

WYOMING JUDICIAL COUNCIL

TEAMS Meeting
December 12, 2022
9:00 A.M. – NOON

MEETING MINUTES

Members: Chief Justice Kate Fox (Chair), Justice Lynne Boomgaarden, Justice Kari Gray, Judge Catherine Wilking, Judge Catherine Rogers, Judge Joseph Bluemel, Judge Nathaniel Hibben, Judge John Prokos, Judge Wendy Bartlett

Others Present: Elisa Butler, State Court Administrator, Kristin Trebil-Halbersma and Mandy Allen from NCSC

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| Welcome | Chief Justice Kate Fox opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and thanked the members for attending the first Wyoming Judicial Council meeting. |
| Judicial Branch Innovation JBI Members Kristen Trebil-Halbersma - NCSC | <p>The BJPA established the JBI task force to do six numbered tasks: identify the challenges facing the Judicial Branch and its delivery of justice including those impacting the internal functioning of the Branch and the interactions with the public seeking justice; prioritize challenges into short- and long-term goals to be addressed; identify and evaluate potential solutions to the challenges; identify modifications to rules, policies or statutes necessary to implement identified solutions; identify the implications financial, structural or other of implementing identified solutions; and make recommendations to the BJPA for modifications to address identified challenges. Also, to provide regular updates to the BJPA as well as an interim report no later than December 12th, 2022, which is the report on the agenda today.</p> <p>Chief Justice Kate Fox thanked the members of the JBI for their hard work over the last nine months reviewing all the materials and meeting monthly. She mentioned that they have had great assistance from the National Center, two of those people are present today, Kristen and Mandy are here to provide the report.</p> |
| <p>Final Report from the National Center for State Courts (Appendix A)</p> <p>The Judicial Council received the final report from the National Center for State Courts.</p> | Kristen Trebil-Halbersma of the NCSC thanked the members of the JBI for their hard work and commitment. This work began with a survey and from that the JBI developed five different key areas. The five areas are: administrative support, funding for the Judicial Branch, customer support, employee judicial well-being, and the Judicial Branch governance structure. Over the course of these meetings, the NCSC facilitated discussions focused on each one of these areas. The NCSC brought in national experts from the National Center to talk about research and information at a national level that could provide some insight to the JBI. The NCSC recommendations are as a result of the work of NCSC staff with the JBI task force. Those recommendations are set forth in the report and include: adoption of a mission statement, values, and strategic and operational plan; rebranding the BJPA to the Judicial Council; adopting rules and procedures to convey the authority of the Wyoming Judicial Council which were approved during the last meeting; and obtaining adequate funding for staffing at the AOC. |

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| | <p>The AOC has inadequate funding for the needs of the Wyoming Judicial Branch in comparison to other states.</p> <p>Judge Bluemel moved that the Wyoming Judicial Council receive the final report from the National Center for State Courts. Judge Prokos seconded. All members voted in favor with none opposed.</p> |
| <p>Proposed Judicial Branch Strategic Plan (Appendix B)</p> <p>The Judicial Council adopted the amendments to the Strategic Plan.</p> | <p>The strategic plan was provided to the members at the September meeting. It is being presented again because there are some slight changes to clean it up and make it a resource that is shareable. The hope is that this plan will serve as a platform and framework for the work that the Judicial Council and JBI will be focused on moving forward.</p> <p>Judge Bartlett moved to adopt the amendments to the strategic plan. Judge Prokos seconded the motion. All members voted in favor with none opposed.</p> <p>Chief Justice Fox mentioned the difficult task moving forward for the Judicial Council will be prioritizing these tasks and getting things done. She encouraged the members of the Judicial Council to talk about this with their conferences so that they understand this is a plan for everybody.</p> |
| <p>Future of the JBI Task Force</p> | <p>Kristen Trebil-Halbersma introduced the subject of an State Justice Institute (SJI) grant to help support the second phase of the JBI. The proposal to SJI was based on goals in two specific areas. The first being the implementation of the strategic plan, working with JBI to ensure that the operational and strategic plan can be institutionalized. The second piece is assisting with communication of the plan both internally and externally. A report will also be provided to the Wyoming Judicial Council from the NCSC at the end of 2023.</p> <p>Elisa Butler explained at the last JBI meeting there was a discussion about what the JBI should be working toward – should the task force be looking at the big picture, or should it shift to implementing the strategic plan?</p> <p>Kristen suggested the short-term implementation of the strategic plan and the steps to accomplish that could be done in just a few meetings. She added that some items could likely be implemented fairly quickly, and some items may take longer than two years, that is something the JBI could look at – the timeline for the tasks and the committees to accomplish these tasks and provide that information to the Judicial Council.</p> <p>Chief Justice Kate Fox suggested at the next meeting there be an outline for the Council to consider based on the discussion today – a more formal direction for JBI in Phase two. To summarize, JBI should look at both vision and implementation.</p> <p>All members agreed to this plan.</p> |
| <p>Subcommittees of the Wyoming Judicial Council</p> <p>Current Committee List (Appendix D)</p> | <p>Chief Justice Fox acknowledged that committee work can be a strain on Judges' time. The hope is with these new committees to have more staff support to help with a lot of the work, and let the Judges make the final decisions.</p> |

The Judicial Council approved creation of the Legislative Relations, Behavioral Health, Technology and Human Resources Subcommittees of the Judicial Council. The Judicial Council also approve making the Access to Justice Commission a subcommittee of the Judicial Council.

1. Legislative Relations

Chief Justice Kate Fox explained the district court conference has formed its own Legislative Relations committee, which is great, but there should also be a Judicial Council Legislative Relations subcommittee that coordinates with all judicial conferences to ensure everyone is on the same page when it comes to the Legislature. The subcommittee would be an umbrella overseeing the legislative work in the Branch, and it would assist in providing a consistent message. Elisa Butler would report legislative issues and happenings to the Legislative Relations Committee, and the members of the committee will be responsible for disseminating the information to their respective conferences.

Judge Bluemel moved to approve the Legislative Relations Subcommittee of the Wyoming Judicial Council made up of one to two members of the Supreme Court, and two members from each of the district and circuit court conferences; Judge Hibben seconded the motion. All members voted in favor with none opposed.

2. Behavioral Health

Behavioral health is a big issue in the State, and something the Legislature is interested in right now. This question not only involves treatment courts, but also competency evaluation backlogs, Title 25 issues, family law cases, and the fact that 90% of our incarcerated have substance abuse or mental health issues. There is currently an informal behavioral health committee, and several Judges that have expressed their interest in this topic, but there has not been a formal committee formed. The committee will be made up of two members from each conference.

Judge Bartlett moved to approve the Behavioral Health Subcommittee of the Wyoming Judicial Council made up of two members from each conference, Judge Prokos seconded, and the motion carried.

3. Technology

The Council discussed formation of a Hardware/Software Committee, and whether it was needed. Elisa Butler suggested the Council consider broadening the scope of the committee to include technology issues and questions from both the IT division and the Applications division – possibly call this committee the Technology Committee instead of Hardware/Software Committee. Judge Prokos suggested the committee may need one judge from each conference and then possibly one clerk each – a district court clerk and circuit court clerk. Judge Prokos also suggested that a person from Court Administration be a member of the committee. Elisa mentioned that the AOC would be staffing the committee, meaning the AOC would be involved as staff rather than as a member.

Judge Prokos moved to approve the Technology Subcommittee of the Wyoming Judicial Council made up of one member from each conference, a clerk of district court, and a chief clerk of the circuit court. Judge Hibben seconded the motion. All members voted in favor with none opposed.

