KING COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT 2008 ANNUAL REPORT



Message from Presiding Judge Bruce Hilyer

On behalf of the judges, commissioners, and staff of the King County Superior Court, I am pleased to present our 2008 Annual Report highlighting the court's accomplishments over the past year. I hope you will find this informative and useful.

In 2008, Superior Court struggled through the most challenging and difficult budget process in recent memory. County forecasts for revenue shortfalls grew steadily through the year as the nation's financial situation worsened. A structural imbalance between the county's revenues and expenditures kept revenue growth low while inflation and the cost of services increased. The court took more than \$5 million in cuts to its budget, and critical services remain in jeopardy.

I would like to personally thank all those citizens and community group representatives who took the time to attend community budget forums and public hearings, or who sent email or other correspondence to the King County Councilmembers. I would like to thank the King County Bar Association for its steadfast support of court-based services. Lastly, I would like to commend the professionalism of all Superior Court and Department of Judicial Administration employees. Without your credibility and commitment to public service, the court could never achieve its mission.

King County Superior Court – Mission Statement:

To serve the public by ensuring justice through accessible and effective forums for the fair, just, understandable, and timely resolution of legal matters.

King County Superior Court – Jurisdiction:

- Civil matters involving more than \$300, unlawful detainers, and injunctions
- Felony criminal matters
- Misdemeanor criminal cases not otherwise provided for by law
- Family law, including dissolutions, child support, adoptions, parentage, and domestic violence protection matters
- Probate and guardianship matters
- Juvenile offender matters
- Juvenile dependencies, including abused and neglected children, children in need of services, at-risk youth, and truancies
- Mental illness and involuntary commitment matters

King County Superior Court – 2008 Summary Statistics:

- General jurisdiction trial court
- Serves the 13th most populous county in the nation
- Handles a caseload of more than 60,000 new cases each year
- Operates at four sites, including the King County Courthouse, Juvenile Court, and mental illness court at Seattle locations; and the Maleng Regional Justice Center in Kent
- Has 52 judges and 14 commissioners
- Is supported by 454 Superior Court judicial officers and staff and 215 staff in the Department of Judicial Administration

Message from Chief Administrative Officer Paul L. Sherfey

In 2008, the King County Superior Court achieved greater efficiency, improved court service delivery, and maintained critical court services in the face of significant budget reductions.

Strategic Planning. With leadership provided by the court's Executive and Strategic Planning Committees, the court revisited its Strategic Plan, last fully revised in 1996. The court engaged consulting expertise from the National Center for State Courts to assist with the update, which was nearing completion as the year drew to a close. Once completed, the revised plan will guide and coordinate decision-making at all levels of the court for years to come.

Family Justice Center. The court also moved closer to realizing its goal of developing a Children and Family Justice Center to serve north King County. This facility will make it possible to collocate the Juvenile and Family Courts in a single facility, where the court's goal of assigning all legal matters affecting a single family to a single judge can be realized. Onsite access to treatment services and other assistance will enhance court customer experience.

Criminal Caseflow. Following several years of growing criminal case backlog, King County Superior Court and its criminal justice partners hired a consultant to evaluate the county's system for handling criminal matters. Although the consultant identified many strengths in the current system, the consultant also found several points where a case's forward momentum could be lost. The consultant's final report included a set of recommendations for improving criminal caseflow, which the court quickly began to implement.

Superior Court on County TV. The court continued its fruitful collaboration with the county's cable access station, King County TV (KCTV), developing several new broadcast segments with information on court services. As part of the station's 'Justice Files' series, KCTV and the court have developed seven segments on the court in the past three years – four in 2008 alone. The newest segments provide information on the court's involvement with the annual YMCA Mock Trial competition, the court's Family Law Information Center and Childcare Center in Kent, and the court's Adoption Services program. Additional segments are planned for 2009.

Customer Service Improvements. Superior Court and the Superior Court Clerk's Office also prepared to launch three new Internet-based systems designed to improve customer service. The Family Law Motions Confirmations Online system, which launched in July, makes is possible for court customers to confirm family law hearings online. The E-Forms system, expected to launch early in 2009, will facilitate the completion of selected court forms online. The E-Commerce system, also expected to launch in early 2009, will allow court customers to request and pay for copies of court documents online. In addition to offering customer convenience, these systems generate staff efficiencies for the court.

Budget Impacts. Finally, in the midst of positive change on many fronts, the court faced head-on a county budget crisis of unprecedented proportions. Although the court was able to maintain many critical services into 2009, important service capacity was lost, and the court's future ability to meet its mandates remains uncertain. The court looks forward to working with its many partners at all levels of government and throughout the community to find ways to safeguard those services, to ensure access to justice in King County.

