



District and Municipal Court Judges' Association

April 22, 2022

President

JUDGE CHARLES D. SHORT
Okanogan County District Court
149 N 3rd Ave, Rm 306
Okanogan, WA 98840
(509) 422-7170

President-Elect

COMMISSIONER RICK LEO
Snohomish County District Court
415 E Burke Ave
Arlington, WA 98223-1010
(360) 435-7700

Vice-President

JUDGE JEFFREY R. SMITH
Spokane County District Court
1100 W Mallon Ave
PO Box 2352
Spokane, WA 99210-2352
(509) 477-2959

Secretary/Treasurer

JUDGE KARL WILLIAMS
Pierce County District Court
930 Tacoma Ave S Rm 239
Tacoma, WA 98402-2115
(253) 798-3312

Past President

JUDGE MICHELLE K. GEHLEN
King County District Court
Redmond Facility
8601 160th Ave NE
Redmond, WA 98052-3548
206-688-0418

Board of Governors

JUDGE THOMAS W. COX
Garfield County District Court
(509) 382-4812

JUDGE ANITA M. CRAWFORD-WILLIS
Seattle Municipal Court
(206) 684-8709

JUDGE MICHAEL R. FRANS
Kent Municipal Court
(253) 856-5730

JUDGE DREW ANN HENKE
Tacoma Municipal Court
(253) 591-5357

JUDGE CATHERINE MCDOWALL
Seattle Municipal Court
(206) 684-5600

JUDGE LLOYD D. OAKS
Pierce County District Court
(253) 798-7487

JUDGE KEVIN G. RINGUS
Fife Municipal Court
(253) 922-6635

JUDGE LAURA VAN SLYCK
Everett Municipal Court
(425) 257-8778

JUDGE MINDY WALKER
Jefferson County District Court
(360) 385-9135

COMMISSIONER PAUL WOHL
Thurston County District Court
(360) 786-5562

VIA EMAIL

Honorable Charles W. Johnson
Honorable Mary I. Yu
Supreme Court Rules Committee
c/o Clerk of the Supreme Court
Temple of Justice
PO Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

RE: Comment on Proposed New General Rule 42

Dear Justice Johnson, Justice Yu, and Rules Committee Members:

On behalf of the District and Municipal Court Judges' Association (DMCJA), I am writing in support of the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA)'s proposal to enact a new GR 42 establishing the independence of public defense services. The DMCJA supports the concept that judicial officers should not be involved in the selection of attorneys providing public defense services. However, the DMCJA is concerned that the language isn't sufficiently clear in this regard.

The proposed subsection (e) conflicts with the desire to establish the independence of public defense services because it directs judicial officers to assign attorneys in some situations. A simple fix is to add a short statement to subsection (c) that states, "unless otherwise provided for in this rule." The DMCJA has provided a revised draft of the new rule that addresses this concern.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

s/Judge Charles D. Short
DMCJA President

cc: Judge Jeffrey Goodwin, DMCJA Rules Chair
Ms. J Benway, DMCJA Rules Staff

Attachment: Revised Draft New GR 42

GR42

[NEW]

INDEPENDENCE OF PUBLIC DEFENSE SERVICES

(a) Purpose and policy. The purpose of this rule is to safeguard the independence of public defense services from judicial influence or control. Consistent with the right to counsel as provided in article I, sections 3 and 22 of the Washington State Constitution and in Washington statutes, it is the policy of the judiciary to develop rules that further the fair and efficient administration of justice. In promulgating this Rule, the Washington Supreme Court seeks to prevent conflicts of interest that may arise if judges control the selection of public defense administrators or the attorneys who provide public defense services, the management and oversight of public defense services, and the assignment of attorneys in individual cases.

(b) Scope. This rule applies to superior courts and courts of limited jurisdiction.

(c) Selection of the public defense administrator and public defense attorneys. Judges and judicial staff in superior courts and courts of limited jurisdiction shall not select public defense administrators or the attorneys who provide public defense services, unless otherwise provided for in this rule.

(d) Management and oversight of public defense services.

(I) Judges and judicial staff in superior courts and courts of limited jurisdiction shall neither manage nor oversee public defense services, including public defense contracts and assigned counsel lists. Judges should encourage local governments to have attorneys with public defense experience manage and oversee public defense services.

(2) The terms "manage" and "oversee" include: drafting, awarding, renewing, and terminating public defense contracts; adding attorneys or removing them from assigned counsel lists; developing or issuing case weighting policies; monitoring attorney caseload limits and case-level qualifications; monitoring compliance with contracts, policies, procedures and standards; and recommending compensation.

