

FERRY COUNTY CLERK
and
Ex Officio Clerk of Superior Court
350 E. Delaware #4 * Republic, WA. 99166
(509)775-5245

April 26, 2024
Clerk of the Supreme Court
PO BOX 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

RE: RAP 9.6 Rule Changes

Dear Clerk of the Supreme Court,

I am writing in response to the proposed rule changes to RAP 9.6. The changes that are being proposed will be a hardship to Ferry County, as we are a very small Rural County. Our budget is very small and it will be very difficult to allocate sufficient funds to meet the change requirements. Adopting the suggested amendments will have unwanted consequences for Ferry County Superior Court.

1. Our Trial Exhibits could be exposed to damage, altered or even lost.
2. I have a small staff to keep up with our current workload and this would significantly increase our workload.
3. There are serious security risks, exposing county networks, hardware, and software that are at risk of damage.
4. I am concerned that copying or distributing exhibits that contain financial and protected information could have a negative impact.
5. We do not have dedicated equipment to include the required software to support copying digital media. We are definitely a technology challenged County. Statutory cover fees will not come close to the cost to cover the equipment and supplies. Also, my Clerk's office and Courthouse do not have the space. We cannot copy an audio file directly from one to the other, it has to be copied onto a hard drive. This could potentially cause harm to our desktops.

It is imperative that policymakers consider the unique challenges faced by small rural counties. Adequate support would be needed to ensure successful adaptation of the rules.

I believe that any amendment should only be considered after a hardware/software exhibit management system could be provided statewide for all 39 Counties.

Technology has changed and the rules and Management of our Court exhibits and records have not kept up with the pace. We need to take a Holistic approach on implementation, financial assistance etc. that will work for all of the Counties.

Sincerely,

Melanie L. Breezee
Ferry County Superior Court Clerk