Judges and Commissioners

Judges of the King County Superior Court in 2008

George T. Mattson Appointed, 1981

Sharon Armstrong Appointed, 1985

Michael J. Fox Appointed, 1988

Carol A. Schapira Elected, 1989

William L. Downing Appointed, 1989

Joan E. DuBuque Appointed, 1989

LeRoy McCullough Appointed, 1989

Charles W. Mertel Appointed, 1992

Laura C. Inveen Appointed, 1992

Deborah D. Fleck Appointed, 1992

Michael C. Hayden Elected, 1992

Brian D. Gain Elected, 1993

Richard D. Eadie Appointed, 1995 Nicole K. MacInnes Appointed, 1995

Michael J. Trickey Appointed, 1996

Glenna S. Hall Appointed, 1996

Jeffrey M. Ramsdell Elected, 1996

Philip G. Hubbard, Jr. Elected, 1996

Suzanne M. Barnett Elected, 1996

Jay V. White Elected, 1996

Patricia H. Clark Appointed, 1998

Dean S. Lum *Appointed, 1998*

Ronald Kessler Appointed, 1999

Palmer Robinson Appointed, 1999

Helen Halpert Appointed, 1999

James Doerty Appointed, 1999

Julie Spector Appointed, 1999 Richard McDermott Appointed, 2000

> Mary Yu Appointed, 2000

Bruce W. Hilyer Appointed, 2000

James D. Cayce Appointed, 2000

Michael J. Heavey Elected, 2000

Douglass A. North Elected. 2000

Catherine Shaffer Elected, 2000

Douglas D. McBroom Elected. 2001

Gregory Canova Elected, 2001

Cheryl Carey Elected, 2001

John Erlick Elected, 2001

Laura G. Middaugh Elected, 2001

> Paris K. Kallas Appointed, 2001

Steven Gonzalez Appointed, 2002 Harry J. McCarthy Appointed, 2002

Mary E. Roberts Appointed, 2003

J. Wesley Saint Clair Appointed, 2004

Andrea A. Darvas Elected, 2005

Theresa B. Doyle Elected, 2005

Christopher A. Washington Elected, 2005

Jim Rogers
Elected, 2005

Susan J. Craighead Appointed, 2007

Bruce Heller Appointed, 2007

Kimberley Prochnau Appointed, 2007

Monica Benton Appointed, 2008

Regina S. Cahan Elected, 2008

Commissioners of the King County Superior Court in 2008

Carlos Y. Velategui, 1986

Bonnie Canada-Thurston, 1993

Eric B. Watness, 1995

Hollis Holman, 1996

Nancy Bradburn-Johnson, 1998

Leonid Ponomarchuk, 1998

Richard Gallaher, 2000

Lori Kay Smith, 2006

Elizabeth Castilleja, 2006

Meg Sassaman, 2006

Mark Hillman, 2007

Julia Garrett, 2008

Jacqueline Jeske, 2008

Strategic Planning

Court Undertakes Major Revision of its Strategic Plan

In 2008, the court revisited its Strategic Plan, last fully updated in 1996. Once completed, the revised plan's goals, objectives, and strategies will guide the court's operations for years to come.

To assist with the planning effort, the court engaged the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), a national leader in court-based planning. The NCSC proposed the following six-step process:

- **Step 1: Project Orientation and Protocol Development.** This step provides agreement on project logistics and determines areas of emphasis for the update process.
- **Step 2: Trend Analysis and Issue Identification.** This step establishes an information basis for the plan through:
 - Trend analysis learning (1) how major trends are affecting state courts nationwide, and (2) how local trends (e.g., population, demographics, case mix) are affecting this court; and
 - Issue identification learning how court participants (judges, staff, participants in legal proceedings, and the public) view the court.
- **Step 3: Strategic Agenda Development.** This step maximizes judge and court staff involvement through:
 - A 'Mission, Vision, and Values Workshop,' focused on updating the court's Mission, Vision, and Values statements; and
 - A 'Strategic Agenda Workshop,' focused on developing goals and strategies that address the trends and issues identified in Step 2.
- **Step 4: Draft Plan.** This step results in a draft plan based on work accomplished in Step 3. A period of review follows.
- **Step 5: Implementation Plan.** This step results in an implementation plan that carries plan priorities to every level of court operations. The goal is to make the strategic plan a part of everyday life for each employee.
- Step 6: Final Plan. This step delivers the final plan.

The court began this six-step process during the summer of 2008 and arrived at Step 4 by the end of the year, identifying eight strategic goals for the new plan. The court expected to complete the planning process in February 2009.

Access

Promote access to iustice for all

Case Management

Resolve cases in a fair, understandable, and timely manner

Problem-Solving Courts

Use therapeutic strategies to enhance outcomes

Funding

Seek full funding of court operations

Facilities & Security

Ensure that court facilities are safe, secure, and effective

Technology

Use technology to streamline operations and access

Governance

Enhance internal capacity for strategic response

Work Environment

Develop healthy, welcoming court for public and staff

Children and Family Justice Center

King County Moves Closer to Creating a Children and Family Justice Center

In 2008, Superior Court, working in conjunction with its justice system partners, continued to move toward the creation of a Children and Family Justice Center to serve north King County. Driving objectives behind this effort include:

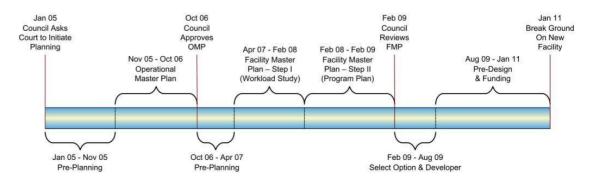
- The need to replace the current aging Juvenile Court facility;
- The benefits of collocating Juvenile and Family Court in a single facility; and
- The need to free up space in the King County Courthouse (Seattle) and the Maleng Regional Justice Center (Kent) for growing criminal and civil caseload.

The planning process has divided into three major phases, which are described below.

Phase I – Developing an Operational Master Plan (2005-2006). Early in 2005, the court joined its justice system partners to plan for a truly Unified Family Court in King County. Such a court would bring together many functions currently divided between the Juvenile and Family Courts, making it possible to respond more effectively to the needs of children and families. Phase I of the planning effort produced an "Operational Master Plan" (OMP), which sets forth how the Juvenile and Family Courts should operate now and in the future. The plan includes eleven recommendations for improving the experience of children and families involved in the court system. The court went to work immediately to implement these recommendations.

Phase II – Developing a Facility Master Plan (2007-2009). Following county council approval of the OMP, the court and its partners shifted focus from operations to facilities and began planning to meet Juvenile and Family Court space needs for the next 25 years. Planning for court space requires two critical steps. The first step is to project future caseload and the number of judicial officers and staff needed to handle those cases through a workload study. The second step is to translate judicial officer and staff numbers into space needs and determine how those space needs can be met by developing a program plan. The court completed the first step in early 2008 and was nearing completion of the second step as the year drew to a close. The results will comprise a "Facility Master Plan" (FMP), which is expected to be sent to the county council for review and approval in early 2009.

Phase III – Pre-Design/Funding (2009-2010). The county council's review likely will result in the selection of a preferred option for a new Children and Family Justice Center to be located at the current Juvenile Court site in Seattle. Once that selection has been made, pre-design work can begin. Meanwhile, the county will look carefully at all available funding options to find the one that will work best for this facility. Once pre-design work has been completed and funding has been identified, the project will be ready to break ground. The court hopes to finalize funding for the new facility in 2010 and to begin construction in 2011.



King County Budget

Superior Court Impacted by King County Budget Crisis

In recent years, as King County has faced both increasing demand for service and greater constraints on revenue, Superior Court has been an active participant in identifying efficiencies and reducing overall operational costs. Since 2002, the court has accommodated more than \$8 million in budget reductions by cutting expenditures or increasing revenue. Though most services have been preserved, the cuts have resulted in significant staff reductions., totalling 47.25 positions.

