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BJA AI Statement of Principles

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies carry both promise and risk. Washington State’s Judiciary is committed to working in partnership with other stakeholders to develop a framework for assessing new technologies in a way that advances access to justice, avoids compounding bias, safeguards individual privacy and security, and upholds the rule of law. The integration of new technologies into the legal arena does not diminish continued adherence to our core values of judicial excellence, transparency and accountability.

Court processes can be complicated and AI-related technologies have the potential to dramatically enhance every litigant’s ability to successfully navigate our court systems, including through greater access to information and low-cost translation tools. As the legal community increasingly turns to AI and other technologies in the practice of law – developing new tools for tasks such as drafting legal documents or conducting discovery and research – we recognize that technology is not a substitute for human judgment. Moreover,

maintaining accountability and transparency in legal processes is essential to the integrity of our courts. While judicial officers may increasingly use AI and other technologies to improve judicial economy, they must always employ independent judgment in making their decisions and comply with the ethical obligations of the Code of Judicial Conduct. Similarly, while AI may significantly expand access and boost efficiency related to court administration, courts must zealously protect the public trust and ensure that personal information and data are securely maintained in their systems.

We recognize that AI and other emerging technologies may require adjustments to existing court rules and practices, and the Washington State Judiciary is committed to actively engaging with justice partners and the broader community to develop workable standards and guidelines that meet the needs of today and the future.