4. Access to Justice

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| | <p>The Access to Justice Commission is a bit different than the other committees because it already exists. Historically, the Access to Justice Commission has been independent. There was some discussion from the members as to whether this Commission should remain independent or move under the umbrella of the Judicial Council. Justice Boomgaarden suggested as chair of the Access to Justice Commission that it be moved under the Judicial Council in the spirit of collaboration. What really needs to come through the Access to Justice Commission are the Judicial Branch priorities so that coordination and collaboration can occur as reflected in the strategic plan the Judicial Council just adopted.</p> <p>Justice Boomgaarden moved to make the Access to Justice Commission a subcommittee of the Wyoming Judicial Council. Judge Bartlett seconded the motion. All members voted in favor with none opposed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5. Human Resources</p> <p>There was some discussion from the members as to whether there needs to be a Human Resources Committee, or whether a shorter-lived task force might be formed in lieu of a committee to handle discreet topics as they come up. The Council thought it would be helpful to have an HR Committee to help make decisions and implement new systems, training, and other issues that may come up. There currently is an informal committee made up of some judges, that would be willing to continue to act in that capacity.</p> <p>Judge Bluemel moved to approve the Human Resources Subcommittee of the Wyoming Judicial Council made up of two members each from the district and circuit court conferences, and one Supreme Court Justice. All members voted in favor with none opposed.</p> <p>The members reviewed the current committee list and made no changes. The Council discussed creating a mentorship program for outgoing members to be able to spend some time with incoming members to make the transition easier.</p> |
| <p>Executive Committee Review Elisa Butler</p> <p>The Judicial Council approved the decision of the Executive Committee to permanently assign a vehicle to Judge Hibben.</p> | <p>The Council discussed the decision made by the Executive Committee to permanently assign a vehicle to Judge Hibben for use when traveling for work purposes.</p> <p>Judge Bluemel moved to ratify the decision and Judge Prokos seconded. All members voted in favor with none opposed.</p> |
| <p>BJPA Policy – Vehicles Elisa Butler</p> <p>Board of Judicial Policy and Administration – Policy Statement for Permanently Assigned Vehicles in State Courts (Appendix E)</p> | <p>Elisa introduced the BJPA policy on permanently assigned vehicles and explained that the decision on whether to assign a vehicle must currently be made by the Judicial Council. The topic was put on the agenda today to determine whether the Judicial Council would like to continue to make these decisions, or if these decisions are better left to Court Administration based on a cost-benefit analysis. The Council agreed that, based on the calculation performed to determine whether a permanently assigned vehicle is warranted, there is no reason for the</p> |

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| <p>The Judicial Council repealed the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration – Policy Statement for Permanently Assigned Vehicles in State Courts.</p> | <p>Judicial Council to make these decisions.</p> <p>Judge Hibben made a motion to repeal the policy. Judge Prokos seconded the motion. All voted in favor with none opposed.</p> <p>There was some concern that a Judge may be denied a permanently assigned vehicle by Court Administration, and there would be no recourse for that Judge. Chief Justice Fox suggested that the Judicial Council rules include a provision indicating that any disputes with Administration be resolved by the Judicial Council.</p> |
| <p>Budget Elisa Butler</p> | <p>1. 2023-2024 Supplemental Budget hearing update.</p> <p>Elisa Butler provided an update on the budget defense hearing. The Joint Appropriations Committee will likely start marking up the budget bill in the next week.</p> <p>2. 2024-2025 Budget discussion.</p> <p>Elisa discussed with the Council the importance of starting to look at the budget for the next biennium. In terms of preparation, Elisa suggested that a list of possible budget items be provided at the March meeting. The Council could discuss those items, and in June, the Council would need to make some final decisions to allow Court Administration staff to create the budget based on those decisions. Chief Justice Fox added the budget decisions are critical to forming the direction of the Wyoming Judicial Branch, which is why it's important for the Judicial Council to be involved in those decisions.</p> |
| <p>Pay Tables/ Employee Compensation Elisa Butler</p> <p>The Judicial Council approved using a crosswalk from the Executive Branch pay tables to create the Judicial Branch compensation structure.</p> | <p>Elisa Butler discussed the use of pay tables to allocate pay raises for employees. Unfortunately, that project did not yield reliable data.</p> <p>In July, the Judicial Branch received money for employee pay raises, and to allocate that money, the Judicial Council used a crosswalk from the Executive Branch pay tables. The AOC looked at the job descriptions in the Executive Branch and compared those to the job descriptions of Judicial Branch employees to provide information to the Judicial Council. The AOC recommends that the Judicial Branch follow this same approach for creating Judicial Branch pay tables. In this way the Branch will be able to obtain updated pay information each year.</p> <p>Justice Boomgaarden added the state developed and started working on this Hay study methodology back when she was state lands director in the early 2000s, which gives it about fifteen years of history in Wyoming. The Executive Branch and the Legislature are very familiar with it and have a lot of confidence that it reflects Wyoming circumstances.</p> <p>Judge Hibben moved to pursue the crosswalk, Judge Bartlett seconded that motion. All members voted in favor with none opposed.</p> |

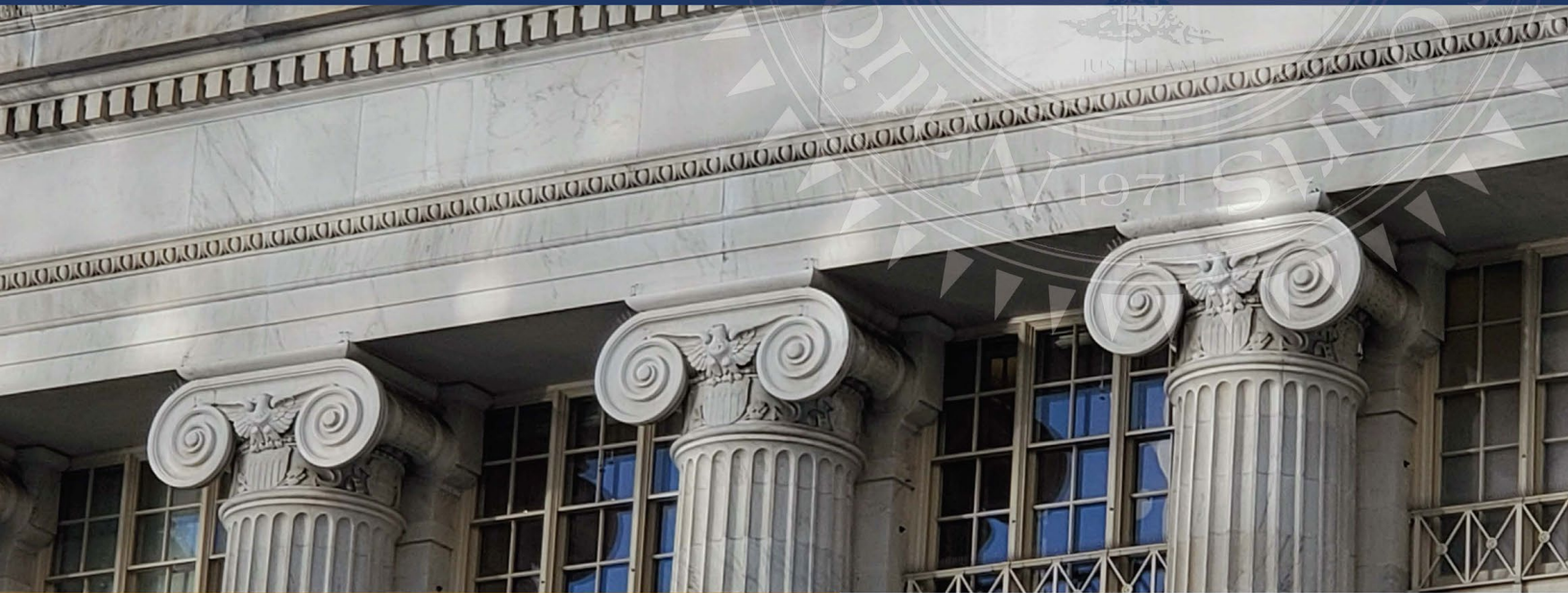
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| Employee Compensation Elisa Butler | Elisa provided an update on employee compensation in the 2023 session. The Judicial Branch has again been included in the Governor's request for additional employee compensation. As the bill reads today, that compensation would go into effect on April 1, 2023. As a result, if the appropriation is approved, the Judicial Council will need to decide on the allocation of employee compensation at the March meeting. Elisa asked the Judicial Council to think about what kind of information it would need to help make that allocation decision in March so the AOC staff can begin putting materials together. |
| ADA Policy Elisa Butler Draft ADA Policy (Appendix G) | <p>Elisa Butler presented the proposed draft ADA policy. The goal is to take ADA issues off the Judges' plates as much as possible. This won't be always possible, but the hope is that an ADA coordinator within the AOC will help coordinate ADA requests and modifications most of the time, relieving the Judges of this burden.</p> <p>The members discussed the policy and the timeline for the policy to be implemented. The members agreed they would like additional feedback from their conferences, and the Executive Committee may or may not take a vote on the policy before the next Judicial Council meeting if the changes are not too significant. All members agreed to this plan.</p> |
| Court Interpreter Policies Elisa Butler Draft Spoken Language Interpreter Policy (Appendix H) Draft Sign Language Interpreter Policy (Appendix I) | <p>Elisa Butler presented the request received back in the spring to split the single interpreter policy into two separate policies – one for foreign language interpreters and one for sign language interpreters. Additional research revealed that the two kinds of interpretation fall under two different federal laws. Foreign language interpretation falls under Title 6 of the Civil Rights Act, and sign language interpretation falls under the ADA. While it makes sense to distinguish between these different methods of interpretation based on federal law, having two interpreter policies may create some confusion.</p> <p>Elisa recommended to the members that instead of having two policies for interpretation, to have one policy for spoken language interpretation to comply with the requirements of Title 6 and then merge the sign language interpreter policy with the ADA Policy that the members are currently considering. In that way the two different methods of interpretation are differentiated, and everything that involves compliance with the ADA falls under one policy instead of two.</p> <p>The members discussed moving the sign language interpreter policy under the ADA policy as an appendix. The members agreed to that approach, and requested that the updated ADA Policy which includes the sign language interpreter appendix be circulated to the conferences for review.</p> |
| Adjourn Administration Newsletter | Chief Justice Fox adjourned the meeting at 11:57 a.m. |

Attachments are designated in blue text.