The court also has searched for innovative long-range solutions to troubling issues. Current examples include its strategic planning effort, its work to develop a Children and Family Justice Center, and its study of criminal caseflow. Such efforts have helped the court achieve its mission with fewer resources.

Preparation of the 2009 budget, however, was particularly challenging. King County faced a budget crisis of unprecedented proportions, the full extent of which only became apparent as the year progressed. The county's deteriorating



District Court Chief Presiding Judge Barbara Linde, Prosecuting Attorney Dan Satterberg, Superior Court Presiding Judge Bruce Hilyer, and Sheriff Sue Rahr testify before the County Council concerning the 2009 King County Budget.

fiscal picture resulted in changing (and escalating) requests for cuts from all county organizations. In two rounds of cuts, the court was able to identify \$4.5 million in cost reductions and new sources of revenue. However, when the executive's budget was sent to the county council for review, the court was asked to take additional cuts by implementing four days of staff furlough, or unpaid leave.

For 2009, the court is grateful to have been able to find efficiencies that preserve most court services. However, the county expects additional challenging budget years ahead, with further cuts for most county organizations. The court may have reached the point where further reductions will violate the court's mandate, which is to handle all court matters in a timely manner. Several court services, though not directly mandated, promote the efficiency of all courtrooms and thus provide critical support for meeting the court's overall mandate. When these programs are at risk, so too is the court's ability to ensure access to justice for the citizens of King County. The court welcomes citizen input and involvement as it works to find solutions to the budget crisis and to preserve programs that play critical roles in the quality of justice in our region.

Electronic Court Records

Clerk's Office Serves as National Resource for Electronic Records Management

In September 2007, the Superior Court Clerk's Office received the 'Innovations in American Government Award' for its Electronic Court Records (ECR) Program from Harvard University's Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation. As one of seven such award winners, the Clerk's Office received \$100,000 to share information about its ECR Program with other jurisdictions.

ECR is the system the Clerk's Office uses to maintain most court records. Each day, the Clerk's Office receives roughly 8,000 new filings, or 50,000 pages of new court documents. ECR allows the Clerk to maintain these documents in an electronic format, either by receiving them electronically initially, or by scanning them into the ECR system. The electronic format greatly enhances user access to documents and promotes document security.

The Clerk's Office developed an ambitious work program for maximizing the impact of the \$100,000 grant and completed two significant work program components in 2008. These include:

- Producing a Documentary. Working with the Ash Institute, the Clerk's Office developed a documentary that tells the story of the ECR innovation. The documentary has been shown at numerous conferences and has been broadcast on King County TV. Copies of the documentary have been distributed widely.
- Organizing and Hosting an Invitational Conference. In October 2008, the Clerk's Office hosted a two and a half day conference for representatives from courts that are serious about implementing ECR. Entitled 'Establishing Your Own ECR System,' the conference covered all aspects of ECR program development, from visioning and planning, through budgeting, contracting, and promotion. Legal considerations and court rule making also were examined. Presenters comprised a "who's who" of King County ECR players, including judges, Clerk's Office personnel, a King County Councilmember, technology managers and consultants, and legal expertise. Representatives from five state court systems and numerous county and municipal courts attended the confer-



The Electronic Court Records system greatly enhances user access to court documents.

Additional grant-funded work is planned for 2009, including the following efforts:

- Building an Online Library. The Clerk's Office plans to build an online library of key ECR documents and other philosophical, historical, and contextual information. The library will enable self-serve access to information based on user-defined search criteria.
- Marketing ECR. The Clerk's Office plans to develop a "how-to" guide for ECR system implementers, as well as promotional materials that introduce and encourage use of ECR services.
- Making Presentations at Harvard. The Clerk's Office has agreed to send representatives to Harvard's Kennedy School of Public Administration to present key information about ECR to a class and public forum.
- Organizing and Hosting a Second Invitational Conference. The Clerk's Office hopes to organize a second invitational conference in 2009, if resources allow.

Public Information

Learn about Superior Court on King County TV

King County Superior Court actively seeks opportunities to inform the public about the services it offers. One of the more innovative ways the court does this is by working in partnership with the county's cable access station, King County TV (KCTV). As part of the station's 'Justice Files' series, KCTV and the court have developed seven segments on Superior Court in the past three years – four in 2008 alone. These segments cover the following topics:

- Superior Court (April 2006) provides an overview of Superior Court and its four primary service areas: criminal, general civil, juvenile, and family law cases.
- Jury Duty (February 2007) describes the court's Jury Services program, which brings more than 30,000 jurors to the court each year, and highlights the importance and rewards of jury service.
- Interpreter Services (March 2007) –
 describes the court's nationally recognized Interpreter Services program,
 which coordinates more than 15,000
 interpretation sessions each year.
- YMCA Mock Trial Competition (April 2008) – describes the annual YMCA Mock Trial Competition, in which local high school teams compete. Superior Court judges volunteer their time to organize the event and preside over the trials.



As part of the station's 'Justice Files' series, King County TV and the court have developed seven court information programs in the past three years.

- Family Law Information Center (September 2008) describes the court's walk-in service center in Kent, where people without attorneys can get assistance with family law matters.
- Childcare Center (November 2008) describes the court's drop-in childcare center in Kent, where parents with matters before the court can access daycare for a minimal fee.
- Adoption Services (December 2008) describes the court's adoption services program, the services it offers to the public, and its critical role in finalizing adoptions.

KCTV also films and rebroadcasts select court-sponsored events, such as the annual National Adoption Day Celebration.

You can view these segments on KCTV, which is channel 22 for most cable customers, or by visiting the KCTV website at http://www.kingcounty.gov/KCTV.aspx. Links to these programs also may be found on the court's website at http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/superiorcourt/info.aspx. KCTV and the court are planning several new segments for 2009.

Criminal Case Management

Superior Court Streamlines Criminal Case Handling

In late 2007, King County hired Justice Management Institute (JMI), a nationally respected court management consultant, to conduct a study of its adult criminal case management system. The study looked not only at the court and clerk's office, but also at the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Office of the Public Defender, and King County's four contract defender agencies.

