

From: [OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK](#)
To: [Martinez, Jacquelynn](#)
Subject: FW: Changes to JuCR 7.16
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From: David Wheeler <David.Wheeler@co.benton.wa.us>
Sent: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 5:30 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Changes to JuCR 7.16

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Erin Lennon,

I respectfully request the Washington State Supreme Court **rescind JuCR7.16**. The information provided by the Superior Court Judges' Association letter dated February 10, 2023 provides a very detailed and well-articulated list of reasons why, which I fully support. In addition, I have spoken to numerous colleagues, members of the community, stakeholders, and all have been quite befuddled to angered about this Court rule, which allows for justice to be delayed and/or ignored entirely based on whether or not a juvenile offender decides to come to Court. As currently written, the Judicial Officer's hands are tied, limiting warrants to only those whose circumstances present a serious threat to the community. Most juvenile offenders do not pose a serious threat to the community, so if they either do not feel like coming to court or deliberately choose not to, the hearing is continued. This can happen repeatedly until such time they choose to come to court or turn 18 and have the matter filed in adult court where this juvenile court rule does not apply. Many juvenile offenders lack consequential thinking skills, so it's confusing why a court rule would allow for juvenile offender choice to appear and limit a Superior Court Judge's authority for making informed decisions by evaluating all the facts. Victims are left wondering why there are laws if Judges can't uphold and enforce the administration of Justice, which they are sworn to do. In my opinion, this also further taints the perception of justice and over time will contribute to communities feeling less safe. If it's the intended goal of the Supreme Court to limit Juvenile Court's involvement and handling of certain Juvenile Offender cases, then please consider allowing the Legislature to take this up and propose any revisions to RCW Chapter 13, which they believe is necessary. Until then, please rescind this court rule and immediately return full authority to Superior Court Judges to uphold the administration of juvenile justice as the laws are currently written.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

David Wheeler, Juvenile Court Administrator
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