Decisions are reflected in green text.

Wyoming AOC

Administrative Structure of the Wyoming Judicial Branch and the Board of Judicial Policy & Administration



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November 7, 2022



Acknowledgements

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) project team gratefully acknowledges the State of Wyoming Judicial Branch for their assistance and leadership with this project. During the course of this study, we were fortunate to work with a distinguished group of dedicated individuals. We would like to express our appreciation to:

Hon. John Perry (Ret.), Chair of Wyoming Judicial Branch Innovation Committee

Hon. Kate Fox, Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court

Hon. Lynne Boomgaarden, Associate Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court

Hon. Wendy Bartlett, Circuit Court Judge

Hon. Nathaniel Hibben, Circuit Court Judge

Hon. Catherine Wilking, District Court Judge

Hon. Jason Conder, District Court Judge

Elisa Butler, Wyoming State Court Administrator

Disclaimer: The points of view expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Wyoming Judicial Branch or the BJPA.

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National Center for State Courts

This Report was prepared for the Wyoming Judicial Branch. The study was funded primarily through a technical assistance grant awarded by the State Justice Institute ("SJI"), a federal Department of Justice program dedicated to improving the quality of justice in state courts and fostering innovative, efficient solutions to common issues faced by all courts.

Consulting services were provided by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). The NCSC is an independent, private nonprofit corporation, founded in 1971, targeting innovation and the improvement of courts nationwide and internationally. This study assesses the governance of the Wyoming Judicial Branch and recommends certain improvements in the organizational structure and administration of the Judicial Branch.

The points of view and opinions expressed in this Report are those of the consultants, and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the SJI, the Wyoming Judicial Branch, or the judges and staff of the Wyoming Judicial Branch.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....1

Scope of Work.....2

Report Observations.....5

Recommendations.....6

Discussion.....8

Summary.....9

Appendices.....10

 A Order Establishing the Wyoming Judicial Council.....10

 B Rules and Procedures of the Wyoming Judicial Council.....12

 C Operational Plan.....16

Executive Summary

The Wyoming Judiciary has a non-unified governance and funding structure. While the Circuit Courts in all 23 counties are subject to the Supreme Court's administrative and fiscal control, the 26 District Courts are free from administrative and fiscal control of the Supreme Court. In addition, the Clerks of District Court are independently elected officials that report to the Board of County Commissioners in their respective counties.¹ They are considered county employees, and neither the Supreme Court nor the District Courts have supervisory control over the Clerks of the District Courts. To address the difficulties in governing in this decentralized structure, the Wyoming Supreme Court formed the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration (BJPA) in 2000 to assist in setting branch wide policies for Judicial Branch support and strategic planning. The BJPA is made up of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, two supreme court justices, three district court judges and three circuit court judges. The district court and circuit court judges are elected by their respective judicial conferences for three-year terms. Chief Justice Kate Fox, who became Chief Justice in July 2021, serves as the chair of the BJPA. State Court Administrator (SCA) Elisa Butler serves as the executive secretary, and the state court administrator's office is responsible for providing staff support for the BJPA.

At its Fall 2021 meeting, the BJPA discussed the role of the BJPA, coming to the consensus that the BJPA should focus its efforts on the significant challenges facing the courts. Some of the issues raised by the BJPA as areas of focus included: attracting and retaining qualified judges; well-being of judges and court staff; dealing with self-represented litigant needs; ensuring qualified counsel exist to resolve matters; and exploring the possibility of establishing specialty courts, including a family court. The BJPA has formed a task force to assist in this work by identifying issues to be addressed, studying those issues, and providing recommendations to the BJPA for consideration. The task force has been named the BJPA task force on Judicial Branch Innovation (JBI).

The JBI identified five (5) areas of concentration for this project: 1. Administrative Support at State and Local Levels of the Judicial Branch; 2. Funding; 3. Customer Support; 4. Employee and Judicial Officer Well-Being; and 5. Governance Structure. The Municipal Courts of Wyoming were not included in this project. Together with the NCSC project team, the JBI met monthly regarding the concentration areas. NCSC project staff developed the agendas, provided resources, and facilitated the meetings.

The NCSC project team made the following recommendations to the JBI:

- Adoption of a mission statement, vision statement, strategic plan and operational plan.
- Rebranding of the BJPA to the Wyoming Judicial Council.

¹ WY Const 1889, Art 5, § 13

- Adopting Rules and Procedures with specific language to convey adequate authority to the Wyoming Judicial Council.
- Adequate staffing the Courts (AOC), to fully support the Wyoming Judicial Branch

Scope of Work

Task Schedule

This twelve-month project was formally commenced on March 2, 2022, at the meeting of the BJPA. NCSC consultants organized the project around the following tasks:

1. **Project Initiation – Kickoff Videoconference**

A kickoff meeting was held with the project liaison, the oversight committee, and consultants from the NCSC. At this meeting, the participants confirmed the scope of the project and the deliverables that would be produced, discussed best practices, data requirements and communication channels. In addition, the members present discussed the necessity to name the task force, prioritize issues and the idea of bringing additional stakeholders to the project.

2. **Survey**

A survey was developed and distributed to the judges in Wyoming to identify any areas of concern. The survey asked respondents questions pertaining to job satisfaction, demographic information, levels of satisfaction with the recruitment and retention processes, delivery of services, and the current structure of the Wyoming Judicial Branch. The survey also sought information regarding items such as administrative decision-making, resource allocation, time standards, and case management practices.

Results were tabulated and an overview of the results was provided to the task force on May 20, 2022. From the results of the survey, the task force established a focus of priorities including: Administrative support at the local and state level; Funding; Customer support and service delivery – statewide forms and competency; Employee and Judicial well-being; and Governance Structure.

3. **Task Force Meeting Planning**

It was anticipated that there would be at least ten (10) meetings of task force, with additional meetings of any committees formed. The NCSC project team assisted the Court with agenda planning, the determination of various research topics, coordinating research with consultants, analyzed and presented data/resources to the Court and secured presentations and presenters for meetings. The NCSC team followed up with meeting minutes after each meeting.

4. **On-Site Meetings with BJPA and/or Task Force**

The NCSC project team appeared in person and virtually for meetings of the BJPA to facilitate the presentation of the task force progress and areas of reform and recommendations.

5. Facilitate Meetings of the Task Force Committees (virtual)

The NCSC project team appeared in person and virtually for meetings of the JBI to obtain feedback from the JBI members and to facilitate discussion between the members. At these meetings, the NCSC project team led discussions on establishing mission and vision statements for the branch and development of an operational plan. In addition, the JBI was challenged to review the governance of the Judicial Branch, its structure, and the current structure of the BJPA. The NCSC project team provided the JBI members with agendas and meeting materials prior to each meeting.

6. Research Potential Reforms/Identify Practices in Other State Courts

The NCSC project team conducted research and presented information to the task force on the findings. Specifically, the team researched and provided options regarding administrative functions of the Administrative Office of the Court (AOC) and local circuits by comparing current structure of Wyoming with other structures around the country. Similar courts were evaluated, but other items were taken into consideration such as elected Clerks of Court, different administrative functions of the State Court Administrator and local administrators, and whether local administration should be by district, or by location.

The team also conducted research regarding the structure of judicial councils of several states. A range of comparisons was given, from the very formal and structured council to a less formal council. The research included information about the formation of each council, whether that be a constitutional, statutory, or administrative formation, and information about the tasks the various councils could undertake.

7. Identify Topical Experts or Other State Court Leaders on Selected Topics

The NCSC project staff provided comparative analysis of governance structure and court administration by comparing several state court systems in the United States. The NCSC also provided expert consultation regarding family courts, mental health for employees and court users, self-represented litigants, development of vision and mission statements, strategic planning and operational planning.

8. Analyze Potential Reforms, Determine Feasibility, and Identify Strengths/Weaknesses

Each of the five (5) concentration areas were fully examined, potential solutions were explored and the JBI and NCSC project team analyzed each solution for appropriateness for the Wyoming Judicial Branch.

9. Draft Task Force Report

A report was drafted by the NCSC project team which identifies and analyzes potential reforms and determines the feasibility of each recommendation. A thorough examination of the

strengths and weaknesses was performed. The draft of the report was presented to the JBI on September 29, 2022.

10. Revise and Issue Final Report

Following presentation of the draft report to the JBI, the JBI provided feedback to the NCSC project team. The feedback was incorporated into the report and delivered to the JBI on October 27, 2022.