The study identified a number of strengths in the county's current criminal justice system, including the following:

- The core criminal justice institutions are sound, have strong leadership, and work well together;
- King County is more efficient and manifests a greater commitment to fairness than most other large urban jurisdictions; and
- The jail population is relatively low on a per capita basis.

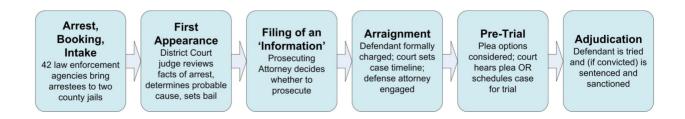
However, the study also identified a number of weaknesses:

- Felony case processing times have grown longer since 1993 and now exceed the staterecommended guidelines for criminal case resolution;
- The court plays an overly limited role in the case management process; the movement of a case from arraignment to resolution is essentially directed by legal counsel; and
- Interim hearings, such as case setting and omnibus, are repeatedly continued (postponed), delaying case resolution.

JMI made 14 recommendations for improving this system, five of which specifically concern case management. The core criminal justice institutions should:

- · Collaboratively develop goals and standards for felony case processing;
- Establish policy and practice standards that give Superior Court responsibility for managing caseload from the time a case is filed until it is resolved;
- Incorporate differentiated case management techniques, which place each case on one of three major tracks, depending on complexity, and designate a lead judge for each track;
- Organize and allocate the resources of the court's criminal division to effectively manage caseflow from filing to resolution; and
- Develop and implement calendaring and case management procedures that take account of the need for effective case preparation and representation of clients, the desirability of trial date and case event certainty, and the public interest in fair and timely resolution of cases.

In October 2008, the court convened a workgroup with representatives from all criminal justice system participants to implement the five recommendations described above. By the end of 2008, after extensive discussion and additional work by several subcommittees, the workgroup had begun to make progress. Significant changes to the criminal case management system are expected in 2009.



Customer Service Online

Online Applications Improve Customer Service

In 2008, Superior Court and the Superior Court Clerk's Office launched, or prepared to launch, three new web-based systems designed to improve customer service. When fully implemented, these systems will make it possible for the public to confirm family law motions online, to complete certain types of court forms electronically, and to request court documents online.

Family Law Motions Confirmation Online (FLMCO). The FLMCO website, which opened for business in July 2008, gives court customers an online option for confirming family law hearings, as required by the court. At any time during the hearing confirmation period, which runs from 12:00 noon three court days prior to the hearing until 12:00 noon two days prior to the hearing, customers may visit the website and confirm or strike their hearing. This option may be more convenient than confirmation by phone, as customers may confirm or strike their hearings outside regular business hours. Users of the online process are asked to enter specific information to identify their case, and also must provide a contact e-mail address and phone number in case follow-up is needed. After the close of the hearing confirmation period, customers may view a calendar to ensure that their hearings were in fact confirmed or stricken. To access the FLMCO website, visit the Family Court homepage.



Three new online systems will improve Superior Court customer service.

Electronic Forms (E-Forms). The goal of the E-Forms project is to develop an online tool that will help court customers complete basic court forms. Customers visiting the E-Forms website first will be asked what type of action they would like to file. Next they will be asked a series of questions designed to elicit information needed to complete the necessary forms for that action. The system will populate fields in these forms automatically based on information received and then will deliver printable copies of the completed forms to the customer at the conclusion of the session. Designed to function like popular tax preparation and personal finance software, these systems should streamline the process for people who need to file court actions. The court expects to launch this new system with forms for guardianship filings in early 2009. Afterward, forms for other types of actions will be added. The E-Forms website will be available through the Clerk's Office homepage.

Electronic Commerce (E-Commerce). The goal of the E-Commerce project is to make it possible for court customers to request and pay for copies of court documents online. Currently, most document requests are processed in person or by mail. Once the E-Commerce system is operational, customers will have access first to a tool that will help them find the case number for the file they are interested in, and then to the court's Electronic Court Records system where the file is located. By selecting documents within this file, and requesting either regular or certified copies, the customer will build a document order that then can be processed electronically. Payment will be made by credit card or other electronic transfer. The court expects to launch this new system in early 2009. The E-Commerce website will be available through the Clerk's Office homepage.

Additional customer service projects currently are in the planning and development stages, including a system to serve Superior Court jurors. This system, which is expected to be complete by the end of 2009, will make it possible for prospective jurors to get information about their jury service and respond to their summons online.

Childcare Center

Jon and Bobbe Bridge Childcare Center Serves Children in Need

Shortly after the Maleng Regional Justice Center opened its doors in 1997, the court created the first court-based childcare center in the Pacific Northwest there. This center makes it possible for parents and guardians with business before the court to leave young children in a safe environment while they participate in court proceedings.

Under most circumstances, a courtroom is not a place for children. Descriptions of crime scenes, allegations of domestic violence, and contentious discussions of family legal matters can be challenging for adults to handle. Judges often find that they simply cannot allow children to be present.

The court's drop-in childcare centers offers a nurturing alternative to the courtroom for children, ages 4 weeks to 12 years old. Children of parents with court business are welcome, as are up to two children of jurors (for a limit of two days). A \$5 fee is requested for the service, but no family will be turned away for inability to pay. Children are served a nutritious snack both in the morning and in the afternoon, and a wide-range of developmentally appropriate activities are available. Children can choose to play with games and puzzles, blocks, dolls, trucks, books, and artwork. Story time is also a daily event.

The childcare center is operated by Children's Home Society of Washington, which is Washington's oldest and largest statewide organization serving children. The court provides the space, and Children's Home Society provides the staff. The Society supports children and families across the state through six core services: adoption, out-of-home care, child and family counseling, early childhood education, family support and education, and advocacy. Staff have extensive experience working with children who may be experiencing stress as a result of family strife.



The Jon and Bobbe Bridge Childcare Center offers children a nurturing alternative to the courtroom.

