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Subject: FW: Updating caseload standards
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From: Scott, Debra <Deb.Scott@kingcounty.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2024 10:32 AM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Updating caseload standards

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Dear Washington State Supreme Court,

I am writing to ask you to please support reduced legal caseload standards. I am an investigator at King County Department of Public Defense. I love my job and doing my best work for our clients; however, current caseloads standards make it difficult to do more than the bare minimum in each case. We desperately need caseload relief.

These unsustainable caseload standards result in a poor quality of representation. It is my understanding that under the current WSBA standards, each public defense attorney is expected to handle as many as 150 felony cases or as many as 400 misdemeanor cases a year — a caseload that works out to, approximately, 13.3 hours per felony or 5 hours per misdemeanor.

Again, I love this work and feel a deep commitment to our clients and the pursuit of justice, but year after year of this unrelenting pressure is difficult to sustain. We are losing attorneys – often the best attorneys, the most effective and conscientious attorneys – in numbers I have never before seen in my 18 years working in public defense.

This work has always been challenging, but, especially now, with the advent of body-worn camera video and other new technologies, just doing a thorough review of discovery takes far longer than it did 10 years ago. I encourage you to support the new caseload standards to ensure that Washington State residents receive their 6th

Amendment rights.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Deb Scott

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