



Superior Court  
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## Mission Statement

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### **Superior Court:**

- Adjudicate all cases, both criminal and civil, in a just and timely manner
- Assure due process and equal protection under the law
- Promote access to justice to all persons

### **Drug Court:**

Enhance community safety and security by holding substance abusing individuals accountable for their actions while providing them an opportunity for treatment to develop and change their life skills and habits so they can become responsible and productive members of their families and society.

### **LIFT Court (Living in Families Together) Family Therapeutic Court:**

LIFT Court's mission is to achieve safe and timely permanent child placement by providing structure, discipline, accountability and encouragement to parents through judicially managed community based service.

## Function

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**Superior Court:** The Superior Court is a general jurisdiction court. It has the responsibility of adjudicating matters coming before it over which it has original or appellate jurisdiction, pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Washington. This includes felony criminal, civil, juvenile, domestic relations, adoption, guardianship, paternity, probate, domestic violence, and mental illness cases. The court is charged with resolving cases in an accessible and expeditious fashion.

**Drug Court:** Clallam County Superior Court operates two Drug Court Programs for those charged with crimes: Adult Drug Court and Juvenile Drug Court. The Drug Courts are a minimum one year voluntary treatment-based program for individuals in need of intensive treatment for addictive disease and co-occurring mental health disorders. Drug Court offers an alternative to criminal prosecution.

Since its inception, Drug Court has served 1516 participants with 473 graduates. Drug Court reduced recidivism, returned participants to work and school, reunited families and participants became active members of the community reducing need for community services. Clallam County has been able to provide more services and treatment opportunities to more participants than any county of comparable size.

**L.I.F.T. Court** (Living in Families Together) operates for high risk dependency cases that involve mental illness and/or addiction and alcoholism. Participants are referred by the court, social workers, attorneys, treatment providers or are sometimes self-referred. Participants are reviewed on a weekly basis for parenting, housing, legal, recovery, SUD treatment , and counseling compliance. Since its inception in August 2008, L.I.F.T. Court has served 286 parents and 354 children; 103 parents have graduated, and 150 children have achieved permanency without the need for a trial. L.I.F.T. Court reduced recidivism, returned parent and children to school and/or work, reunited families, reduced the need for additional supervision, and created participants who are interested in their communities and want to be part of the greater good.

The L.I.F.T. Court Coordinator has been a member of the Clallam County Behavioral Health Advisory Board for over 17 years, or since 2008. The Committee meets on a bi-monthly basis and makes recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners on how to best allocate the 1/10th of a percent Behavioral Health Dollars our county collects. The Committee reviews all Requests For Proposals (RFP's) submitted each year and determines who qualifies to receive grant funds. The L.I.F.T. Court Coordinator continues to volunteer for the sub-committee that reviews the RFP's and presents to the Committee for a vote on which programs are to be funded.

The L.I.F.T. Court Coordinator continues to assist in clinical support with our Drug Court Coordinator. The Coordinators meet daily to check in about cases, court, and staffing issues. The L.I.F.T. Court Coordinator also meets daily with the FJCIP (Family Juvenile Court Improvement Plan) Coordinator to staff cases and prepare for Dependency Court.

## Trends/Events

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**Blake Decisions:** In February of 2021, the Supreme Court declared former RCW 69.50.4013 unconstitutional, invalidating the crime of felony possession of a controlled substance. As a result thousands of convicted individuals were able to have their convictions vacated and possibly resentenced. The court worked closely with the public defender's and prosecutor's office to handle these matters as efficiently as possible. Since 2021, there have been a total number of 387 cases addressed without any additional costs incurred to the court by handling these matters on our regularly scheduled court calendars and in chambers. At this time we anticipate these cases becoming fewer and fewer as it seems or appears most Clallam County cases have been addressed.

**Unified Guardianship Act (UGA):** As of January 1, 2021, the State of Washington enacted a new statute (RCW 11.130.195) that requires all courts to begin appointing guardian ad litem attorneys and court visitors to represent parties involved in minor guardianship cases. These are called Title 11. The average hours per case can range from 5-20 hours total and costs \$45/\$100 per hour for attorney GAL/CV fees. The court has experienced an increase in cases needing these appointments which has made it difficult to find enough attorneys and court visitors to accept these appointments. Since 2021 there have been a total of 84 appointments made. Additionally, the Administrative Office of the Courts has offered funding to courts to help cover these costs.