11. Presentation of Report to the BJPA

A formal presentation of the final report was made to the BJPA on December 12, 2022, to facilitate discussion about the final recommendations and to answer any questions of the Board members.

Tasks & Timeline

The proposed timeline composed at the beginning of the project is found below.

| Task | Months from Project Start | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| Task 1. Project Initiation | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 2. Meeting Planning | X | X | | | | | | | | | | |
| Task 3. On-Site Meetings | | | X | | | X | | | X | | | X |
| Task 4. Meeting Facilitation | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Task 5. Research Reforms | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | |
| Task 6. Identify Experts | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | |
| Task 7. Analyze Reforms | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Task 8. Draft Report | | | | | | | | | | X | X | |
| Task 9. Revise/Final Report | | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| Task 10. Present Report | | | | | | | | | | | | X |

REPORT OBSERVATIONS

Judicial Administration

Currently, the State Court Administrator is the administrative head of the branch, as delegated by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Comparative analysis suggests that the Administrative Office of the Courts is understaffed. Locally, the District Court Judges and Circuit Court Judges are responsible for several administrative tasks. Some tasks are delegated to clerk's office staff, some tasks are completed by the AOC, and the rest are completed by the judges. There is a desire to shift the day-to-day administrative work from the judges to the State Court Administrator or to a local administrator. Administrative functions passed from judges to the AOC would require additional staffing at the AOC. The branch does not employ district or county administrators at present.

The AOC has some direct authority over the circuit courts, but not the district courts, although the AOC provides extensive support to the district courts. In addition, there is some tension between the district and circuit courts. The courts would like to maintain their autonomy.

The Clerks of the District Courts are elected officials which can present administrative challenges in a local administrative model, although, the issues exist in a state administrative model as well. The District Judges feel that there is no control that they may exert over the office of the Clerk. Circuit courts have appointed Chief Clerks who serve in a Clerk of Court capacity and are employees of the Judicial Branch.

BJPA

The BJPA ² was established on May 24, 2000, by Order of the Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court.³ The Supreme Court delegated all administrative authority to the BJPA, except those items for which the Supreme Court had no authority, such as the elected Clerks of the District Courts and their staff. The District Courts also delegated their administrative authority, except for the District Court budget setting/planning, to the BJPA. Rules and procedures of the BJPA were adopted by the Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court, to supplement the order of authority.

In 2021, the BJPA recognized that the Judicial Branch is in a state of change due to many factors, including automation, technological advances, results of the Covid-19 pandemic and the number of self-represented litigants. These changes have perhaps caused issues surrounding the well-being of judicial officers and court staff, such as poor recruitment and retention surrounding both groups. The BJPA, in response, established a task force, applied for a grant from the State Justice Institute (SJI), to study these changes and the best reactions to the changing environment of courts. The Judicial Branch Innovation (JBI) task force of the BJPA contracted the services of the National Center for State Courts for assistance on this project.

² During this project, the BJPA was renamed the Wyoming Judicial Council.

³ A copy of the Order is found in the Appendix, together with the Rules of the of current BJPA.

Judicial Branch Innovation

The JBI adopted the motto, "Designing our future, honoring our past." The JBI, consisting of the Chief Justice, a Supreme Court Justice, two (2) Circuit Court Judges, two (2) District Court Judges, the State Court Administrator and a Retired Judge serving as Chair, met eight (8) times during the project. NCSC project staff were present for each meeting, either virtually or in person. Meetings were facilitated surrounding the issues identified by the BJPA, with project staff preparing research materials and agendas for each meeting. The JBI made several decisions to take to the BJPA during the course of the project. The JBI identified five (5) key areas to examine: 1. Administrative Support at State and Local Levels of the Judicial Branch; 2. Funding; 3. Customer Support; 4. Employee and Judicial Officer Well-Being; and 5. Governance Structure.

The JBI investigated various forms of administrative support and governance structures by comparing other court systems in the United States. The comparisons provided insight to the task force, assisting them in final decision making regarding administrative support and structure.

Subsequent to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Judicial Branch realized that the well-being of staff and judicial officers was suffering. The well-being of the economy and litigants also created an uptick in the number of people who have decided to represent themselves in court rather than hire counsel. The task force committed to researching the feasibility of more self-help resources being employed by the Judicial Branch and to also research the possibility of establishing a family court.

The JBI also committed to the establishment of mission and vision statements and an operational plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The NCSC offers the following recommendations to the State of Wyoming Judicial Branch.⁴

1. The NCSC recommends the adoption of the mission statement, vision statement, strategic plan and operational plan developed by the JBI.⁵
2. The NCSC recommends the rebranding of the BJPA to the Wyoming Judicial Council, by withdrawing the order establishing the former Wyoming Judicial Council, by ordering the change of name from the BJPA to the Wyoming Judicial Council, and then adopting Rules and Procedures of the Wyoming Judicial Council.⁶

⁴ Recommendations 4-6 will require appropriations by the Wyoming Legislative Branch

⁵ This recommendation was adopted by the Wyoming Judicial Council during the project.

⁶ This recommendation was adopted and implemented by the Wyoming Judicial Council during the project.

3. The NCSC recommends that the Rules and Procedures of the newly formed Wyoming Judicial Council, include language specific enough to afford adequate authority to the Council.⁷
4. The NCSC recommends that the Wyoming Judicial Branch adequately staff the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), to fully support the needs of the Judicial Officers, Court Staff, Special Programs, Human Resources, Applications, Education, and Auditing.⁸
5. The NCSC recommends that the AOC establish new positions within the AOC, namely, a Public Information Office, an ADA Coordinator, Security, Grant Manager/Writer, Treatment Courts, a Juvenile Division and Language Interpreter (including Deaf and Hard of Hearing).⁹

⁷ This recommendation was adopted and implemented during the project.

⁸ Based on comparative analysis, the Wyoming AOC is extremely understaffed to address the needs of the branch. The Wyoming AOC employs approximately 35 people in 5 divisions. In contrast is the Minnesota AOC which employs 330 people in 6 divisions and Washington AOC which employs 240 people over 4 divisions. The population of the state of Wyoming is approximately 579,495 according to [Wyoming Population 2022 \(Demographics, Maps, Graphs\) \(worldpopulationreview.com\)](https://worldpopulationreview.com/population-statistics/wyoming/). The state of New Hampshire has a population of 1,389,741, [New Hampshire Population 2022 \(Demographics, Maps, Graphs\) \(worldpopulationreview.com\)](https://worldpopulationreview.com/population-statistics/new-hampshire/), but their caseload is smaller than that of Wyoming. The AOC of New Hampshire employs 50 people in 9 divisions. The state of Vermont has similar population (643,077, [CSP STAT Overview | Court Statistics Project](https://www.vermontjudicialbranch.org/csp-stat-overview/)), and similar caseloads. However, the 2020 data indicates that the number of cases per 100K for Vermont is 15,192, while the number for Wyoming is 25,168. The AOC of Vermont employs approximately 64 people for trial courts.

⁹ The AOC requires a Public Information Office to adequately address the dissemination of information to the public and to the media. In addition, to stay compliant with ADA, it is imperative that the SCA have an office dedicated to this function, providing access to the courts for employees, judges, court users and the general public. The same is true for an office of language interpretation. Having a centralized language interpretation unit will assist the Judicial Branch with compliance with Executive Order 13166, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Safe Streets Act of 1968.

Leadership and Governance

Recommendation: Adoption of the mission statement, vision statement, strategic plan and operational plan developed by the JBI.

Discussion: Mission and Vision Statements provide information to employees and judicial officers of the branch, as well as the public and court users. Such statements convey purpose and goals of the organization, while Strategic and Operational Planning outline key objectives and the roadmap to achieving the goals of the organization. Each stakeholder of the court benefits from access to this information because the stakeholders know their responsibilities to the organization and the standards by which it operates.

Recommendation: Rebranding of the BJPA to the Wyoming Judicial Council.

Discussion: The BJPA was established for the purpose of accepting the administrative authority of the Wyoming Judicial Branch. While the BJPA has been in operation for a number of years, there has been a lack of clarity of authority that would be held by the BJPA.

Over the course of time, the caseloads of the Judicial Branch, together with the people employed there and the people using it, have changed, creating the need to take an honest look at policies and procedures of the Branch. The possibility of making changes requires a robust body, with the authority to make needed changes. For this reason, it is important to build a new identity of the policy-making body.

Recommendation: Rules and Procedures of the newly formed Wyoming Judicial Council include language specific enough to afford adequate authority to the Council.

Discussion: Having clear language delegating authority to the Wyoming Judicial Council, allows the Council to set policy and procedure without question of authority.

Recommendation: Adequate staffing of the Administrative Office of the Court (AOC).

