

THE SUPREME COURT OF WASHINGTON

IN THE MATTER OF THE FAMILY DEFENSE
CASELOAD STANDARDS FOR INDIGENT
DEFENSE UNDER CrR 3.1, CrRLJ 3.1, AND JuCR
9.2

ORDER

NO. 25700-A-1656

The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) and the Council on Public Defense (CPD) have recommended proposed amendments to the Standards for Indigent Defense under CrR 3.1, CrRLJ 3.1, and JuCR 9.2 related to “family defense,” which their proposed amendments define as “the practice of representing all people statutorily and constitutionally entitled to legal representation in cases under RCW 13.34, 13.36, and 13.38, et seq.” Their proposed amendments include, but are not limited to, recommendations for reducing the caseload standards for family defense attorneys.

The Court published the proposed amendments for comment in January 2025, with a comment deadline of April 30, 2025. Having reviewed the proposed amendments and the comments received, the Court finds that a reduction in the caseload standards for family defense attorneys is warranted, but under a different implementation schedule than proposed by WSBA and CPD.

Now therefore, it is hereby ORDERED:

ORDER

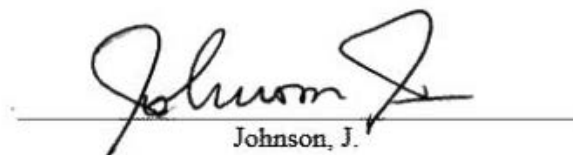
IN THE MATTER OF THE FAMILY DEFENSE CASELOAD STANDARDS FOR
INDIGENT DEFENSE UNDER CrR 3.1, CrRLJ 3.1, AND JuCR 9.2

(a) Beginning July 1, 2026, family defense attorneys shall not represent more than 45 family defense clients or carry more than 60 open and active cases at any given time pursuant to the Standards for Indigent Defense under CrR 3.1, CrRLJ 3.1, and JuCR 9.2. Beginning July 1, 2028, family defense attorneys shall not represent more than 35 family defense clients or carry more than 40 open and active cases at any given time. Rule amendments concerning these revised caseload standards will be issued in the near future, once the Court's review of all pending proposed amendments to the Standards for Indigent Defense is complete.

(b) This order will be published in the Washington Reports.

DATED at Olympia, Washington this 5th day of September, 2025.


CHIEF JUSTICE

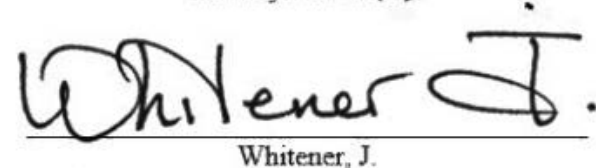

Johnson, J.


Yu, J.

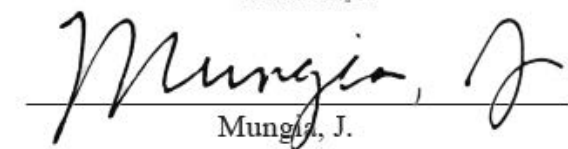

Madsen, J.


Montoya-Lewis, J.


González, J.


Whitener, J.


Gordon McCloud, J.


Mungia, J.