



Northwest Justice Project

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César E. Torres
Executive Director

April 28, 2023

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
supreme@courts.wa.gov

Re: Letter in Support of Proposed Amendments to RPC 1.8(e)

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

The Northwest Justice Project (NJP) writes in strong support of the proposed amendments to RPC 1.8(e), proposed by the WSBA Board of Governors, Committee on Professional Ethics (WSBA). As stated in the GR 9 cover sheet accompanying the proposed amendment, the changes “would permit lawyers to pay court costs and expenses of litigation on behalf of indigent clients, and to provide modest gifts for living expenses to indigent clients in limited circumstances.”

NJP is the largest provider of civil legal aid in Washington State, employing over 200 advocates working in 21 offices across the state. Since NJP was formed in 1995, it has closed more than 500,000 cases that have directly benefited over 1,000,000 low-income people in our state. In addition to individual cases, NJP also identifies and addresses prevalent systemic inequities that have benefits for low-income community members across the state.

The proposed amendments expand access to the justice system and will allow NJP to better provide holistic services to our clients. The proposed changes to RPC 1.8(e) largely track the ABA Model RPC, with some modifications, and apply to lawyers representing indigent clients through a nonprofit legal services or public interest organization, and law school clinical or pro bono programs. NJP strongly urges the Washington Supreme Court to adopt the proposed amendments to RPC 1.8(e).

Sincerely,

Mary Welch
Statewide Advocacy Counsel
Northwest Justice Project

From: [OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK](#)
To: [Martinez, Jacquelynn](#)
Subject: FW: Comments in support of amendments to RPC 1.8(e)
Date: Friday, April 28, 2023 3:33:15 PM
Attachments: [Letter in support of proposed amendments to RPC 1.8\(e\).docx](#)

From: Mary Welch <maryw@nwjustice.org>
Sent: Friday, April 28, 2023 3:05 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Comments in support of amendments to RPC 1.8(e)

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Enclosed please find a letter in support of the proposed amendments to RPC 1.8(e). If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you,

Mary Welch – Statewide Advocacy Counsel

Northwest Justice Project

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