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**Subject:** FW: Public Defender comment on standards  
**Date:** Monday, October 28, 2024 11:53:24 AM

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**From:** Jane Boman <[JBoman@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:JBoman@co.whatcom.wa.us)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 28, 2024 11:52 AM  
**To:** OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <[SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV](mailto:SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV)>  
**Subject:** Public Defender comment on standards

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Hello Justices,

I write with hope you will adopt new caseload standards to significantly reduce our caseloads. Please adopt the proposed changes to CrR 3.1.

I love public defense. This is the job I was born to do. I never want to leave, but I do not know how much longer I can do it.

I have been a public defender for 12-and-a-half years. When I started, I was brand-new out of law school and I had worked at public defender agencies in Seattle and the Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Washington. I loved the legal work, the courtroom work, the investigations, the negotiations, and I especially loved the social work aspect of client-centered advocacy. I have grown up and now I am the mother of two young girls. They are 3 and 6 and I believe it should be possible to parent and lawyer at the same time, especially in a wonderful office in a community that tries to support me. But it is absolutely not possible with a caseload like the one I carry.

I was in District Court for two years and I have been in felonies for ten-and-a-half. I am the felony lead for our felony unit. I know how to maintain organization and sustain a high-maintenance caseload, but there is a limit to what is possible. It is not possible to carry all the work we are asked to do and live a life outside of the office. The hours of body camera footage per case would, on its own, require many more than 12 hours to view. Motions-writing demands hours on top of discovery review. We spend countless hours in court waiting for cases to be called. We are responsible for calendars (1<sup>st</sup> appearances, arraignments, plea/sentencing, motions) in addition to the office work and client meetings our job demands.

The RAND standards reflect that current caseloads are untenable because they are. My own office is

losing incredible lawyers—lawyers who have clerked for Supreme Court Justices and have truly extraordinary skills to offer our clients—because the grind is more than a person who wants to provide the advocacy our clients deserve can give.

Please take our input seriously. We are losing some of the best lawyers to this crisis.

Jane Boman