

Renee S. Townsley  
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*The Court of Appeals  
of the  
State of Washington  
Division III*



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Spokane, WA 99201-1905

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April 29, 2015

The Honorable Charles Johnson  
Washington State Supreme Court  
Temple of Justice  
415 12<sup>th</sup> Ave SW  
PO Box 41174  
Olympia, WA 98504  
[supreme@courts.wa.gov](mailto:supreme@courts.wa.gov)

RE: Comment on Suggested Amendments to Court Transcriptionist Rule Changes

Dear Justice Johnson:

I am writing as the Chair of the Court Management Council (CMC) Transcriptionist Subcommittee to urge the Court to adopt the Suggested Amendments to SPRC 3; RAP 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.8, 9.9, 9.10, 10.2, 18.9; CR 43, 80; ARLJ 13; RALJ 5.3; CRLJ 75 and Suggested New Rules: CR, CrR, and GR. We are also urging the Court to amend the published version of the "New Rule—Official Certified Superior Court Transcripts" proposal.

After thorough and tedious deliberation, the CMC members—court management leaders from all levels of appellate and trial courts—by unanimous vote proposed a series of rule updates to enhance the consistency and efficiency of creating, maintaining, and transmitting the verbatim report of proceedings. The CMC proposals were reviewed by the Court of Appeals Rules Committee, the Superior Court Judges' Association, and the District and Municipal Court Judges' Association, and later endorsed by the Board for Judicial Administration (BJA). With one exception, those proposals are the ones currently before the Court.

The "New Rule – Official Certified Superior Court Transcripts" as originally suggested to the Court by the court administrators and BJA read:

Except as otherwise ordered by the court the minimum qualification to become an authorized transcriptionist in order to complete and file an official certified court transcript from electronically recorded proceedings is certification as a court reporter or certification by AAERT (American Association of Electronic Reporters and Transcribers) or proof of one year

of supervised mentorship with a certified court reporter or an authorized transcriptionist. Courts may require additional qualifications at their discretion.

However, the published version added two words to the last sentence, and now reads: "Courts may require additional *or different* [emphasis added] qualifications at their discretion." This change from the original submission undermines the foundational goal to bring consistency across the state for verbatim report of proceedings. We currently have rules in place that allow different qualifications and no minimum standards for persons completing this important work for the courts. The rules need to be changed and clarification added to improve the quality of transcribed materials. The addition of "or different" allowing courts to opt out of minimum requirements, undoes much of the new rule changes.

I strongly urge the Court to adopt the suggested court rule amendments and in the case of the new rule, adopt the version originally submitted by the Court Management Council.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Renee Townsley".

Renee Townsley  
Clerk/Administrator

RST/mos

**Tracy, Mary**

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**From:** OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 30, 2015 11:49 AM  
**To:** Tracy, Mary  
**Subject:** FW: CMC Rule Change-Supreme Court Comment  
**Attachments:** CMC Rule Change-Supreme Court Comment.doc

For you ☺

**From:** Townsley, Renee  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 30, 2015 11:39 AM  
**To:** OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK  
**Subject:** CMC Rule Change-Supreme Court Comment

Ron,

Please accept the attached letter for filing as a comment on the Court Management Council suggested Court Rule amendments. I understand today is the deadline for your office to receive comments.

Let me know if you need any further information.

Thank you,

*Renee Townsley*  
**Clerk/Administrator**  
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500 North Cedar Street  
Spokane, WA 99201-1905  
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