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To: [Martinez, Jacquelynn](#)
Subject: FW: Suggested amendments to CrR 3.1/CrRLJ 3.1/JuCR 9.2
Date: Thursday, October 31, 2024 4:31:02 PM

From: Eric Mapes <mapeser2@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2024 4:29 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: Suggested amendments to CrR 3.1/CrRLJ 3.1/JuCR 9.2

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Dear Justices,

I have been working as a public defender for more than 8 years. In that time, I've directly experienced the strain that this work puts on us. I've also seen numerous colleagues quit due to stress from the high workload. The constant turnover impacts the quality of the services we can provide and increases stress on those of us who continue to do this work. As someone who came to this profession relatively late in life (I was 37 when I got my bar license), I don't know how much longer I can sustain this level of effort. I feel like I'm performing a plate-spinning routine, with more plates in the air than I can keep track of.

I realize that ours is not a popular profession, and that prosecutors and judges find it easy to blame us for perceived deficiencies in the criminal justice system. Our work is critical, however, both as a check against abuses of power and as a means of increasing accuracy in the results of criminal prosecutions. Wrongful convictions and excessive punishment have severe negative consequences for society and decrease respect for the justice system.

I urge you to adopt these rule changes. Public defenders need to have the time and resources to provide each client effective representation and a vigorous defense. The current caseload limits put too much strain on our health and lead to worse outcomes for everyone.

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

Eric Mapes
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