

Whatcom County Superior Court /Superior Court Clerk

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Administration

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Superior Court Administration

In Whatcom County:

- Superior Court
- Juvenile Court
- County Clerk

* 4 of 39 counties have combiner Superior and Juvenile Administrators.

* We are the only county in Washington State not having a stand alone Clerk's office

About Superior Court

- One of 39 Superior Court.
- Four elected Judges serving a four year term
- Four full time court commissioners

Each Judge has a judicial assistant who manages their caseload, maintains order in the courtroom (serving as bailiff) supervises jurors, and coordinates courtroom activities. A courtroom clerk assigned each court keeps minutes of the proceedings and processes exhibits.

Types of cases heard

- Adult felony
- Civil Cases-including cases involving real property and or claims in excess of \$35,000
- Divorce/Child Custody/Child Support matters
- Probate and Guardianship (includes
- Paternity actions
- Adoptions
- Juvenile cases (offender, dependency, at risk youth, child in need of services, and truancy).
- Mental Illness/Involuntary Treatment Act

Superior Court Programs/Services

- Adult Drug Court
- Mandatory Arbitration Program (judge assigned the case determines which cases are referred.)
- Family Treatment Court- Substance abuse court for dependency (abuse or neglect) cases.
- Maintains Title 26 (divorce) & 11 (guardianship) Guardian Ad Litem registry
- Family Law Facilitator- Helps pro se litigants in family law cases.
- Guardianship Facilitator- Helps pro se litigants seeking guardianship of a loved one. Also monitors reporting compliance for guardians.
- Office of Assigned Counsel: Screens applications for public defense. Assigns cases conflicted from the Public Defender's Office to contracted attorneys. Also assists the public in obtaining civil protection orders.
- Pretrial Services for Superior Court – Since August 26th, 2019 provides services and monitoring of defendants in the community awaiting case disposition.

Superior Court 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.)