WASHINGTON
COURTS

February 27, 2025

TO: Data Dissemination Committee

FROM: Kevin Cottingham, AOC Data Dissemination Administrator

RE: JIS-Link Site ID Policy Change Request

Longstanding AOC practice has been to create separate JIS-Link sites for contracted public defenders or prosecutors who hold contracts with multiple jurisdictions. Due to the difficulty in enforcing this policy and its perceived lack of benefit, AOC requests DDC approval regarding a policy change.

The stated reason for this policy has always been auditability—if AOC were to look into any JABS misuse, activity would be segregated by site, and AOC auditors would be able to clearly follow the trail of use. This, unfortunately, doesn't line up with auditing in reality, where any reasonable auditor would pull all associated activity when investigating misuse. No auditor would assume that a user materially misusing the system would follow such a policy.

Second, this process adds unnecessary complication for all parties at all levels. An attorney working for multiple jurisdictions in a day would need to log out of the system and log back in using a different account for other work, which has occasionally caused technical problems with browsers. If a user went for some period of time without working for a particular jurisdiction, one account might get disabled due to inactivity, and calls to JIS-Link customer service are more difficult when users mix up the particular login causing issues. Finally, all JIS-Link sites are assigned a three-character site ID. Over time, these site IDs have gone from being generally readable (WSP$ for the State Patrol, for example) to fairly abstract (ZGE$ for a newly-contracted public defender who does not have a "Z" in his name). This is exacerbated when AOC creates multiple sites per firm. This isn't a huge issue, but users are more able to remember their logins when the site ID means something to them and isn't simply a string of random characters.

Third, this policy is mostly reliant on the actual subscribers for enforcement, and as a result, is not followed uniformly. AOC does not maintain a list of every single contracted firm—firms and contracting jurisdictions reach out to us when they need JABS access. Some percentage simply use existing JABS accounts when picking up a new contract and neither AOC nor the contracting agency would have any reason to know. AOC

knows with certainty that this occurs—one firm contacted during an audit recently turned over all their certificates of eligibility upon request and revealed that they had been contracted to provide prosecutorial services for six separate municipalities. They had JABS access since 2009 but the issue had never come up, and they were using a single JABS site to conduct all their work.

Based on experience, AOC is requesting DDC endorsement of a new policy that would allow JABS users to maintain a single JABS site, which could be used for any valid use.