



*Superior Court of the State of Washington  
for Okanogan County*



**Juvenile Court Division  
Department of Juvenile and Family Services**

Chief Justice Steven González and Supreme Court Justices  
Temple of Justice  
PO Box 40929  
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

Re: Suggested Changes to JuCR 7.16

Honorable Chief Justice González and Justices of the Washington State Supreme Court,

While there are many legal considerations regarding the change or permanency of the currently adopted JuCR 7.16, I would like to take the time to explain the impact that the implementation of this rule has had on the family's and youth we serve. JuCR 7.16 has been enacted its current form for just over two years as it took effect on February 1, 2021. Since the implementation of this rule we have had a number of parents, family members, community partners and juvenile justice stakeholders upset with the inability of the Juvenile Court to act when youth refuse to participate in the court process. They refuse to participate by failing to appear, running away, using *dangerous* illicit substances against court orders and numerous other situations or combinations of situations that present a clear and present danger to themselves, yet not rising to the level of posing a "Serious Threat to Public Safety". This inability of the court to act and to partner with the families in the best interest of their child has led to an erosion of trust, rapport and team approach to helping the youth in crisis. It has increased barriers on some of the most difficult and vulnerable youth in the Juvenile Justice System.

An example of this in Okanogan County where we had a 17-year-old youth under court supervision on cases involving malicious mischief and assaultive behavior compounded with a history of co-occurring mental health and substance use. Her parent was desperately seeking treatment and help for her daughter. The youth did go to treatment, then aborted treatment unsuccessfully and returned to our county. Once home, she immediately slipped back into her old lifestyle and a violation was filed under the JuCR 7.16. A hearing was set instead of a warrant being issued. She failed to appear for her court date and another court date was set. We again requested a warrant and one was issued. On February 14, 2022 it was reported to us that she wound up in Idaho, got access to a firearm and shot herself.

The Juvenile Courts understand processes and practices that have harmful effects on youth. We also understand processes and practices to save their lives.

Please consider rescinding JuCR 7.16, so that we can work together to save lives and refine practices that work.



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**From:** [OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK](#)  
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**Subject:** FW: Suggested Changes to JuCR 7.16  
**Date:** Friday, April 28, 2023 2:26:07 PM  
**Attachments:** [Public Comment JuCR 7.16.pdf](#)

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**From:** Dennis Rabidou <[drabidou@co.okanogan.wa.us](mailto:drabidou@co.okanogan.wa.us)>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 28, 2023 2:14 PM  
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Good afternoon Erin,

Please see attached public comment for JuCR 7.16.

Best Regards,

***Dennis T. Rabidou***  
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