

**From:** [OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK](#)  
**To:** [Martinez, Jacquelynn](#)  
**Subject:** FW: RAP 18.25  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 8:29:07 AM

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**From:** Megan Allen <mallen@kcsarc.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 5:46 PM  
**To:** OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>  
**Subject:** RAP 18.25

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Hello,

I am emailing in support of RAP 18.25. As an advocate for victims of sexual assault for the last 25yrs I have witnessed the way in which the criminal justice system unnecessarily revictimizes individuals who merely sought out the system to help protect them. We know that most victims of sexual assault never report, and we have made very little progress over the years to make the system more accessible, and trustworthy to victims of sexual assault. We cannot continue to advocate for justice reform and trauma informed courts when we neglect to apply these same concepts to victims. Victims have a right under our constitution to be treated with 'dignity and respect'. Providing sexual assault victims to have their identifies given an additional layer of privacy is reasonable and necessary. We know that victims of sexual assault are primarily BIPOC, women and children; and have little voice or consideration historically in our criminal justice system. We know that victims have no appointed attorneys in the criminal justice system fighting for their rights along with no mechanism for enforcing a violation of these rights. Reinforcing a need ensure the courts are providing equal consideration of the victim's rights and promote the courts as an access point for protection for victims; not one that causes additional harm.

I have worked with countless victims who have been re-victimized when their most personal and traumatic details are publicly available and visible by a quick google search. I do not believe the concepts around open courts were outlined with the realities of current day immediate access to information through the internet. We already witness the way in which the system allows defendants to use the courts to punish victims for speaking out. Open courts are not an absolute as we have many examples of courts consideration for matters involving juvenile respondents, dependency court, sealing of records.

Victims of sexual assault often experience a system that does not prioritize their rights, nor does it consider the tremendous burden and possible harm the system can cause in the pursuit of justice. Nothing about asking for an additional layer of privacy and protection in requiring all sexual assault victims' names be initialized violates the open courts as the defendant's case, the case details and all the court records, court hearings and courtroom will continue to be available and accessible. If RAP 18.25 was adopted a victim's involvement in the criminal justice system would not open them up to an unreasonable level of visibility. Protecting a victim's name from publicly appearing in court

documents does not hinder the "...the right to freely observe the administration of civil and criminal justice" We can do better as we know and understand the ways in which perpetrators to use public visibility to shame, deter, and punish victims for speaking out; reinforcing the rape myths that have been so successful at silencing victims.

I urge you to support RAP 18.25. Victims of sexual assault would be encouraged to report and more willing to engage in the criminal justice system if the system provided equal consideration of their rights.

Sincerely,

Megan Allen

**Megan Allen**

**Director of Advocacy Services** | Pronouns: she/her

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