

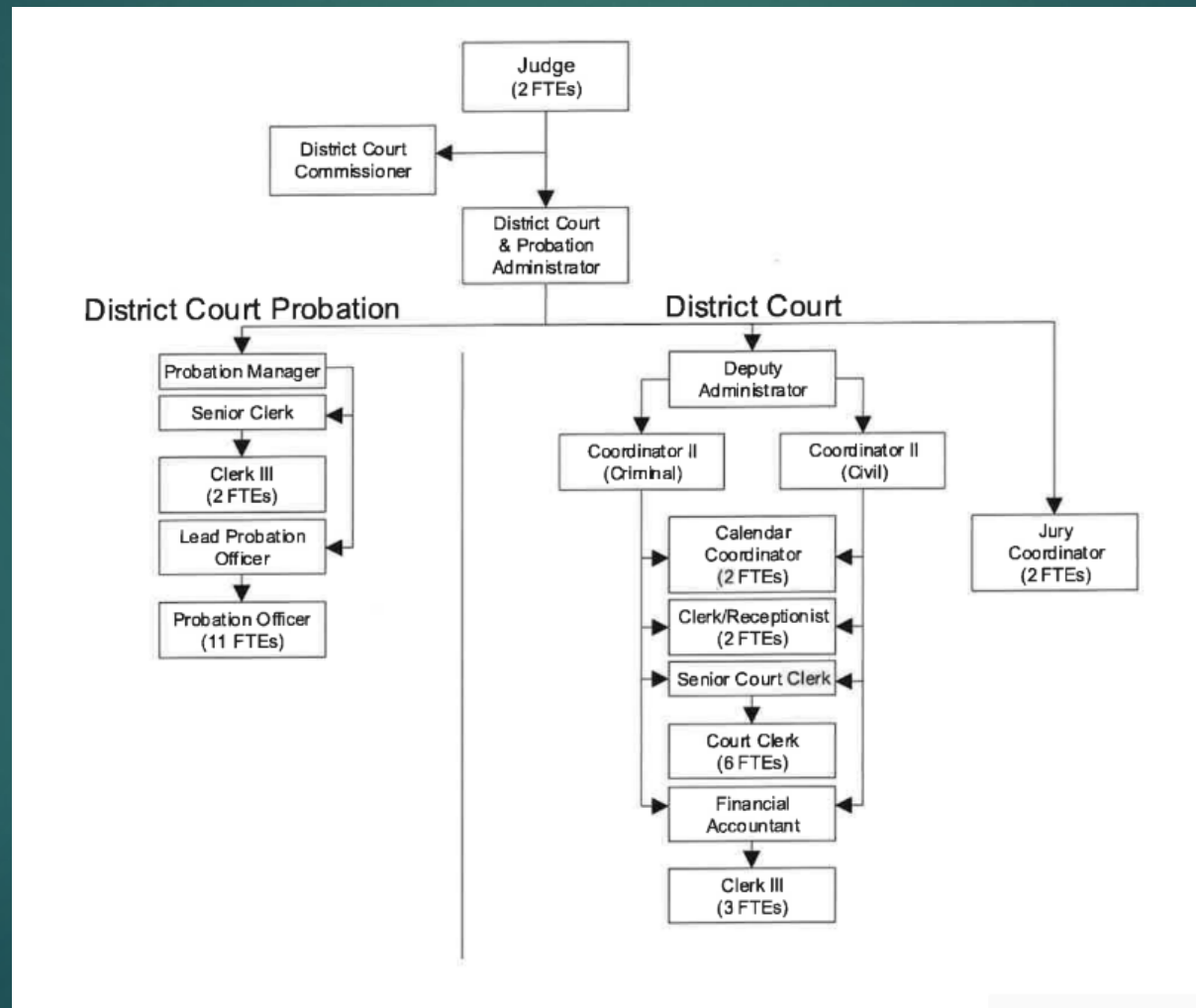


Whatcom County District Court

2026 ANNUAL PRESENTATION

JAKE WIEBUSCH, ADMINISTRATOR

District Court Organization Structure



Whatcom County District Court- Filings (Criminal/Civil/Infractions)

- ▶ Overall, filings increased from **2024** to **2025** by 7%
 - ▶ Civil – (small claims, protection orders and name changes). Remained within 1% of 2024.
 - ▶ Infractions - Increased 21%
 - ▶ Criminal – (DUI/PC, Other Traffic, Non Traffic). Remained within 1% of 2024
- ▶ A 48% total increase from **2023** to **2025**.
- ▶ Overall Filing Ratio for 2025
 - ▶ 66% Infractions - 11% Criminal - 23% Civil
- ▶ Overall **2025** filings are within **1%** of the **6 yr. pre-Covid** average (2014 - 2019).
 - ▶ Civil filings have increased 31% compared to the 6 yr. pre-Covid Average.
Case processing has become increasingly more complicated and requiring additional staff time.

DC Processes, then and now

- ▶ Civil Protection Orders (CPO)
 - ▶ Total CPO for 2025 = **285**
 - ▶ Total CPO for 2024 = **320**
 - ▶ Pre-Covid (6 year average) = **279**
 - ▶ What was previously a **6 step** process is now **13 steps**, **adding** a minimum of **30 minutes** per filing.
- ▶ Judgement and Sentencing
 - ▶ Previously a **1 page** document, now **6 pages**.
- ▶ Jury debit cards vs. mailing checks
 - ▶ Method is more efficient and beneficial to the public, however placed an additional 11 step procedure on the DC Jury Coordinators and management to follow.

Whatcom County District Court- Jury Trials

- ▶ In **2025**, District Court held **32 jury trials**.
- ▶ In **2024**, District Court held **45 jury trials**.
- ▶ In **2023**, District Court held **41 jury trials**.

- ▶ The **6 yr. pre-Covid** average was **16 jury trials** per year.
 - ▶ **150% increase** of jury trials held.
 - ▶ Increased # of trials held does not correlate to filing trends.

Whatcom County District Court Accomplishments-

- ▶ Blake Vacate project: ~99% completed. **3,671** cases have been vacated in partnership with AOC.
- ▶ JIS replacement progress. New Enterprise Justice (a Tyler product) is coming October 12, 2026.
- ▶ Department and staff consistency.

Whatcom County District Court Accomplishments-

- ▶ Continued our focus on increasing access to justice-
 - Overhauled local rules to enhance equity and accessibility
 - Annual review of our Language Access Plan (interpreter services)
 - Maintained access to AOC funds.
 - Updated most forms and made them more accessible to the public.
 - Continued partnership with DV Commission and *Families for Justice* to provide meaningful aide in sensitive cases.
- ▶ Reduced the small claims backlog to less than 90 days from filing to trial.
- ▶ Maintained growth and progress with Family Justice Court (DV) and Mental Health Court (MHC), including receiving funds from AOC.

Whatcom County District Court

Looking ahead

- Judicial Capacity Considerations
- Security and Safety Considerations



Whatcom County District Court

Questions?

Thank you,
Jake Wiebusch