The childcare center was renamed the 'Jon and Bobbe Bridge Childcare Center' in 2001 to recognize the charitable work of Jon and Bobbe Bridge. Former Justice Bridge was instrumental in establishing the childcare center when she served as the court's presiding judge, and she and her husband have continued to support the center through charitable contributions. The center also receives support from Superior Court jurors, who are invited to donate their \$10 per diem to the center. A significant number of jurors accept this invitation; juror donations ex-

ceeded \$125,000 in 2008. The center can serve up to 12 children at any one time and serves more than 100 children each month.

Employee Recognition

Superior Court Recognizes Exceptional Employees

Each year, Superior Court recognizes one court employee at each of its three locations who represents the high standards that all court staff aspire to achieve. Nominated by judges, court supervisors, or their peers, the recognized staff:

- Offer new, innovative ideas for improving service and efficiency;
- Go above and beyond the call of duty;
- Are exceptionally courteous and helpful; and
- Demonstrate outstanding reliability in the workplace.

In 2008, the court recognized the following employees for outstanding contributions to the court:

King County Courthouse (Seattle): Karen Igo. Karen is an Information Processing Specialist working in the court's busy downtown Seattle arraignment courtroom. Karen is responsible for entering all data for hearings in that courtroom into the court's criminal information system. Karen consistently makes improvements and works with agencies to improve efficiency in ordering defendants for case setting calendars. Karen is described by her colleagues as a true team player who goes above and beyond the call of duty. She also is known for



Karen Igo

the thoughtful ways she supports her teammates and helps to boost morale.



Imee Crisostomo

Maleng Regional Justice Center (Kent): Imee Crisostomo. Imee is a Civil Case Specialist with the Family Court in Kent, though she frequently is asked to cover additional positions when there is a vacancy or leave of absence. Because of her breadth of experience, she often is called upon to train new staff and always is willing and available to answer questions for new and even seasoned employees. Imee's colleagues say she consistently brings new ideas to her department that make the workplace more efficient. She takes great pride not only in

her work, but also in her workplace, and makes sure that things in the office get done in a timely manner whether it is her job to do them or not.

Youth Services Center (Juvenile Court): Cathy Lehmann. Cathy is a Family Treatment Court (FTC) Specialist at Juvenile Court, although for much of 2008 she also fulfilled the job duties of the FTC Program Manager while that position was vacant. Her colleagues say she was the main reason this court program continued to run smoothly, even without adequate staff. Cathy is viewed as a model of how to be courteous and respectful to court clients, who often feel marginalized by chemical dependency and their involvement with the child welfare system. Regardless of how busy she is, she gives her full attention and concern



Cathy Lehmann

to whomever she is interacting with. Her colleagues describe her as pleasant, easy to work with, and an exceptionally courteous representative for Juvenile Court.

Recent past winners of the Employee Recognition award include:

- 2007 Gary Cutler, Rita Amaro, Karen Schalow, Tiffany Schlepp, and Nicole Concinnity
- 2006 Gerald Ito, Ted Shaw, Carole Allen, and Emma Puro

Jury Service

Court Partnership Promotes Jury Service

In 2008, Superior Court partnered with King County District Court and the county's municipal courts, through the King County Trial Court Coordinating Council, to promote understanding of trial courts and the critical role jurors play in the administration of justice. The courts developed a series of bus banners, featuring local celebrity jurors, which were placed on Metro buses. The banners also advertised a new website with comprehensive information on jury service in King County. You can visit this website at www.kingcounty.gov/JuryService.





All trial courts in King County need the service of jurors. Each year, more than 30,000 King County residents, selected at random, serve in Superior Court and the courts of limited jurisdiction. Nearly all jurors report satisfaction with the process and appreciation for how they are treated. Most report gaining a greater understanding of our legal system and a greater respect for the democratic institution that is trial by jury of one's peers. Nearly all are glad they served. The court works diligently to promote this vital citizen service within the community.





Juvenile Dependency

Superior Court Continues to Develop as a Juvenile Dependency Model Court

In 2008, Superior Court, working in collaboration with local and national partners, continued to improve its handling of juvenile dependency cases. A 'dependent child' is a child who has been abandoned by his or her parent, guardian, or other custodian; has been abused or neglected by a person legally responsible for his or her care; or has no parent, guardian, or custodian capable of providing adequate care. Normally, the government does not interfere in family matters. However, the law allows the state to step in and protect a child from harm if the child is found to be dependent.

The Model Courts Project is a national network of juvenile and family courts that work together to improve the experience of children and families involved in the dependency system. The project, sponsored by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ), uses best practices in the field to identify barriers to effective case handling and enhance delivery of services to dependent children and their families. The NCJFCJ also provides technical expertise to courts designated as Model Courts.

King County became a Model Court in April 2006. Soon thereafter, the court increased the number of judicial officers hearing dependency cases, and subsequently strengthened its hearing process, so that the well-being of dependent children could be more effectively monitored. The court has worked to expand educational opportunities for judicial officers who handle dependency cases and to promote greater consistency for families by assigning one family to one judge and keeping judicial officers in place longer. The court also has formed a Model Court Advisory Committee, with representa-



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The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges sponsors the Model Courts Project and provides technical assitance to program participants.

tives from the Washington Department of Social and Human Services, the Attorney General's Office, and other dependency system players. This group meets regularly to improve inter-organizational collaboration.

In 2008, the Model Court Advisory Committee developed a two year strategic plan (2008 -2010) which reflects current goals for the dependency system. The plan establishes three central priorities: 1) to reduce racial disproportionality and disparate treatment of children of color in the child welfare system; 2) to increase timely and thorough hearing preparation in dependency court cases; and 3) to provide consistent judicial leadership by committing to longer rotations and expanding best practices education. The committee and the court immediately set out to implement the plan.

Studies indicate that children who are abused and neglected are at significantly higher risk for academic failure, chronic delinquency, adult criminal behavior, antisocial personality disorder, and violent crime. As a child's length of time in out-of-home care increases, the probability of negative outcomes also grows. However, studies show that more efficient and effective dependency courts can reduce the length of time children spend in the system, and this in turn improves these children's chances for future success. The court is deeply committed to providing the greatest possible opportunities for these kids. For more information about the dependency system visit www.kingcounty.gov/courts/juvenilecourt/dependency.