Discussion: The current AOC is quite understaffed for the role it has in the Wyoming Judicial Branch. Having additional staff available to undertake the business of the courts is necessary, particularly in the areas of Special Programs, Human Resources, Applications, Education and Auditing. There are positions to support each of these areas, however, staffing levels are not keeping up with the increase in work.

The Wyoming AOC employs approximately 35 people in 5 divisions. In contrast, the state of Vermont, with similar population and filing statistics, employs approximately 64 people in their AOC, who are dedicated to their trial courts.

Recommendation: Establish new positions within the AOC, namely, a Public Information Office, an ADA Coordinator, Security, Grant Manager/Writer, Treatment Courts, a Juvenile Division and Language Interpreter (including Deaf and Hard of Hearing).

Discussion: While comparing other court systems, it was noted that many of the other court systems in the U.S. already have positions to deal with public information, ADA requests/complaints, security, treatment courts, juvenile divisions, language access and grant administration. Each of these positions are new concepts in court administration but are necessary to comply with local and federal legislation regarding access to the courts. Also subsequent to the establishment of the Wyoming Judicial Branch, we see specific grants available to state courts to assist with the business of the court, but no position to seek, make application for, and manage grant monies. Having this function will allow the Judicial Branch to secure grant funding for this branch of government.

Summary and Conclusion

The Wyoming Judicial Branch has expressed that the current operations of the Branch do not meet the existing needs. Recommendations contained within this Report will position the Wyoming Judicial Branch to begin changes in a manner which will take time to implement, but the results will improve overall governance, leading to increased court performance over time.

Thus far, the Judicial Branch, through the JBI, has accomplished a great deal with minimal resource allocation. This is due to the commitment of the JBI to effect changes needed to design a branch that serves the needs of the citizens of Wyoming and the judges and employees of the Judicial Branch.

Appendix A - Order Establishing the Wyoming Judicial Counsel

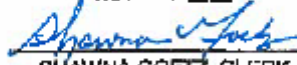
IN THE SUPREME COURT, STATE OF WYOMING

October Term, A.D. 2022

In the Matter of the Modification)
of the Board of Judicial Policy and)
Administration and)
Establishment of)
the Wyoming Judicial Council)

IN THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF WYOMING
FILED

NOV - 1 2022


SHAWNA GOETZ, CLERK

ORDER OF MODIFICATION TO COURT'S ORDER OF MAY 24, 2000, ESTABLISHING BOARD OF JUDICIAL POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION AND APPOINTING MEMBERS THEREOF AND RENAMING IT THE WYOMING JUDICIAL COUNCIL

THIS MATTER came before the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration (BJPA) upon the recommendation of the Judicial Branch Innovation task force to change the name of the BJPA and to modify its structure. The BJPA having considered the recommendation hereby modifies the Order of May 24, 2000, and finds:

On May 24, 2000, the Supreme Court ordered the establishment of the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration to promote communication, cooperation, and efficient management of all levels of the Wyoming courts for the Wyoming Judicial System; and

By its Order Establishing Board of Judicial Policy and Administration and Appointing Members Thereof, the Supreme Court ordered that superintending authority vested in the Supreme Court be delegated to the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration; and

By their ratification dated September 8, 2022, the District Court Judges' Conference confirmed the April 24, 2000, delegation of their administrative authority, except for the submission of budgets, to the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration; and

The Supreme Court ordered the appointment of membership to the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration; and

The Supreme Court adopted the Rules and Procedures Governing the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration on March 23, 2011; and

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration shall now be known as Wyoming Judicial Council;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED THAT the members of the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration as of the date of this order and any previous actions taken by the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration are continued and shall be considered members and actions of the Wyoming Judicial Council until superseded;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED THAT the superintending authority vested in the Supreme Court and previously delegated to the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration is hereby delegated to the Wyoming Judicial Council; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED THAT the District Court Judges' delegation of their administrative authority, except for the submission of budgets, to the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration is hereby delegated to the Wyoming Judicial Council; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED THAT the Rules and Procedures Governing the Wyoming Judicial Council as attached hereto are hereby adopted.

DATED this 1st day of November, 2022

**BY THE BOARD OF JUDICIAL POLICY
AND ADMINISTRATION:**



Kate M. Fox, Chief Justice
Chair, Board of Judicial Policy and Administration

Appendix B - Rules and Procedures of Wyoming Judicial Council

Rules and Procedures Governing the Wyoming Judicial Council

Rule 1. Supreme Court.

In accordance with the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration's Order of November 1, 2022, the superintending authority vested in the Wyoming Supreme Court by Article 5, Section 2 of the Wyoming Constitution is delegated to the Wyoming Judicial Council.

Rule 2. District Courts.

In accordance with the resolution of the District Courts unanimously approved on April 24, 2000, and ratified on September 8, 2022 by the *Ratification of the District Judges' Conference April 24, 2000 Resolution Regarding the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration*, the Wyoming District Courts delegate their administrative authority as established by Article 5, Section 1 of the Wyoming Constitution and W.S. 5-3-102(b) and 9-2-1002(c), except for the submission of budgets, to the Wyoming Judicial Council.

Rule 3. Wyoming Judicial Council.

Pursuant to the Wyoming Constitution, the Order of the Wyoming Supreme Court and the resolution of the Wyoming District Courts, the Wyoming Judicial Council will exercise general superintending control over the Judicial Branch for administrative, policy making, and planning purposes.

Rule 4. Membership.

The Wyoming Judicial Council is composed of the following members:

1. The Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court and two justices of the Wyoming Supreme Court;
2. Three district court judges; and
3. Three circuit court judges.

All members enjoy voting rights. The Wyoming Judicial Council may appoint non-voting members to serve for specified terms to increase perspective of others in the judicial branch, including, but not limited to, judges, clerks of court, chief circuit clerks, court personnel, and Staff of the State Court Administrator.

Rule 5. Terms of Members and Vacancies.

The Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court shall serve on the Wyoming Judicial Council during tenure in that office. The other members of the Wyoming Judicial Council shall be elected by their respective judicial conferences, serving staggered terms of three years, with the exception of the Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court. Members may serve successive terms. Elections to fill vacancies shall be held in the spring. Vacancies may be declared by the Wyoming Judicial Council because of the death, retirement, resignation, or nonattendance of a member at three meetings during a calendar year. If necessary, a member may attend in person, by telephone, or by virtual means.

Rule 6. Responsibilities of Presiding Officer.

The Chief Justice is the presiding officer of the Wyoming Judicial Council. It is the responsibility of the presiding officer to preside at meetings and to serve as the chief spokesperson for the Wyoming Judicial Council.

Rule 7. Organization.

The presiding officer shall preside at any meeting. In the presiding officer's absence, the Executive Committee member with the most seniority on the Judicial Council shall act as the presiding officer. The presiding officer may appoint standing committees, and advisory committees at any time to assist the Wyoming Judicial Council in carrying out its responsibilities. Standing and advisory committees shall have a designated chairperson as determined by the presiding officer. Existing Supreme Court committees may be designated as standing or advisory committees by order of the Chief Justice.

Rule 8. Executive Committee.

There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court, one district court member of the Judicial Council, and one circuit court member of the Judicial Council. The district court and the circuit court member of the Executive Committee shall be designated by the other members of the Judicial Council from that judicial conference. The Executive Committee shall have the authority to act between Judicial Council meetings. All actions of the Executive Committee shall be reported at the next Judicial Council meeting to be voted on by the Judicial Council.

Rule 9. Meetings.

The Wyoming Judicial Council shall act only at a meeting, unless agreed upon unanimously by the Wyoming Judicial Council, in which case action may be taken or a vote by email or other means may be taken. The Wyoming Judicial Council shall meet at least quarterly as determined by the presiding officer. Standing or advisory committee meetings may be called at the discretion of the committee chairperson. The Wyoming Public Meetings Act, W.S. 16-4-401, et seq., by its terms, does not apply to the judiciary. Meetings of the Wyoming Judicial Council are open to all sitting Circuit and District Court Judges and Supreme Court Justices but are not public unless, in its discretion, the Judicial Council determines a particular meeting or agenda item should be open to the public.

Rule 10. Reporter for the Wyoming Judicial Council and Minutes.

The State Court Administrator shall be the executive secretary and a non-voting member for the Wyoming Judicial Council. It shall be the duty of the executive secretary to prepare and keep the minutes of all meetings. In the absence of the executive secretary, the executive secretary shall choose another member of court administration to record the minutes. The executive secretary shall record the names of the members present, all actions taken, and any other matters that the Wyoming Judicial Council may deem appropriate. Copies of the minutes shall be distributed as deemed appropriate by the Wyoming Judicial Council and shall be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Supreme Court.

Rule 11. Actions and Voting.

