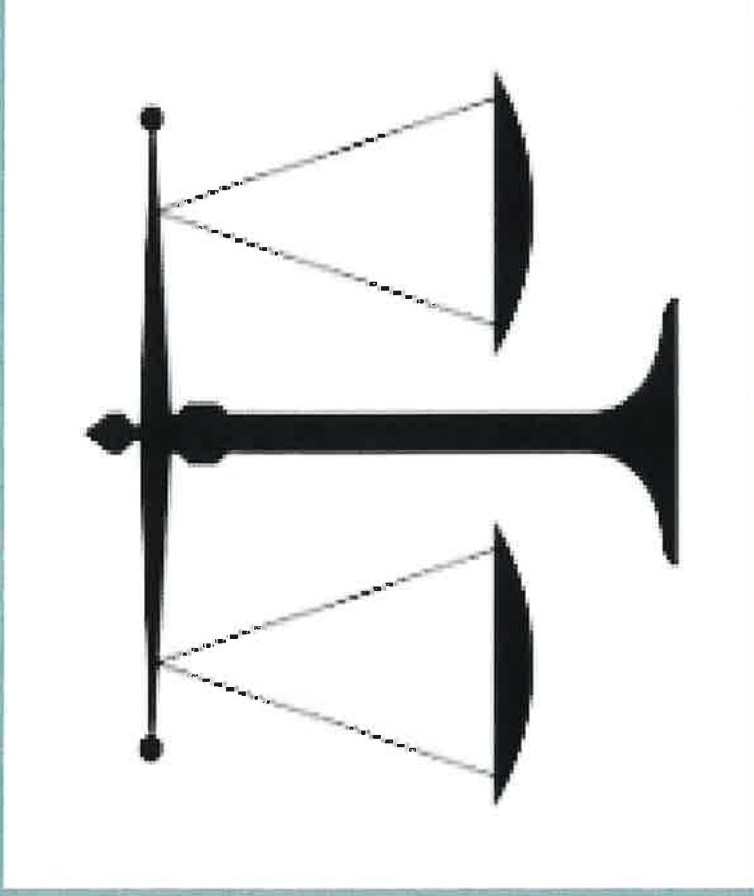
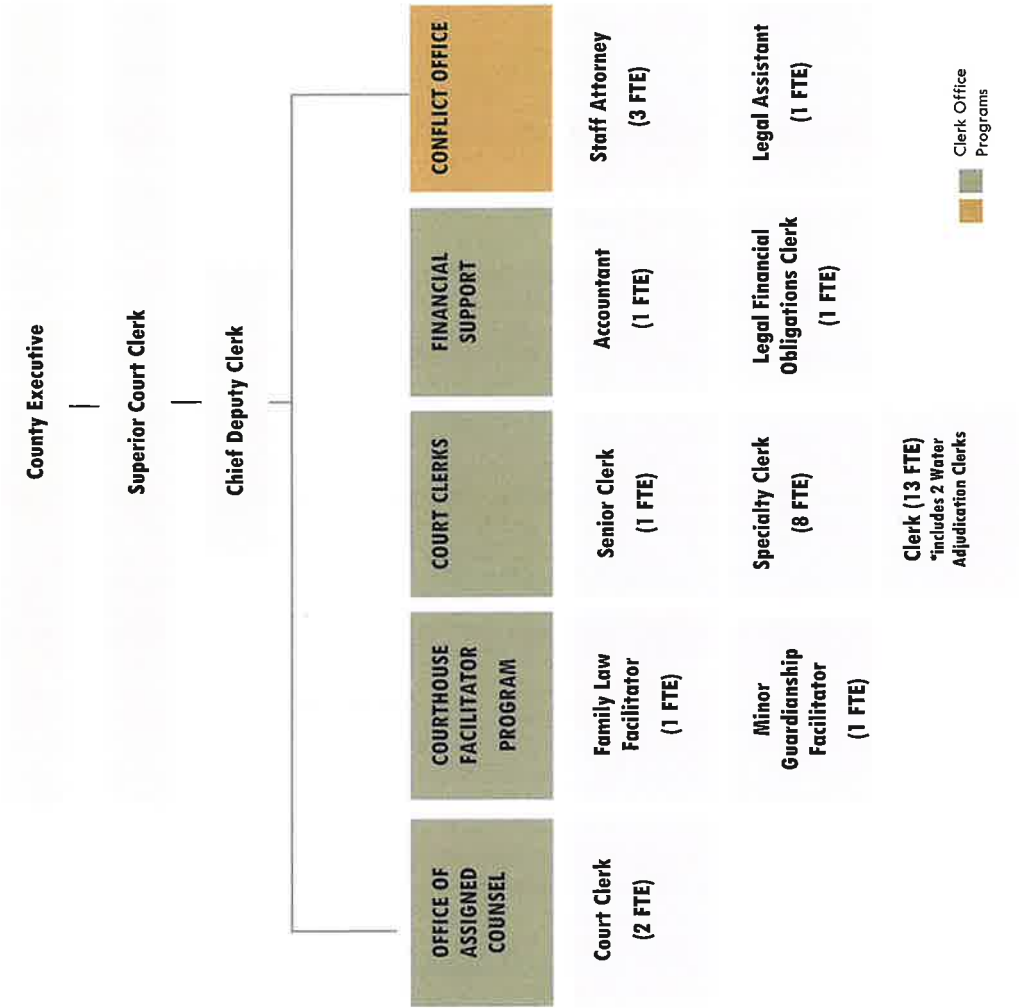