Family Court Operations

Family Court Offers Services for Litigants

The Family Court offers a variety of services to assist families involved in family law matters:

Family Court Services assists the court in making decisions regarding the best interests of children in family law cases. The program also offers parent education, mediation, and evaluation services; and provides social workers to assist families struggling with domestic violence, chemical dependency, child abuse, mental illness, and other issues. In 2008, the program:

- Received more than 2,600 family law referrals;
- Screened 797 adoption calendars;
- Provided mandatory family law seminars for more than 4,500 parents; and
- Provided services that benefitted more than 2,100 children (63% under the age of 12). For more information about Family Court Services, please visit the program webpage at: http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/familycourt/services.aspx.

The Family Law Facilitator Program provides information to litigants to help them prepare their case for a hearing before a commissioner or judge. Assistance in obtaining and understanding required forms and complying with local rules improves litigants' access to the court and reduces the time judges and commissioners spend on their cases. In 2008, the program:

- Served approximately 7,600 self-represented clients in the Facilitator Program offices;
- Served more than 2,500 self-represented clients appearing on Ex Parte final decree calendars;
- Performed more than 4,300 file reviews on family law cases and 4,000 file reviews on guardianship and probate cases to establish compliance with statutes and court rules.

For more information about the Family Law Facilitator Program, please visit the program webpage at: http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/familycourt/facilitator.aspx.

The Unified Family Court (UFC) provides intensive case management for complex or multiple cases involving the same family. The 'one judge – one family' concept of the UFC allows for efficient coordination of court proceedings for each family and enables judicial officers to be well-informed about each family's issues. Case managers facilitate court process and connect families to support services. In 2008, the program:

- Screened 458 case groups, totaling 645 legal actions, to determine whether specialized case management was appropriate; and
- Accepted 184 new case groups, totaling 275 legal actions, into the program.

For more information about the UFC, please visit the program webpage at: http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/familycourt/ufc.aspx.

The Dependency Court Appointed Special Advocates Program (Dependency CASA) trains and supervises volunteers who represent the best interests of abused and neglected children in juvenile dependency cases. CASA volunteers donate thousands of hours each year interviewing children and family members, contacting teachers, medical providers and others, and reporting their findings and recommendations to the court. In 2008, King County CASA volunteers:

- Advocated for 1,539 children in 980 cases;
- Provided 2,147 court reports for dependency hearings; and
- Totaled 361 active volunteers, 65 of whom were new in 2008.Program staff provided six 28-hour cycles of volunteer training in 2008 for new applicants, as well as periodic in-service training on a wide range of topics.

For more information about Dependency CASA, please visit the program webpage at: http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/juvenilecourt/depcasa.aspx.

Superior Court Budget

2008 Expenditures By Program Area

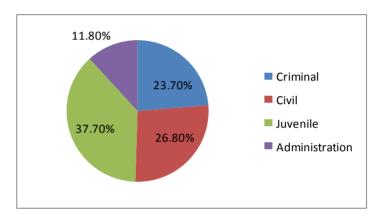
Criminal: Judges, bailiffs, court reporters, court coordinators, interpreters, jury staff, and payments to jurors. (23.7%)

Civil: Judges, bailiffs, court reporters, court coordinators, interpreters, jury staff, payments to jurors, guardianship & probate staff, Unified Family Court, Family Court Services, Family Law Facilitator, Dependency CASA, Mandatory Arbitration, and Guardianship Facilitator programs. (26.8%)

Juvenile: Judges, bailiffs, court coordinators, interpreters, probation and treatment services, Juvenile Drug Court, Reclaiming Futures, Partnership for Youth Justice, and Truancy and At-Risk Youth programs. (37.7%)

Administration: Executive staff, human resources, computer services, and support staff for payroll, purchasing, facilities, accounts payable, and clerical services. (11.8%)

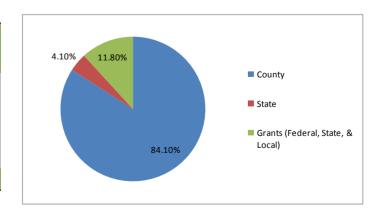
Program Area	Expenditures	Percent- age of To- tal
Criminal	\$11,908,257	23.7%
Civil	\$13,496,424	26.8%
Juvenile	\$18,945,808	37.7%
Administration	\$5,961,073	11.8%
TOTAL	\$50,311,562	100%



2008 Funding By Source

In 2008, King County Superior Court received a total of \$50,311,562 in funding from county, state, and grant sources. The majority of the Court's funding, \$42,320,047 (84.1%), was provided by King County. The State of Washington provided a total of \$2,075,960 (4.1%). A combination of public and private grants provided a total of \$5,915,555 (11.8%).

Source	Funding	Percentage of Total
County	\$42,320,047	84.1%
State	\$2,075,960	4.1%
Grants (Federal, State, & Local)	\$5,915,555	11.8%
TOTAL	\$50,311,562	100%

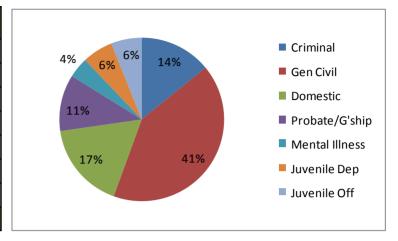


Superior Court Caseload & Performance

Case Filings

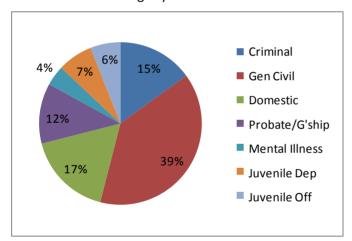
In 2008, a total of 61,731 cases were filed with King County Superior Court, down slightly from 2007. Criminal filings fell significantly, while Juvenile Dependency and General Civil filings rose.

Case Type	2008	Change from 2007
Criminal	8,667	-19.5%
General Civil	25,331	6.2%
Domestic	10,647	-5.9%
Probate & Guardianship	7,046	1.2%
Mental Illness	2,420	1.0%
Juvenile Dependency	3,817	9.3%
Juvenile Offender	3,803	-3.8%
Total Filings	61,731	-1.6%



Case Resolutions

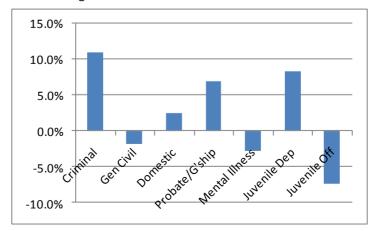
In 2008, the court resolved a total of 62,940 cases. Although case resolutions were down slightly from 2007, resolutions exceeded case filings by almost 2.0%.



