JIS Information Technology Governance Policy

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Judicial Information System (JIS) information technology (IT) resource investments are aligned with business objectives, add value to the IT portfolio (see JIS Policy 10.200), mitigate risk, and deliver projects and services in a cost-effective manner.

The Judicial Information System Committee (JISC) needs a consistent and structured process for its IT governing bodies, so it can: make effective IT investment decisions; process IT requests associated with projects, applications, and services; and address IT governance challenges. The development and implementation of an ITG Framework for JIS applications and services will address this need.

IT governance provides the framework by which IT investment decisions are made, communicated, and overseen. IT governance focuses on the alignment of IT decisions with the overall organizational strategy and the delivery of value from those decisions.

Authority

RCW 2.68.010 gives the JISC the authority to “determine all matters pertaining to the delivery of services available from the judicial information system.” JISC Rule 1 provides for AOC to operate the Judicial Information System (JIS) under the direction of the JISC and with the approval of the Supreme Court pursuant to RCW 2.56.

Scope

For purposes of this policy, "IT governance" is defined as a structure and process for the JIS governing bodies to classify requests and apply criteria and thresholds to determine the appropriate levels of authority and accountability and deliver value for IT investment decisions. IT governance includes, but is not limited to, policies, processes, tools, and templates to identify, evaluate, prioritize, and authorize IT requests, and to communicate the status of those requests to the user communities affected. IT governance applies to all persons, organizations, or agencies that operate, manage, or use the portfolio of IT products and services provided by AOC (see JIS Policy 100-P1).

Policy

It is the policy of the Judicial Information System Committee that the AOC implement a set of IT governance standards and processes that are driven by a business plan, align with an IT strategy, and provide clear guidance, repeatable processes, and measurable outcomes. The standards must address:

1. Maximizing business value and benefit
2. Minimizing impact of potential risks
3. Providing a cost-benefit analysis and desirable return on investment
4. Leveraging existing IT portfolio assets and technology expertise
5. Aligning with enterprise architecture and other technology-related standards
6. Aligning with the JIS Business Plan and IT Strategy

The AOC shall implement an IT governance framework that is used to process all requests for IT investments. The framework shall contain a workflow that includes five steps:

- Initiate an incident or project request.
- Endorse – Affirm that the request is reasonable and viable.
- Analyze – Assess and augment the request prior to review by recommending bodies.
- Recommend – Filter and score against pre-defined criteria to create a prioritized list of IT requests.
- Schedule – Compare all recommended requests to determine the scheduling of action, subject to delegated authority, resource availability, and approved budget.

The authority to initiate and endorse a request shall be vested in the court user community through the establishment of user groups representing the constituencies listed in Appendix XXX.

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The authority to recommend requests to JISC for scheduling shall be vested in the court user community through the establishment of court level user groups comprised of the constituencies listed in Appendix XXX.

The user groups and the court level user groups shall adopt individual charters describing their composition, and rules of operation, provided that the charters adopted by the court level user groups shall state that requests may only be denied upon a unanimous vote of the membership and all other requests will move forward with either a unanimous or majority/minority recommendation for scheduling to the JISC.

A copy of the user group and court level user group charters shall be provided to the JISC.

The IT governance framework must ensure that:

1. Governance processes are aligned with business priorities and reflect the strategic direction of the JISC and the AOC.

2. The processes, frameworks, models, and tools are developed and evolve to their most simple state, in support of the business needs of Washington courts.

3. Decision makers and stakeholders understand their roles in the governance process and the roles of others

4. AOC takes ownership of the governance model and tools, and facilitates future reviews and improvements.

5. Standards, policies, and procedures are created in collaboration with all stakeholder groups, based on acceptance of minimum, ISD-wide standards.

6. A designated IT governance authority and governance structures establish priorities, manage key issues, and make decisions relating to the selection and management of requests, initiatives, and projects.

7. Stakeholders, providers, and users govern the development and implementation of the IT governance framework.

8. AOC will provide staff support and management for initiatives, requests, or projects arising from stakeholder communities.

9. The governance bodies and other participants in the governance process operate in a clear and transparent way to promote trust in the process for managing request and any resulting initiatives or projects.

10. Participants are informed through each step of the process, equipping them with the appropriate information, tools, and resources needed to take each step.

11. There is communication throughout the governance process to ensure greater visibility into the decision-making process.

12. The governance model be allowed to operate for a given period and assessed formally on an ongoing basis, guided by predetermined performance measures.

13. The approach to IT governance evolves over time, allowing participants and stakeholders to continue to operate the IT governance process in a way that meets their business needs.

14. The range of participants and level of participation evolve over time as the IT governance framework is established.

Delegated authority for the State Court Administrator and the AOC Chief Information Officer is shown in the IT Governance Delegation Matrix in appendix XXX. The JISC may review, increase, decrease, or revoke any previous delegation regarding acquisition of IT resources. All acquisitions conducted under delegated authority must comply with JIS IT Governance Policy and the JISC IT Governance Standards.

The Administrator for the Courts and the AOC CIO shall report to JISC on all decisions made under the delegation matrix at each regularly scheduled JISC meeting.

Decisions not to schedule recommended requests by the State Court Administrator and the AOC CIO shall state the reasons for the denial and may be appealed to the JISC by the recommending court level user group.

Maintenance

The AOC must review its IT Governance standards and framework at least annually and make appropriate updates after any significant changes in its business or technology environment. Major policy changes will require the approval of the JISC.

Appendix: JIS Delegation Matrix

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