**Interpreter Costs:** The court continues to see an increase in the need for courtroom interpreters and the wide range of languages needed is increasing. Locating and scheduling for interpreters can be time consuming, especially if appearance is needed in person; however, there are some cost savings to the court by allowing interpreters to appear remotely. The Administrative Office of the Courts has provided and continues to provide grant funding to help reimburse courts up to 50% of the costs incurred, but these funds are very limited and adjusted annually to be shared among all courts. The court is mandated to provide these services at the cost of the County.

**Weddings:** Since COVID the court has experienced a significant increase for requests to perform wedding ceremonies. The court provides this service as a courtesy to the public that is free and available upon request. At this time we have set aside time for the court to perform two wedding ceremonies per week on Thursday afternoons. This service is very popular and booked up to two months in advance.

**Parents for Parents Program:** In March of 2018, Clallam County was chosen to participate in a grant funded program called "Parents for Parents." This program provided education, mentoring and increased engagement in the Dependency system with the help of a Parent for Parent Coordinator and Parent Allies to promote safe and timely reunification of children with their parents. This program ended in June 2025 due to lowered dependency numbers and funding changes; however, the program has now been consolidated with five other counties and continues to offer support to Clallam County, if need, from a Parent for Parent Coordinator housed out of Pierce County.

**Protein for All Initiative (FJCIP):** This trauma response support has taken root in an impactful way with the launch of Protein for All, a program designed to provide protein-rich snacks to those in need within our courtrooms. With funding provided from the Administrative Office of the Courts as a one-time grant for 2025, this initiative has been warmly received through Juvenile Services and Superior Court proceedings, supporting youth and adults alike.

Our FJCIP lead, Christine Sportsman, has gone above and beyond to share these nutritious items with anyone who may need them; from the Victim Advocate in the Prosecutor's office, to staff in Drug Court. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and there is strong hope this supportive program continues.

We were also able to purchase meaningful Native Art with the trauma response funds for the Family Courtroom that was carefully selected by our FJCIP Coordinator. The artwork is from the Eighth Generation, a brand own by the Snoqualmie tribe who partners with various Native American Artists.

**Juvenile Offender Cases:** The court has experienced a significant increase in time needed to prepare for and hear juvenile offender calendar. The court is spending more time on each matter in chambers and per hearing due to the charges being filed and the care and needs of the youth and their families. This also impacts the clerk's staffing and time management to handle these cases.

**Drug Court Standards:** Over the past five years Drug Court has worked to revise several aspects of the program to meet or exceed National Drug Court standards. We are taking time to allow changes to the program and their impact to be measured. We will be seeking increased mental health service collaboration with local providers and have invited one of the largest providers to join the Drug Court team for case consultations. There is also an ongoing effort to increase virtual access to participants while incarcerated so a continuum of care can be maintained.

**L.I.F.T. Court - Reunification Day Picnic:** L.I.F.T. Court will be hosting our 5th Annual Family Reunification Day celebration picnic on July 30, 2025 at the Dream Park located at Erickson Playground. Each year a Reunification Day celebration committee meets over the course of three months to plan and prepare for the arrangements and details of this event. The FJCIP Coordinator, Christine Sportsman, is leading the committee this year along with the support of the L.I.F.T. Court Coordinator and other committee members. The event will be held at Erickson Playfield Dream Park. We will have food, games, prizes and family photos taken by a volunteer photographer, along with several guest speakers. This program continues to be supported by funds made available from through our FJCIP program with the Administrative Office of the Courts. We anticipate another celebration in 2026.

## Goals/Challenges

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### **SUPERIOR COURT:**

**Court Calendar Display Project:** Superior Court has been working with IT on an approved 2025 budget project for implantation and installation of a court calendar digital display system (reader boards) to be located in the Court Administration lobby area and outside the Family Courtroom. The reader boards will list all court hearings, including time, judicial officer, courtroom location, case number and name. The calendars will use a software program called REACH that is managed by Court Administration and will also be published to the Superior Court website. In the long run this will save money by no longer printing paper calendars for multiple courtrooms on a daily basis and this will provide the public with an easier way to locate court cases. We anticipate this system will be operational by October 2025.

