



August 24, 2021

Ms. Erin L. Lennon
Clerk of the Supreme Court
P.O. Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Re: Proposed Court Rule - CrR 3.4

Ms. Lennon:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on proposed changes to CrR 3.4.

While the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) appreciates the proposal to expand remote hearings in criminal cases and create standards for the technology used, interpreters, and public visibility, the proposal does not contain language that acknowledges the wide variety of issues associated with this expansion. As you know, there are varying degrees of internet access between counties, especially our most rural and remote counties. There are also costs associated with upgrades associated with these new standards. How will counties pay for these requirements? While there are likely many benefits to continuing to provide access in an alternative manner, we must be mindful that these changes can be costly. It should come as no surprise that our courts are overwhelmed with court backlog caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and worsened by the responsibilities that come with the recent Blake decision. Court costs have increased with little manner by which to pay for them.

Therefore, we request that the court provide an official comment that indicates that nothing in the proposed rule requires a legislative entity to update its IT infrastructure or resources.
Sincerely,

/s/
Juliana Roe
Policy Director
Washington State Association of Counties

Cc: Judge Laura M. Riquelme, SCJA Criminal Law and Rules Committee, Chair

From: [OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK](#)
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Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to comment on CrR 3.4, attached.

Thank you,

Juliana

Juliana Roe | Policy Director
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jroe@wsac.org | 360.489.3012

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