



October 28, 2024

Washington Supreme Court  
415 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW  
Olympia, WA 98504

**RE: Proposed Standards for Indigent Defense**

Dear Clerk of the Supreme Court,

The Washougal Police Department urges the Washington State Supreme Court to maintain reject the proposed amendments to the Public Defense Standards without a plan in place to hire new lawyers to meet the current demands. Without a plan to hire more attorneys to pick up the cases that will no doubt increase due to reduced caseloads, the criminal justice system will be forced to release defendants no attorney is available to represent them. Prosecutors will have to reduce the number of cases taken to trial which decreases public safety as defendants are not held accountable.

Further, as this proposal is an unfunded mandate, the required changes to support staff ratios will have an unintended consequence to small legal firms that contract with small cities for indigent defense who may not be able to meet the specific ratios for staff thus further reducing the pool of available public defense. I urge the Court to consider the need for financial support before requiring implementation.

Sincerely,

WENDI STEINBRONN  
Chief of Police

CITY HALL  
1701 C Street  
Washougal, WA 98671  
(360)835.8501  
Fax (360)835.8808

POLICE DEPARTMENT  
1320 A Street  
Washougal, WA 98671  
(360)835.8701  
Fax (360)835.7559