Six members of the Wyoming Judicial Council shall constitute a quorum. Once a quorum has been established, that quorum shall carry throughout the duration of the meeting. Approval of a majority of those voting shall constitute an action. The presiding officer is a voting member of the Wyoming Judicial Council. A tie vote means that the matter voted on has failed adoption. A member may vote on specific issues by written proxy delivered to the presiding officer. A motion to reconsider can only be made by a member who voted on the prevailing side of an issue.

Rule 12. Staff.

Under the direction of the Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court, the State Court Administrator's Office shall provide staff for support for the Wyoming Judicial Council and any committees established by the Judicial Council.

Rule 13. Authorized Actions of the Wyoming Judicial Council.

The Wyoming Judicial Council shall be the administrative policy-making body of the Wyoming Judicial Branch. All administrative policies shall be binding on all judicial branch judges and employees. County employees and elected officials serving the Wyoming Judicial Branch, pursuant to law, shall also adhere to administrative policies which are relevant to them, and are adopted by the Wyoming Judicial Council. The administrative policy-making authority of the Wyoming Judicial Council shall continuously study the organization, rules, procedures, work accomplished, results, and uniformity of the state courts and methods for their improvement including, but is not limited to the following:

1. Development and implementation of the mission statement and strategic plan of the Wyoming Judicial Branch;
2. Determination of budget priorities;
3. Develop and support legislative initiatives as permitted by the Code of Judicial Conduct;
4. Human Resources functions;
5. Technology and infrastructure for the effective operation of the Judicial Branch;
6. Education and organizational development for judicial officers and staff;
7. Programs including jury, guardian ad litem, interpreter, specialty courts; and
8. Core services, court performance measures and accountability.

Adopted this 1st day of November, 2022.

BY THE WYOMING JUDICIAL COUNCIL:



Kate M. Fox, Chief Justice
Chair, Wyoming Judicial Council

Appendix C - Wyoming Judicial Branch Operating Plan

Wyoming Judicial Branch STRATEGIC PLAN FY2023–2024



Mission Statement

As an independent branch of government, we provide access to justice through the timely, fair, and impartial resolution of legal disputes.

Vision Statement

The Wyoming Judiciary is a cohesive and collaborative court system, characterized by excellence, that provides justice for the individual and society through the rule of law.

The Wyoming Judicial Branch is committed to excellence in:

- Delivering just and efficient resolution of people's disputes;
- Promoting public confidence in the law and providing access to justice;
- Faithfully discharging our duties as judges through adherence to the law;
- Ensuring fairness and impartiality by providing quality service that continuously improves, that meets or exceeds the public expectations, and that ensures that all are treated with courtesy, dignity, and respect;
- Fostering an expectation of excellence in the work of the Judiciary through recruitment, training and retention of all judicial officers and employees;
- Acting as a cohesive system that speaks with a single voice and shares a common purpose; and
- Ensuring the highest professional conduct, integrity and competence of the bench and bar.

1 *Access to Justice*

Advance the just and efficient resolution of people's disputes by:

Providing resources for self-represented litigants to assist in accessing and navigating the court system.

- Establish a court navigator program for the judicial branch.
- Create and maintain standardized forms that are fillable or take the litigant through a guided interview process.
- Make Access to Justice Commission a standing committee of the Wyoming Judicial Council.
- Ensure that indigent litigants have access to the courts through fee waiver or reduction for qualified applicants.

Ensuring that the members of the bar are well trained and accessible.

- Explore incentives to promote practice in rural areas of Wyoming.
- Facilitate a mentoring program for attorneys.
- Explore opportunities for collaboration with the University of Wyoming and the Wyoming State Bar to enhance the skills of lawyers.

Providing resources for the courts to efficiently move cases to resolution.

- Investigate the possibility of expanding the role commissioners and magistrates play in the courts.
- Evaluate alternative approaches to resolving domestic relations cases and cases that involve families by:
 - Exploring family courts.
 - Investigating the shift of child support cases to the Office of Administrative Hearings.
 - Exploring a position to screen and triage domestic relations cases.
- Improve the reports Judges can use to manage their dockets.
- Investigate positions for circuit courts – circuit court judicial assistant and circuit court law clerk.

2 *Effective Operation of the Judicial Branch*

Establish branch wide priorities through the Wyoming Judicial Council.

Promote a quality workplace for judicial officers and employees.

- Develop secondary trauma and well-being programs and services for judicial officers, staff, and jurors.
- Formalize and fund the use of retired Justices and Judges to provide assistance as needed.
- Create formalized education opportunities for employees.
- Create a mentorship program and expectations for new employees and Judges.
- Provide a more robust and effective judicial orientation for new Judges.
- Create a new employee onboarding program.
- Increase workplace flexibility where possible.
- Maintain adequate compensation for judicial officers and Judicial Branch employees.

Enhance consistent technological infrastructure and associated education to ensure our increased reliance on technology is supported while maintaining strong cybersecurity standards.

- Conduct training with judicial officers and court staff on remote interpretation software and Bizmerlin.
- Continue to provide routine security awareness training to all members of the branch.
- Upgrade or replace aging infrastructure hardware/software to ensure network security.
- Create uniform cybersecurity and technology standards for the branch.

Meet the needs of our courts by providing excellent branch wide administrative support.

- Centralize administrative functions of the circuit courts as appropriate.
- Create a court services office to better support the Judges and their staffs.

Enhance the use of problem-solving (drug) courts.

- Conduct training on problem-solving courts with judges, court staff and other stakeholders.

3 *Public Trust and Accountability*

Promote public confidence in the law, ensuring fairness and impartiality by providing quality service that continuously improves, that meets or exceeds public expectations, and that ensures that all are treated with dignity and respect.

- Assess public expectations and obtain feedback.
- Publish annual State of the Judiciary.

Provide proactive communication to and from the public about the Judiciary.

- Educate the public on the accessibility of the Judicial Learning Center and the courts.
- Plan and implement Law Day activities statewide.
- Secure funding for a public information office for the AOC.
- Ensure media coverage of the State of the Judiciary.
- Create an outreach strategy.

Establish internal criteria, policy, and procedures to ensure data quality and integrity.

- Train judicial officers and court staff on procedures for entering data and the importance of data quality and integrity.
- Perform annual audit on data integrity.
- Consider a data access policy for internal and external customers.
- Create a data governance policy for the Branch.

4 *Adequate, Stable and Predictable Funding for a Fully Functioning Branch*

Maintain sound budgeting principles and practices by application of data-driven information for forecasting, planning, and follow-up each biennium.

- Update 10-year budget need projection for IT support and hardware and long-term projection for other areas.
- Update the statistical workload model.

Establish and maintain relationships with legislative committees to promote understanding of the financial needs of the Judicial Branch.

- Develop informational resources to provide to legislators.
- Educate members of the Judicial Branch on operations of the Judicial Branch so they may convey a consistent message to members of the other branches of government.
- Provide civics for legislators course.
- Support court administration in its role as legislative liaison.

Wyoming Judicial Branch STRATEGIC PLAN

FY2023–2024



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- Educate members of the Judicial Branch on operations of the Judicial Branch so they may convey a consistent message to members of the other branches of government.
- Provide civics for legislators course.
- Support court administration in its role as legislative liaison.

Committee List

Branchwide Committees

Wyoming Judicial Council

- Chief Justice Kate Fox (Chair) – Supreme Court
- Justice Lynne Boomgaarden – Supreme Court
- Justice Kari Jo Gray – Supreme Court
- Judge Catherine Wilking – District Court
- Judge Catherine Rogers – District Court
- Judge Joseph Bluemel – District Court
- Judge John Prokos – Circuit Court
- Judge Nate Hibben – Circuit Court
- Judge Wendy Bartlett – Circuit Court

Wyoming Judicial Council Executive Committee

- Chief Justice Kate Fox – Supreme Court
- Judge Catherine Wilking – District Court
- Judge Wendy Bartlett – Circuit Court

Judicial Branch Innovation Task Force

- Chief Justice Kate Fox – Supreme Court
- Justice Lynne Boomgaarden – Supreme Court
- Judge Catherine Wilking – District Court
- Judge Jason Conder – District Court
- Judge Wendy Bartlett – District Court
- Judge Nate Hibben – Circuit Court

Permanent Rules Advisory Committees:

Civil Division

- Justice John Fenn (Chair) – Supreme Court
- Judge Scott Peasley – District Court
- Judge Catherine Rogers – District Court
- Judge Joey Darrah – Circuit Court
- Attorneys and clerks

Criminal Division

- Justice Keith Kautz (Chair) – Supreme Court
- Judge Paul Phillips – Circuit Court

- Judge Josh Eames – District Court
- Judge Suzannah Robinson – District Court
- Attorneys and clerks

Court Records

- Justice Kari Jo Gray – Supreme Court
- Judge Matt Castano – District Court
- Judge Bobbi Overfield – District Court
- Attorneys and clerks

Appellate Division

- Justice Lynne Boomgaarden (Chair) – Supreme Court
- Judge Peter Froelicher – District Court
- Attorneys and clerks