WHATCOM COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT CLERK'S OFFICE

Annual Report
to the Council
07-08-25

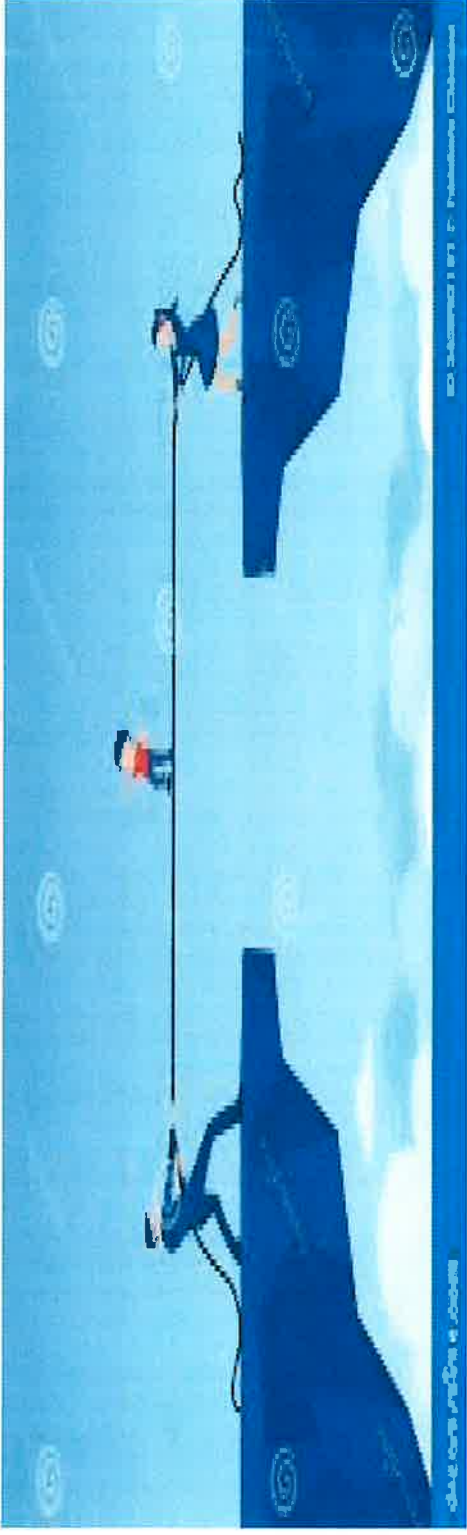
ORGANIZATION CHART



STATE OF WASHINGTON ETHICS OPINION

- Independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary is imperative to public confidence the trust in the superior court.
- Opinion 23-02 outlined there must be a clear separation between judicial and executive functions.
- In the Superior Court, the clerk is a constitutional position that exists outside the judicial branch and does not report to the judge. The clerk reports to the county executive.
- The Superior Court Administrator is an employee of the judicial branch and reports to the judge and is subject to the judge's direction and control.

LEGAL SEPARATION IN 2024



Superior Court
Administration

- Stephanie Kraft

County Clerk's
Office

- Raylene King

WHATCOM COUNTY CLERK ROLES

- Clerk's Office
- Court Facilitators
- Law Library
- Office of Assigned Counsel
- Conflict Office

CLERK'S OFFICE

- **Administrator of court records and exhibits:** Receives, processes, and preserves forever all documents filed in Superior Court
- **Quasi-judicial officer:** Serves a quasi-judicial function in reviewing court documents for possible errors, performs acts as required by law, issues letters of testamentary, warrants of arrest, orders of sale, writs of execution, garnishment, attachments, restitution and set up judgements.
- **Ex-Officio Clerk of the Court:** Under the State Constitution requires the clerk to be present at all court sessions, serving as neutral record keeper of the hearing. Clerk must also be present at every court hearing or trial to receive, record, and preserve all exhibits.
- **Financial Officer of the Court:** Receives court ordered legal financial obligations and fees, issues payments from clerk registry as directed by court order (i.e. child support, etc.)