Case Type	2008	Change from 2007
Criminal	9,619	-13.0%
General Civil	24,858	1.6%
Domestic	10,908	-4.2%
Probate & Guardianship	7,540	4.6%
Mental Illness	2,353	1.0%
Juvenile Dependency	4,137	10.9%
Juvenile Offender	3,525	-4.7%
Total Resolutions	62,940	-1.4%

Clearance Rate

Clearance rate describes the relationship between case filings and case resolutions. A positive rate means more cases were resolved in a particular category than were filed. Ideally, the number of cases resolved would equal the number of cases filed; however, fluctuations in filing rates cause annual variations.

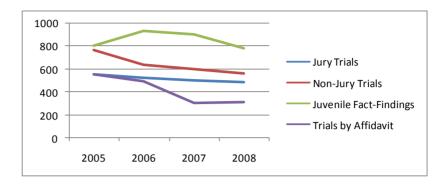


Superior Court Caseload & Performance

Trial Activity

Trial activity continued its recent downward trend in 2008. The 2,137 trials performed in 2008 represents a 7.3% decline from the number of trials performed in 2007.

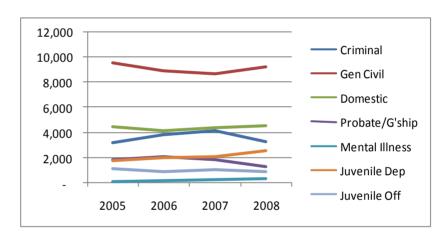
Trial Category	2008
Jury Trials	484
Non-Jury Trials	562
Juvenile Fact-Findings	784
Trials by Affidavit	307
Total Trials	2,137



Year-End Pending Caseload

A case is considered pending if it is unresolved and active. Sometimes, a previously resolved case can again become active if, for example, a warrant is filed for failure to comply with a court order. At the end of 2008, 22,088 cases were pending, a decrease of roughly 1% from 2007.

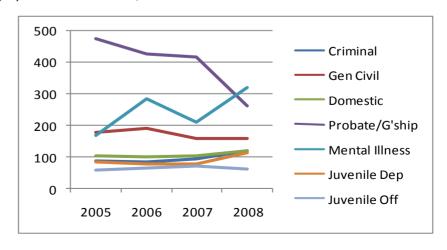
Case Type	2008
Criminal	3,338
General Civil	9,239
Domestic	4,549
Probate & Guardianship	1,254
Mental Illness	301
Juvenile Dependency	2,532
Juvenile Offender	875
Total Pending Cases	22,088



Age of Active Pending Caseload

The age of active pending caseload may be measured in a variety of way. Here it is measured as the median age of cases (in days) in each primary filing category as of December 31, 2008.

Case Type	2008
Criminal	119
General Civil	160
Domestic	119
Probate & Guardianship	263
Mental Illness	320
Juvenile Dependency	112
Juvenile Offender	63
Median for All Active Pending Caseload	141



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Administrative Specialist IV Cynthia Williams

Tech. Info. Processing Spec. II Linda Tran Director & Superior Court Clerk Barbara Miner

Customer Service Specialist II Pamela Carson Julie Espinosa

Heidi Davis

Tech. Info. Processing Spec. III

Program Manager

Social Worker

Facilitator

Asst. Program Manager

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES IT Operations Supervisor Kevin Daggett Business & Finance Manager Steve Davis IT Applications Supervisor Hugh Kim Business & Finance Officer II Senior Database Administrator Rita Napitupulu Terri Bayless

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Czar Peralta Ted Shaw

Doug Buckmeier Administrative Specialist II Gary Cutler Web/Applications Developer Senior Desktop Support Technician Michelle Croy Office Assistant Kristan Johnson

Desktop Support Technician Michael Kim

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Lea Ennis

IT Director

FAMILY COURT OPERATIONS

Director Jorene Moore-Reiber **DEPENDENCY CASA**

Family Court Operations Mgr Merle Redd-Jones Program Manager Linda Katz Early Resolution Case Mgr. Melinda Johnson-Taylor Asst. Program Manager Napoleon Caldwell Fam/Juv Ct. Imp. Proj. Prog. Spec. Jessica Barrett Carolyn Frimpter Sathia Vann Administrative Specialist IV

Melissa Hartley Kiese Wilburn Janet Horton Peggy Larson FAMILY COURT SERVICES Wai-Ping Li-Landis

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Kathryn Barnhouse Karen Chapman Program Attorney Edward Greenleaf Lori Irwin

Paige Hacke Kathleen Martin Martha Hickey Heidi Nagel April Rivera

Debra Hunter Attorney Guardian ad Litem Kathleen Kennelly

Rie Takeuchi UNIFIED FAMILY COURT Adoption Paralegal Jennifer McCall Case Manager William Schipp Imee Crisostomo Customer Service Specialist III Jessica Bailey Civil Case Specialist Customer Service Specialist II

Brooklyn Adams Sarah Williams Laura Contreras

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FAMILY LAW FACILITATORS Court Operations Specialist II Amanda Peterson Program Manager Teresa Koza Family Law Coordinator Rita Amaro

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> Kristen Gabel Tiffany Klein Rose Morrison Catherine Kuvac Monica Osborn Karen Schalow

Intake Specialist Stacey Gibson Fiscal Specialist III Bryan Ivanich Stacy Keen

COURT OPERATIONS

VACANT CRIMINAL DEPARTMENT Court Operations Director

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Court Operations Supervisor II Charlotte Daugherty Barbara Winter

> Carla Gaber Heiti Milnor-Lewis Criminal Calendar Coordinator II

John Salamony Bonnie Larson

Criminal Calendar Coordinator I Court Operations Specialist II Pamela Oldham Erica Conway

John Rodenberg Criminal Court Info. Proc. Spec. Karen Igo

Calendar/Staffing Specialist Marsha Kishida Court Operations Specialist I Sumi Enebrad Facilities Specialist Rodrigo Jacinto Customer Service Specialist II Susan Wells

Kirby Pierce

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Greg Wheeler Jury Services Manager