**Court Calendar Transition:** On May 5, 2025, we transitioned from the Superior Court legacy court calendaring system (a 24-year-old, in house built web-based system) to the Washington State case management system Odyssey calendar used by many courts to prepare our calendars. The transition wasn't easy and has taken a lot of adjustments to get used to coordination with the Court Clerk's office went really well to create a system that works for us. This free calendaring option saves the County money by not having to purchase or replace the older legacy calendar in conjunction with using Odyssey we worked with our IT department to create a department outlook calendar to capture most of the needs we have without the legacy system. We are still working out the kinks, but in the long run we feel this will work for our department.

**Video Conferencing:** Superior Court has been working closely with IT on installing video conferencing systems in our Family Courtroom and jury rooms in courtrooms 1 and 2. The systems consist of wall-mounted TV monitors, a mini computer, microphone, keyboard and mouse. This project is part of a 2025 budget request that will provide for the use of Zoom meetings and remote appearances for settlement conferences, and will improve the ability to view videos and exhibits for jurors during deliberations.

**Courtroom Video Carts:** Superior Court currently has two video carts available in courtrooms 1 and 2 to use for court hearings. Each cart is hardwired and equipped with a laptop and Elmo for participants to use during hearings and trials in order to display videos, pictures and documents. As part of our 2025 budget, we are adding two additional carts, one in the Family Courtroom and one in the Juvenile Courtroom. This is the only way participants can show the court and jurors case information electronically as there is not a way to have audio/video evidence scanned into the Odyssey CMS.

**Jamestown Treatment Center:** The Jamestown Treatment Center is a new Mental Health facility located in Sequim that is planning to open the beginning of 2026. The facility can house up to 17 beds to accommodate for mental health care and treatment. These cases are called Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) which require two court hearings within days of being admitted. As a result, the court will most likely be adding two additional court calendars per week which will add to more court time needed to review and hear each case.

**Extraordinary Costs Petition:** The court recently received a reversal of a case that meets the criteria of a capital offense. These cases are extremely expensive and take hours of court time, attorney and jail time to process. We anticipate the trial date to take place in 2026. The county has the opportunity to request reimbursement of costs incurred if it is decided to do so.

**Local Court Rules:** This year we made a few adjustments to our LCRs to include two revisions and one rescinded rule. We continue to keep this updated and current. The rules are available on the County website and the Washington State Courts website for the public to refer to.

**In Person Retreat (FJCIP):** On June 4, 2025, FJCIP hosted a dynamic in-person retreat focused on cross-system collaboration with one-time grant funds provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts. This year's theme "Best Practices for a Therapeutic Court" brought together a diverse mix of stakeholders including county-serving agencies, attorneys, representatives from Youth and Family Services, and judicial teams from both Clallam and Jefferson Counties. With 50 attendees participating in this full day of shared learning, the retreat was a valuable opportunity to exchange insights and strengthen partnerships. FJCIP is already looking ahead and excited to plan the next retreat in Spring 2026 from continued support offered through AOC.

**Court Facilitator:** The Family Court Facilitator has been a part of Superior Court since 2009 and plays a critical role for the Family Court and the public by providing assistance with documents and how to file them with parties involved in family law proceedings. The need for this service is ever increasing and we are very supportive of this program provided through Pro Bono Legal Services. It is fully utilized by the community and provides for convenient online appointment scheduling and purchase of forms. This is money well spent and helps alleviate excess judicial time working on pro se court cases.

**Speedy Arraignment Amendment:** A change in State law has been ordered amending CrR 4.1, CrRLJ 4.1 and CrRLJ 3.2.1 to take effect on September 1, 2025, that requires any adult jailed in connection with a criminal case or released with conditions must be arraigned and given the opportunity to request bail within 3 days after charges or a File Information has been filed by the State. This is a change from the time requirement of 14 days from the charging date to 3 days. We do not anticipate that this will significantly affect the court, but it could have an impact on the prosecution, defense and jail staff requiring a speedier timeline in order to process cases.