CASE TYPES

- Civil / DV
- Criminal
- Family Law
- Probate / Guardianships
- Paternity / Adoptions
- Mental Illness (ITA)
- Juvenile Civil (CHINS, ARY, Truancy, Dependency)
- Juvenile Offenders

WHATCOM COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT CASELOAD

	Criminal	Civil	Domestic	Probate/ Guardianship	Adoption/ Parentage	Mental Illness/ Alcohol	Juvenile Dependency	Juvenile Offender	Total Filings for Year
2018	1,721	2,277	769	631	132	221	657	311	6,719
2019	1,542	2,364	835	714	131	224	660	229	6,699
2020	1,626	1,306	700	664	87	222	340	167	5,112
2021	1,270	1,316	726	1,029	84	252	398	133	5,238
2022	1,463	1,617	686	1,233	91	270	602	166	6,128
2023	1,483	1,894	788	1,204	80	252	448	192	6,341
2024	1,486	2,283	748	1,165	155	225	599	201	6,862
2025* (Jan. through Apr.)	501	1,284	269	446	49	83	272	67	2,971

Numbers reflect new cases filed for the calendar year. They do not account for cases that were filed in previous years and have not yet been resolved. This count does not reflect the claims filed in the WRIA 1 Water Adjudication. As of the week of June 20th, there were approximately 684 of the 35,000 potential claims filed.

CASELOAD COMPARISONS

Superior Courts

Cases Filed by Type of Case - Annual Report, 2024

	Criminal (1)	Civil (2)	Domestic	Probate/Guardianship (5)	Adoption/Parenthood (3)	Mental Illness/Alcohol	Juvenile Dependency (4)	Juvenile Offender (1)	Total Filings
WHATCOM COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT	1,486	2,282	748	1,165	155	225	599	201	6,861
BENTON COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT	1,153	2,843	968	756	163	152	223	376	6,634
KITSAP COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT	999	3,082	1,208	1,375	161	170	282	159	7,436
YAKIMA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT	1,909	3,838	922	940	249	1,135	346	451	9,790

Superior Courts

Cases Filed by Type of Case - January-April, 2025

	Criminal (1)	Civil (2)	Domestic	Probate/Guardianship (5)	Adoption/Parenthood (3)	Mental Illness/Alcohol	Juvenile Dependency (4)	Juvenile Offender (1)	Total Filings
WHATCOM COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT	501	1,284	269	446	49	83	272	67	2,971
BENTON COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT	429	1,001	282	265	51	48	137	132	2,345
KITSAP COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT	426	1,024	414	500	49	68	124	53	2,658
YAKIMA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT	565	1,340	339	314	66	383	160	139	3,306

COURT FACILITATORS

- Minor Guardianship Facilitator
 - Uniformed Guardianship Act
- Adult Guardianship Facilitator
 - Combined Statistics for Minor/Adult 330 calls and 105 appointments for 2025
- Family Law Facilitator
 - 2024 -4415 People Assisted
 - 2025- 2993. January through May
- Protection Orders
- DV Commission Partnership (Advocates)
 - Helped 31 since March 2025 and 107 Contacts

DVSAS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES

The advocate can help with:

- **Domestic Violence Protection Orders** for intimate partner violence only (partner or ex-partner, husband/wife or ex-husband/wife, boy/girlfriend or ex-boy/girlfriend, etc.)
- **Sexual Assault Protection Orders**
- **Stalking Protection Orders**
- **Safety Planning**

If the advocate is not here, or is working with someone else, please contact the 24-Hour Helpline or visit our downtown center

Protection Order Advocate

Monday 1:00-5:00pm

Tuesday* 9:00am-1:00pm

Wednesday 1:00-5:00pm

Thursday 9:00am-1:00pm

Friday 1:00-5:00pm

***First Tuesday of the Month: 11:15am-1:00pm**

PROTECTION ORDER STATISTICS

2022	2023	2024	2025
203	445	445	575 (Expected)

