules, and requirements.
- The Office Judicial and Legislative Relations serving as the AOC's primary point of contact to the legislative and executive branches of government.

The **Information Services Division** provides IT support to all court levels through the development, operation, and maintenance of the statewide Judicial Information System. The division also provides in-house technology services and support to the AOC, the Supreme Court, and the Court of Appeals. It includes offices focused on architecture and strategy, data and development, IT operations, IT security, policy and planning, project management and quality assurance, and technology infrastructure.

The **Court Services Division** facilitates the analysis and implementation of the law, policies, rules, best practices and technology, as well as education and training of judicial officers and court personnel, so that Washington courts can administer justice fairly, openly, and efficiently.

The **Management Services Division** provides integrated budget planning, asset management, accounting, procurement, revenue monitoring and analysis, facilities and staff services, data dissemination, and contract management for the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, State Law Library, Office of Civil Legal Aid, Office of Public Defense, and the AOC.

In addition to these four primary areas of function, the AOC provides coordination, support, and oversight of the funding for a variety of special programs including the Board for Judicial Administration, Judicial Information Systems Committee, Court Education Committee, the Gender and Justice Commission, and the Minority and Justice Commission.

Clients

The primary clients of the AOC are Washington residents, its judicial officers and courts, and the court managers and employees associated with those courts. The AOC also provides services to a rapidly-widening circle of local and state agencies that are closely tied to the criminal and social problems currently being addressed by the courts. In addition, the AOC provides the JIS Link, a highly popular information service offering access (on a cost-recovery basis) to certain public record court case data contained in the Judicial Information System databases.