#### **DRUG COURT:**

1. Provide an alternative to traditional criminal procedures for defendants committing offenses due to drug addiction.
2. Provide team training to enhance the effectiveness of both Adult and Juvenile Drug Court Teams and individual team members.
3. Utilize existing financial resources effectively.
4. Explore alternatives to State funded inpatient treatment placements for participants needing more help than is available through intensive outpatient treatment.

5. Continue to work with our established Criminal Justice Treatment Account (CJTA) steering committee that serves as a countywide forum charged with submitting an annual plan with the Salish Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization (SBHASO) for disposition of funds provided from the CJTA.
6. Develop a more robust prosocial activities program for Drug Court participants and strengthen the alumni participation and retention.

**L.I.F.T. COURT:**

L.I.F.T. Court is in its first year with Family Court Commissioner Brian Parker on the bench and its 17th year running this program. We continue to have L.I.F.T. Court weekly. The first and third weeks of the month Commissioner Parker presides from the bench, and the second and fourth weeks of the month the L.I.F.T. Court Coordinator and teh FJCIP Coordinator run a check-in group with court participants. The L.I.F.T. Court Coordinator attends Dependency Court weekly and maintains contact with attorneys, treatment providers, DCYF, and the Child Advocate Program. The L.I.F.T. Court Coordinator is responsible for all record keeping, data input, outreach, intakes, discharges, staffing and the operation of L.I.F.T. Court. The Coordinator is involved in Dependency Court as our referrals for L.I.F.T. Court originate in Dependency Court. Since January, Commissioner Parker has ordered in six new L.I.F.T. Court participants, which is the highest number in L.I.F.T. Court since 2019.

**Workload Indicators**

	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual
<b>Cases Filed:</b>			
Criminal	316	329	140
Civil	883	1,017	449
Domestic	299	266	134
Probate/Guardianship	553	592	235
Adoption/Paternity	87	62	35
Mental Illness	119	170	83
Juvenile Non-Offender	199	171	110
Juvenile Offender	137	182	44
<b>Total Cases Filed</b>	<b>2,593</b>	<b>2,789</b>	<b>1,230</b>
<b>Non-Trial Proceedings:</b>			
Civil/Juvenile	2,806	2,926	1,300
Criminal/Juvenile Offender	4,532	4,853	1,946
<b>Total Non-Trial Proceedings</b>	<b>7,338</b>	<b>7,779</b>	<b>3,246</b>
<b>Trials:</b>			
Civil Non-Jury Trial	49	53	16
Civil Jury Trials	1	2	2
Criminal Jury	13	8	2
Criminal Non-Jury Trials	6	4	1
<b>Total Trials</b>		<b>67</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Drug Court:</b>			
Adult, Juvenile Court Participants	50	68	65
Adult, Juvenile Drug Court Graduates	12	19	15
<b>L.I.F.T. Court:</b>			

Adult clients served in L.I.F.T. Court	15	10	14
Children served in L.I.F.T. Court	18	13	22

## Grant Funding Sources

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1. Department of Health and Human Services (Federal)
2. Office Administrator for the Courts (State)

## Revenues

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	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual	2026 Budget
Taxes	0	0	0	0
Licenses and Permits	0	0	0	0
Intergovernmental Revenues	163,993	252,202	159,058	239,766
Charges for Goods and Services	324,812	312,822	162,347	358,081
Fines and Forfeits	26	1,620	2,590	0
Miscellaneous Revenues	0	806	30	0
Other Financing Sources	0	0	0	0
Transfers In	0	0	0	0
General Tax Support	1,217,567	1,064,717	479,837	1,011,232
Total	1,706,397	1,632,167	803,861	1,609,079

## Expenditures

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	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual	2026 Budget
Salaries and Wages	945,599	929,965	486,595	1,065,862
Personnel Benefits	212,689	201,708	116,578	207,617
Supplies	27,583	11,641	8,901	26,280
Other Services and Charges	511,104	482,476	156,966	264,320
Intergovernmental Services	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlays	9,422	6,377	34,822	45,000
Interfund Payments for Services	0	0	0	0
Transfers Out	0	0	0	0
Total	1,706,397	1,632,167	803,861	1,609,079

## Staffing

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	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual	2026 Budget
Full Time Equivalents	8.75	8.75	9.25	9.25