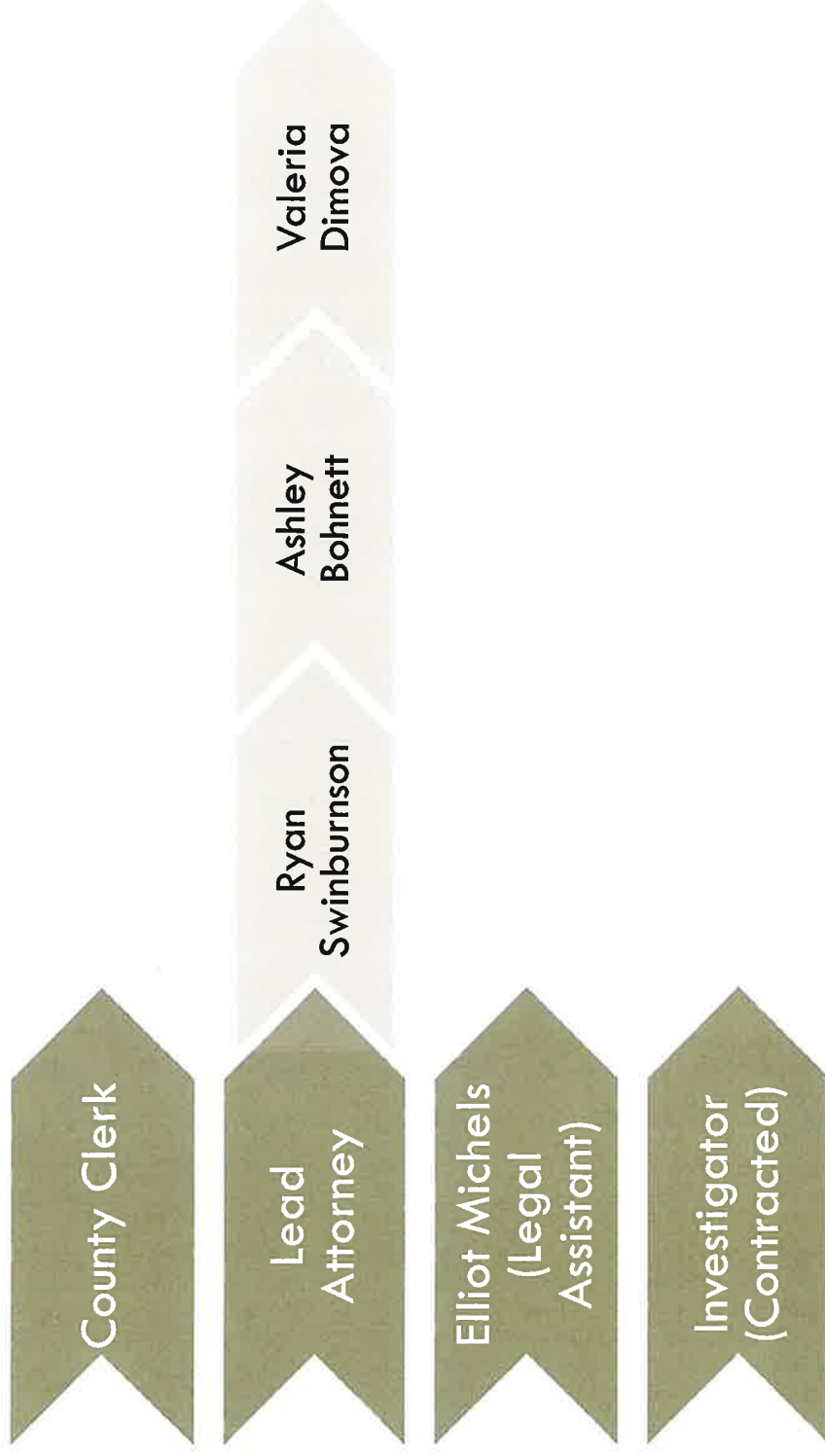
LAW LIBRARY

- Gayle Isaac retired in April
- New temporary employee Marissa Tavener
- Extern with Judge Jones helping this Summer
- Vision for Self-Help Center
- Superior Court Odyssey Portals in Law Library

OFFICE OF ASSIGNED COUNSEL SCREENINGS FOR PUBLIC DEFENSE

2023	2024	2025 through May 28
3593	3583	1651

CONFLICT OFFICE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



CONFLICT OFFICE

	2023 Outside	2024 2024 Outside	2025 2025 Outside
Class A	23	32	6
		18	
			1
Class B/C	357	270	86
	320	114	
			20
District	130	189	72
	93	41	
			5
Juvenile	67	81	28
	46	60	
			7

IMPROVEMENTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- State Archives is live
- Security Screening (Installation Scheduled for July 12, 2025)
- Fully Staffed Conflict Office
- Multi-lingual staff in conflict office & clerk's
- Only one vacancy in clerk's office
- Water Adjudication Forums with Public Outreach

ANY QUESTIONS?