Customer Service Specialist III Patricia Rials Irene Szczerba EX PARTE

Customer Service Specialist II Katherine Glenn Case Mgr – Probate/Guardianship Beth Custer Heidi Bugni Guardianship GAL Keith Thomson

> INTERPRETER SERVICES **BAILIFFS**

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Court Operations Specialist II Charlotte Taylor Margette Baptist Rasheedah McGoodwin

Customer Service Specialist III Hakim Lakhal Sherry Bosse Barbara Murphy Cheryl Spriggs Larry Brown Linda Navarro

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Jane LaMerle Renee Janes Lisa Ziminsky

Monica Jones

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Juvenile Treatment Services MgrMark WirschemDarien RiffeProject Program Manager IIITeddi EdingtonFiscal Specialist IIPaula Moses

Project Program Manager II Pat Ford Campbell

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FAMILY TREATMENT COURT

JUVENILE COURT OPERATIONS Program Manager Steve Noble

Court Operations Supervisor Jacqui Arrington Community Outreach Liaison Roland Akers

Court Calendar Technician Katie Davidson Juvenile Program Service Coord. Josalyn Conley

Court Program Specialist II Damita Beleford Juvenile Probation Counselor Carolyn Williams

Katheryne Davis Tracy Dixon

Elaine Deines Administrative Specialist III Nicole Concinnity
Susan Kaplan Karen Lanpher

Tikecha Pearson
Lauretta Watson

Juvenile Court Info. Specialist Tiffany Ballard Program Manager Jill Murphy

Court Program Specialist III Cathy Lehmann

JUVENILE SERVICES ADMIN SUPPORT

Barbara Whitney

Administrative Specialist IV Marilyn Busby <u>EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS/</u>

Administrative Specialist II Kathleen Hasslinger <u>LOW-LEVEL SUPERVISION UNIT</u>

Carolyn Kurth <u>JPC Supervisor</u> Melissa Sprague

Carolyn Kurth JPC Supervisor Melissa Sprague
Randyl Long (RJC) Juvenile Probation Counselor Lead Gina Reyes (RJC) Community Surveillance Officers Jason Canfield

CASA Paralegals Vickey Wilson (RJC)

Community Surveillance Officers Jason Cannell

Hulet Gates

Kathleen McCormack Melissa Lemanski

Review Monitor

Philip Palana

CASA Pro Bono Specialist Janet Harris Administrative Specialist III Julie Allen
Administrative Specialist II Sheila Singleton

AT-RISK YOUTH PROGRAMS

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Case Management Specialist Adam Myers Education/Employment Specialist Mark Farrell

Amy Andree (RJC)

Court Program Specialist II

Melody Edmiston

Gabby Jacobsen

Mey Andree (RJC)

Guy McWhorter

Denise Ozeri

Truancy Facilitator Gabby Jacobsen Denise Ozeri

ARY Intervention Specialist Erin Grotting Hiroko Vargas

Community Outreach Liaison Dorcas Olegario

CRIME FREE FUTURES/MEDICAID MATCH

Youth Program Coordinator Susie Bridges Weber

JUVENILE COURT SERVICES (CONT.)

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SOUTH I UNIT (RENTON)

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Juvenile Probation Counselor Lead Juvenile Probation Counselor

Kris Brady Dawn Closs

Melinda Fischer Robert Frisbie Dan Higgins Randy Kok

Gideon Oyeleke Pat Hunziker-Pepoy

Administrative Specialist I Renee Olin JPC Supervisor JoeAnne Taylor

Juvenile Probation Counselor Lead Staci Delgardo Juvenile Probation Counselor Jeremy Crowe

> Brian Frv Darlin Johnson Christine Kahikina

Lee Lim Kendra Morgan Debra Stuckman Ron Tarnow Mike West

Administrative Specialist I Pat Durr

CITY UNIT

JPC Supervisor

Juvenile Probation Counselor Lead Juvenile Probation Counselor

Tony Peguero Karen Austin Bill Bodick

Darvl Cerdinio Paul Daniels

> Yvette Gaston Lisa Gistarb Cecilia Parrish

Danielle Kidd Administrative Specialist I

SOUTH II UNIT (KENT)

JPC Supervisor Kelli Lauritzen Diane Rayburn

Juvenile Probation Counselor Lead Juvenile Probation Counselor Fred Aulava

Ginger Barnes-Villegas Yvonne Clemente-Smith Michelle Higa Rachel Hubert

Rob Legge Francisca Madera Michelle Mihail Patricia Nilsson Gwen Spears

Julie Stansberry

SCREENING UNIT

JPC Supervisor Katie Forbes

Juvenile Probation Counselor Bob Burnside

Demetrius Devers

Todd Foster David Gistarb Geri Horrobin

Claudia Scipio Marcia Theofelis

WACIC Data Coordinator Dominick Beck

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JPC Supervisor Gene Dupuis Dan Baxter

Juvenile Probation Counselor

Administrative Specialist I

Norm Charouhas Bruce Gourley Elizabeth Higgins Rebecca Kirkland Kiersten Knutson

Diana Korf Gabrielle Pagano Kelli Sullivan

Administrative Specialist II Kim Swanson

Administrative Specialist I

Teresa Chandler (.5)

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JPC Supervisor Frank Trujillo

Juvenile Probation Counselor Lead Karla Powelson

> Christy Cochran Kelly DePhelps

Dede Gartrell Yoko Maeshiro

Shelley Moore Dawn Nannini

Joyce Chan Administrative Specialist I

Tomas Escarez

The mission of King County Superior Court is to serve the public by ensuring justice through accessible and effective forums for the fair, just, understandable and timely resolution of legal matters.

> Maleng Regional Justice Center 401 Fourth Avenue North Kent, Washington 98032-4429 (206) 205-2501 Fax (206) 205-2585 Clerk's Office (206) 205-8448

King County Courthouse 516 Third Avenue Seattle, Washington 98104-2312 (206) 296-9100 Fax (206) 296-0986 Clerk's Office (206) 296-9300

http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/ superiorcourt.aspx

> Juvenile Court 1211 East Alder Seattle, Washington 98122 (206) 205-9500 Fax (206) 205-9432 Clerk's Office (206) 205-9483