center for
CHILDREN & YOUTH
JUSTICE

BY EMAIL ONLY

Stephanie Happold
JIS Data Dissemination Committee ("DDC")
Data Dissemination Administrator
Administrative Office of the Courts
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October 6, 2015

RE: Additional JIS LINK access for the Center for Children & Youth Justice account

Dear Ms. Happold and other members of the DDC,

This letter is to request additional JIS LINK access, including any exemption needed. Specifically, I am requesting our existing account – assigned to the Center for Children & Youth Justice ("CCYJ") – be changed to one that provides for a DCH (defendant case history) screen that permits me to search true names and AKAs for all courts in Washington.

At CCYJ, I manage a non-profit civil legal aid program, Lawyers Fostering Independence ("LFI"). LFI provides legal counsel and direct representation to 17-24 year olds who have experienced foster, kinship, or group care while growing up. Many of our young people have legal barriers standing in the way of reaching for their future. Juvenile records are a common barrier to housing and employment.

About 30% of LFI's work is to help its clients seal their juvenile records. So I regularly use the JIS LINK (or "the system") to begin evaluating whether a young person is eligible to seal or not. Recently, I have run into the issue of not getting a full criminal history for clients having aliases in the system. In one instance, the system returned two municipal cases but caused me to initially overlook 8 juvenile superior court cases tied to the client's system aliases – I only learned of the other cases because of a municipal docket reference to a superior court case. In short, the JIS LINK access I have right now is hampering my ability to be an effective advocate for our clients.

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A JIS LINK account that has DCH command capability and shows all the cases for any court in Washington tied to true names/AKAs should solve my issue. I hope you will grant CCYJ this access so it can better provide civil legal aid to its LFI clients. Please don't hesitate to let me know if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

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