Evidence Division

- Judge Joseph Blumel (Chair) – District Court
- Judge Paul Phillips – Circuit Court
- Judge James Radda – Circuit Court
- Attorneys and clerks

Juvenile Division

- Judge Matt Castano – District Court
- Judge Stuart Healy – District Court
- Judge Bobbi Overfield – District Court
- Justice Keith Kautz – Supreme Court
- Attorneys and clerks

Access to Justice Commission

- Justice Lynne Boomgaarden (Chair) – Supreme Court
- Judge Bobbi Overfield – District Court
- Judge Peter Froelicher – District Court
- Judge Rick Lavery – District Court
- Judge Paul Phillips – Circuit Court
- Attorneys and clerks

Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee

- Judge Joseph Blumel – District Court
- Judge Michael Greer – Circuit Court
- Judge Bobbi Overfield – District Court

eFiling Committee

- Chief Justice Kate Fox (Chair) – Supreme Court
- Judge Jason Conder – District Court
- Judge Josh Eames – District Court
- Attorneys and clerks

Children’s Justice Project

- Judge Dawnessa Snyder (Chair) – District Court
- Judge Bobbi Overfield – District Court
- Judge Kerri Johnson – District Court
- Judge Catherine Wilking – District Court
- Justice Kate Fox (ex officio) – Supreme Court

Judicial Education Committee

- Justice Keith Kautz (Chair) – Supreme Court
- Chief Justice Kate Fox – Supreme Court
- Judge Rick Lavery – District Court
- Judge Bobbi Overfield – District Court
- Judge Steve Sharpe – District Court
- Judge Dan Forgey – District Court
- Judge Brian Christensen – Circuit Court
- Judge Curt Haws – Circuit Court
- Judge Toni Williams – Circuit Court

Statewide Court Security Commission

- Justice John Fenn (Chair) – Supreme Court
- Judge Wes Roberts – Circuit Court
- Judge Darci Phillips – District Court

Local Court Security Commission

- Judge Joseph Bluemel – Lincoln and Uinta Counties
- Judge Ed Buchanan – Goshen and Platte Counties
- Judge James Causey – Weston County
- Judge Jason Conder – Fremont County
- Judge Peter Froelicher – Laramie County
- Judge Stuart Healy – Campbell County
- Judge Ben Kirven – Johnson County
- Judge Bobbi Overfield – Big Horn, Hot Springs, and Washakie Counties
- Judge Melissa Owens – Teton County
- Judge Scott Peasley – Converse and Niobrara Counties
- Judge Darci Phillips – Sheridan County
- Judge Suzannah Robinson – Sweetwater County
- Judge William Simpson – Park County

- Judge Dawnessa Snyder – Carbon County
- Judge Marv Tyler – Sublette County
- Judge Misha Westby – Albany County
- Judge Catherine Wilking – Natrona County

Commission on Judicial Conduct and Ethics

- Judge Rick Lavery – District Court
- Judge Paul Phillips – Circuit Court
- Judge Dan Forgey – District Court
- Other members

Judicial Nominating Commission

- Chief Justice Fox (Chair) – Supreme Court
- Attorneys and non-attorneys

Bond Committee

- Judge Susan Stipe (Chair) – Circuit Court
- Judge Michael Greer – Circuit Court
- Judge John Prokos – Circuit Court
- Agency participants

Audit Committee

- Chief Justice Fox (Chair) – Supreme Court
- Judge Tom Lee – Circuit Court
- Judge Craig Jones – Circuit Court
- Judge Curt Haws – Circuit Court
- Clerks

District Court Committees

District Court Leadership

- Judge Dan Forgey (Chair/President)
- Judge Catherine Rogers
- Judge Joseph Bluemel
- Judge Rick Lavery (Past Chair)

District Court Judges Conference Rules

- Judge Ed Buchanan
- Judge Dan Forgey
- Judge Rick Lavery

Court Reporter Standards Committee

- Judge Jason Conder
- Judge Bobbi Overfield
- Judge Melissa Owens
- Judge Steven Sharpe
- Judge Dawnessa Snyder
- Court reporters

Legislative Liaison Committee

- Judge Jason Conder
- Judge Stuart Healy
- Judge Catherine Rogers
- Judge Dawnessa Snyder
- Judge Scott Peasley

HR (Pay Tables/Guide) Committee

- Judge Peter Froelicher
- Judge Kerri Johnson
- Judge Suzannah Robinson

Circuit Court Committees

Circuit Court Leadership

- Judge Wendy Bartlett (chair/president)
- Judge Toni Williams
- Judge Sean Chambers
- Judge John Prokos
- Judge Nate Hibben

Automated Forms Committee

- Judge Joseph Darrah
- Judge Susan Stipe
- Judge Craig Jones
- Judge Tom Lee
- Judge Curt Haws
- Judge Michael Patchen
- Judge Wendy Bartlett
- Clerks

Court Procedures & Training

- TBD

Legislative Liaison

- Judge Brian Christensen

Appendix E

Board of Judicial Policy and Administration Policy Statement for Permanently Assigned Vehicles in State Courts

It is the policy of the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration that budgetary requests made by state courts for permanent assignment of a state vehicle to said court will be supported by the Board to the State Legislature, only if:

1. The court can establish a history of traveling, for official court business, for at least two (2) consecutive years, an annual total mileage amount equal to or exceeding the amount of the state motor pool yearly charge divided by the current mileage reimbursement rate (as authorized by this Board) and rounded up to the next one thousandth. (Example: The 2001 state motor pool yearly charge of \$3,216 divided by the 2001 Board authorized mileage rate of 34.5 cents/mile equals 9,321 miles. This amount rounded up to the next thousandth is equal to 10,000 miles per year.)

The term "Court" includes the Judge of said court and any other state employee of said court who would otherwise be authorized to make use of a state vehicle if assigned.

The "actual annual total mileage" traveled must be calculated as the lesser of the actual mileage from the person's residence (if the person resides at a location other than the designated "home" court site as said location may be determined by the Board or by statute) to the duty assignment or from the "home" court site to the duty assignment.

The state vehicle assigned to a court must only be used for "official court business," which means it will only be used for actions necessary for the performance of official duties.

2. The Board has reviewed the need and justification for a permanently assigned state vehicle at its September meeting during odd numbered years. Courts requesting a permanently assigned vehicle must submit supporting documentation to the Court Services Division by August 1st during odd numbered years. The documentation must provide clear and convincing evidence that the travel for official court business will meet the requirements as calculated in #1 above.

Dated this 5TH day of October, 2005.

Board of Judicial Policy and Administration

By:

William C. Hill
Chief Justice Hill

WYOMING JUDICIAL BRANCH

Americans with Disabilities Act Public Access Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure all individuals have equal access to and full participation in judicial programs, court services, and court activities and to prohibit discrimination against any individual on the basis of physical or mental Disability.

II. APPLICABILITY

This Policy shall apply to the Wyoming Judicial Branch, including the Wyoming Supreme Court, District Courts, Chancery Court, Circuit Courts, their employees and any county or elected officials supporting the Wyoming Judicial Branch, pursuant to law.

III. AUTHORITY

- A. Pursuant to the Wyoming Constitution, the Order of the Wyoming Supreme Court and the resolution of the Wyoming District Courts, the Wyoming Judicial Council exercises general superintending control over the Judicial Branch for administrative policy-making and planning purposes.
- B. All administrative policies shall be binding on all judicial branch judges and employees. County employees and elected officials serving the Wyoming Judicial Branch, pursuant to law, shall also adhere to administrative policies which are relevant to them, and are adopted by the Wyoming Judicial Council. *Rules and Procedures Governing the Wyoming Judicial Council Rule 13.*

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Applicant** – An individual who submits a Request for Modification either in writing or orally.
- B. **Auxiliary Aids** – Services or devices enabling persons with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills to have an equal opportunity to participate in a Judicial Proceeding. Auxiliary Aids may (but do not necessarily) include such services or devices as qualified interpreters (See *Supreme Court of Wyoming Spoken Language Interpreter Policy*), assistive listening headsets, television captioning and decoders, telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDDs), videotext displays, readers, taped texts, brailled materials, and large print materials (See *Supreme Court of Wyoming Sign Language Interpreter Policy*). Examples of Auxiliary Aids or services of a personal nature not covered by this Policy include, without limitation, the following: prescription eyeglasses, hearing aids, wheelchairs, and/or personal medical or attendant care.