(e) Assignment of public defense attorneys in individual cases.

(I) Consistent with federal and state constitutions, applicable statutes and rules of court, the role of judges and their staff in the assignment of a specific attorney in an individual case is to: a) determine whether a party is eligible for appointment of counsel by making a finding of indigency or other finding that a party is entitled to counsel; or b) refer the party for an indigency determination; and c) refer the party to a public defense agency or a public defense administrator

to designate a qualified attorney. Alternatively, a public defense administrator may, prior to a court hearing where eligibility is determined, designate a qualified attorney to be appointed if the court finds the party is eligible.

(2) If there is no public defense agency or administrator, a judicial officer should appoint a qualified attorney, on a rotating basis, from an independently established list of assigned counsel or contractors.

(3) If no qualified attorney on the list is available, a judicial officer shall appoint an attorney who meets the qualifications in the Supreme Court Standards for Indigent Defense.

(f) Necessary services and substitution of counsel. This rule does not limit a judicial officer's authority to grant a motion for necessary investigative, expert, or other services, or to appoint counsel in individual cases when substitution of counsel is required or requested. Substitution of counsel should be made as provided in (e) above.

(g) Effective Date of Rule. This rule will go into effect days after its adoption by the Supreme Court.

Comment

[1] This rule does not alter judges' obligation to ensure that public defense attorneys have certified their compliance with the Supreme Court's Standards for Indigent Defense.

[2] This rule does not preclude judges from communicating information about a public defense attorney's performance to the public defense agency or administrator. Following such communication, judges shall have no role in determining what actions, if any, the public defense agency or administrator takes in response to that communication.

[3] This rule does not preclude judges from providing information on an attorney's performance, in response to requests from public defense agencies or administrators, requests from the Washington State Bar Association, and for example, requests for information made by a judicial candidate evaluation committee.

From: [OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK](#)
To: [Linford, Tera](#)
Subject: FW: Comment Letters (11) re CrRLJ 7.6, CrRLJ 3.1, CJC 2.3, CrRLJ 2.1, CRLJ proposal, GR 26, GR 42, APR 9, CJC 2.2 & 2.6, CrR 3.3, and Nonbiased Language Proposal
Date: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 8:06:57 AM
Attachments: [DMCJA Cmt Ltr re CrRLJ 7.6 April 22, 2022.pdf](#)
[DMCJA Cmt Ltr re CrRLJ 3.1 April 22, 2022.pdf](#)
[DMCJA Cmt Ltr re CJC 2.3 April 22, 2022.pdf](#)
[DMCJA Cmt Ltr re CrRLJ 2.1 April 22, 2022.pdf](#)
[DMCJA Cmt Ltr re CRLJ proposal April 22, 2022.pdf](#)
[DMCJA Cmt Ltr re GR 26 April 26, 2022.pdf](#)
[DMCJA Cmt Ltr re new GR 42 April 22, 2022.pdf](#)
[DMCJA Cmt Ltr re APR 9 April 22, 2022.pdf](#)
[DMCJA Cmt Ltr re CJC 2.2 and 2.6 April 22, 2022.pdf](#)
[DMCJA Cmt Ltr re CrR 3.3 April 22, 2022.pdf](#)
[DMCJA Cmt Ltr re nonbiased language proposal April 22, 2022.pdf](#)
[image002.png](#)

From: Dugas, Tracy
Sent: Monday, April 25, 2022 5:25 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Cc: 'Charles D Short' <cshort@co.okanogan.wa.us>; 'Goodwin, Jeffrey' <Jeffrey.Goodwin@snoco.org>; Benway, Jennifer <Jamanda.Benway@courts.wa.gov>; Oyler, Stephanie <Stephanie.oyler@courts.wa.gov>
Subject: Comment Letters (11) re CrRLJ 7.6, CrRLJ 3.1, CJC 2.3, CrRLJ 2.1, CRLJ proposal, GR 26, GR 42, APR 9, CJC 2.2 & 2.6, CrR 3.3, and Nonbiased Language Proposal

Greetings,

Please see the attached letters intended as comments on the proposed amendments to CrRLJ 7.6; CrRLJ 3.1; CJC 2.3; CrRLJ 2.1; the CRLJ proposal; GR 26; GR 42; APR 9; CJC 2.2 & 2.6; CrR 3.3; and the Nonbiased Language Proposal, sent on behalf of Judge Charles D. Short, DMCJA President.

Thank you,

Tracy Dugas (she/her)

Court Program Specialist | Office of Judicial and Legislative Relations

Administrative Office of the Courts

P: 360.704.1950

tracy.dugas@courts.wa.gov

www.courts.wa.gov