- C. Disability** - With respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the Major Life Activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment.
- D. Facility** - All or any portion of buildings housing Judicial Branch employees or courthouses, which includes structures, sites, complexes, equipment, rolling stock or other conveyances, roads, walks, passageways, parking lots, or other real or personal property, including the site where the building, property, structure, or equipment is located.
- E. Individual with a Disability** – A person who has a “Disability,” as that term is defined herein.
- F. Court Proceeding** - Any hearing, trial, or other appearance before the Circuit Courts, Chancery Court, District Courts and the Wyoming Supreme Court in an action, appeal, or other proceeding, including any matter conducted by a Judicial Officer.
- G. Judicial Officer** – A justice, judge, commissioner, or magistrate authorized to preside over a Court Proceeding.
- H. Major Life Activities** - Includes functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.
- I. Qualified Individual with a Disability** - An Individual with a Disability who, with or without Reasonable Modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of Auxiliary Aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the Wyoming Judicial Branch.
- J. Reasonable Modification** –Modifications to court rules, policies, practices or procedures, or the removal of architecture, communication, and transportation barriers to make court services and programs readily accessible to and useable by, Individuals with Disabilities so long as the modification would not result in a fundamental alteration of the nature of a service, program, or activity or cause undue financial or administrative burden.
- K. Request for Modification** - A request provided to the Statewide ADA Coordinator by an Applicant requesting a modification to court rules, policies, practices or procedures, or the removal of architecture, communication, and transportation barriers to make court services and programs readily accessible to, and useable by, the Applicant.
- L. Service Animals** – Service Animals include:
- i. Dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for Individuals with Disabilities. Service Animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person’s Disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as Service Animals.

- ii. Miniature horses pursuant to Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 35-13-205, that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for Individuals with Disabilities.

M. Statewide ADA Coordinator – An employee of the Wyoming Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) responsible for addressing Requests for Modification to access judicial programs, activities, and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act within the Judicial Branch, overseeing the administration, compliance, training and any complaints associated with issues raised by this Policy.

V. THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

- A. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) was enacted to prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities. Under Title II of the Act, no Qualified Individual with a Disability shall, by reason of such Disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of services, programs or activities of a public entity. This Policy aims to give Individuals with Disabilities an equal opportunity to access, use, and fully participate in Court Proceedings, and court services and programs
- B. Whenever reasonable, policies, practices or procedures must be modified to make court services and programs readily accessible to, and useable by, Individuals with Disabilities. This includes removing architectural barriers by altering existing facilities where feasible or relocating services to an accessible site. It also includes removing communication barriers by providing Auxiliary Aids and services which would allow a Individual with a Disability to effectively work in the courts, represent a client, be a party in a lawsuit, testify as a witness, serve on a jury, or observe a hearing or trial.
- C. In providing Reasonable Modifications, the Wyoming Judicial Branch will give primary consideration to the modification requested by the Applicant. However, an alternative modification may be implemented if equally effective. Every effort shall be made to meet the specific needs of the Applicant; However, the Wyoming Judicial Branch is not required to make modifications that would fundamentally alter the service or program or cause undue financial or administrative burden.

VI. REQUESTS FOR MODIFICATION

- A. A person requiring a modification to obtain access to Court Proceedings, programs, services, court records, or activities at the Wyoming Supreme Court, Chancery Court, any District Court or any Circuit Court should contact the Statewide ADA Coordinator.
- B. A written Request for Modification is preferred. However, the request may be made by telephone to the Statewide ADA Coordinator. In such instances the Statewide ADA Coordinator shall commit such request to writing.
 - i. The Statewide ADA Coordinator shall maintain a record of all Requests for Modification and the actions taken thereon for three (3) years.

- ii. The *ADA Modification Request Form*, which is attached hereto as Appendix A, and can be found on the Wyoming Judicial Branch website, may be obtained from the Statewide ADA Coordinator, the Supreme Court Clerk's Office, the Chancery Court Clerk's Office, any District Court judicial assistant, and any Circuit Court Clerk's Office.
 - iii. If appropriate, or upon request, the Statewide ADA Coordinator will provide assistance with writing and submitting the written Request for Modification.
 - 1. Large print or other accessible formats of the *Request for Modification Form* are available upon request.
 - 2. If appropriate, other personnel associated with the judicial program, service or activity may assist the Applicant in the submission of a completed Request for Modification to the Statewide ADA Coordinator.
- C. A Request for Modification shall include:
- i. A description of the person's Disability;
 - ii. The role of the person in the Court Proceeding;
 - iii. The modification sought;
 - iv. The date and time of the modification requested; and
 - v. The Court Proceeding, program, service, or activity for which the modification is sought.
- D. A Request for Modification may be submitted by any lawyer, party, witness, juror, or other individual interested in attending any Court Proceeding, program, activity or service or another person on behalf of such interested person.
- E. The Request for Modification should be submitted to the Statewide ADA Coordinator with as much advance notice as possible, but in any event should be made no less than five (5) business days prior to the date for which the modification is sought. If a Request for Modification is not received five (5) business days prior to the date for which the modification is sought, it will be deemed untimely and addressed as set forth in Section VII of this Policy.

VII. UNTIMELY REQUESTS FOR MODIFICATION

- A. If an untimely Request for Modification is made by a participant (party, witness, etc.), and a Reasonable Modification cannot be made without delay, the court shall postpone, reschedule, or otherwise delay the Court Proceeding, judicial program, service, or activity affected until a Reasonable Modification can be achieved. The court must ensure the delay will not infringe on other protected rights. Under such circumstances, the Applicant shall be required to immediately submit a written request. If appropriate

or upon request, court personnel will provide assistance with writing and submitting the Request for Modification.

- B.** If an untimely Request for Modification is made by a non-participant (public, media, family member, etc.), and a Reasonable Modification cannot be made without delay, the court shall not be required to postpone, reschedule, or otherwise delay the Court Proceeding, judicial program, service, or activity affected. Under such circumstances, the Applicant should immediately submit a written request. If appropriate or upon request, court personnel will provide assistance with writing and submitting the Request for Modification.
- C.** If an untimely Request for Modification is made, and a Reasonable Modification can be made without delay, the court shall immediately grant such modification without requiring an advance written request. In such a case, a *Request for Modification Form* shall be completed by either the person requesting the modification or court personnel. The *Request for Modification Form* and the action taken shall be provided to the Statewide ADA Coordinator to maintain in accordance with this Policy.

VIII. DECISIONS ON REQUESTS FOR MODIFICATION

- A.** Once a Request for Modification has been granted, the Statewide ADA Coordinator will, as soon as practicable, notify the Applicant of the modification to be provided. An alternate modification may be offered instead of the requested modification if the Statewide ADA Coordinator or the court determines another equally effective modification is available.
 - i.** If necessary, the Statewide ADA Coordinator may require the Applicant to provide additional information about the Disability to determine the appropriate modification to meet the Applicant's needs.
 - ii.** Under no circumstances will the Statewide ADA Coordinator be permitted to request information regarding the Applicant's Disability that is not necessary for the evaluation of the modification requested.
- B.** If the Statewide ADA Coordinator determines additional time may be necessary to make a modification, the Statewide ADA Coordinator shall notify the judge presiding over the matter, who will determine an appropriate course of action.
- C.** A Request for Modification may be denied only if the Statewide ADA Coordinator finds that:
 - i.** The person making the request is not a Qualified Individual with a Disability; or
 - ii.** The requested modification would create an undue financial or administrative burden; or
 - iii.** The requested modification would fundamentally alter the nature of the Court Proceeding, judicial program, service or activity; or

- iv. The Applicant has refused to comply with this Policy after being notified of its terms; or
 - v. The Applicant's failure to comply with this Policy makes it impossible or impracticable the ability to provide the requested modification.
- D. The Applicant shall be notified of the decision to grant, deny, or provide an alternative modification when a Request for Modification is received as soon as possible. Such notification shall be made in writing by the Statewide ADA Coordinator. The notice may also be provided orally, by the court, if necessary to avoid delay.
- E. No employee of the Judicial Branch shall retaliate against any person who exercises their rights under the ADA or who requests modification pursuant to this Policy.

IX. APPEAL PROCEDURE

- A. If a Request for Modification is denied or the offered alternate modification is unsatisfactory to the Applicant, the Applicant may appeal the decision of the Statewide ADA Coordinator to the Wyoming State Court Administrator within ten (10) days of receiving a written notification of the decision made.
- B. A written appeal on a modification decision is preferred. However, the appeal may be made orally to the State Court Administrator. In such instances the State Court Administrator shall commit the appeal to writing.
- i. An *Appeal from a Modification Decision Form*, which is attached hereto as Appendix B, and can be found on the Wyoming Judicial Branch website, may be obtained from the Statewide ADA Coordinator, the Supreme Court Clerk's office, the Chancery Court Clerk's office, any District Court judicial assistant, or any Circuit Court Clerk's office.
 - ii. If appropriate, or upon request, the State Court Administrator shall assist in writing and submitting the written appeal.
 - 1. Large print or other accessible formats of the *Appeal from a Modification Decision Form* are available upon request.
 - 2. If appropriate, other personnel associated with the judicial program, service, or activity may assist the Applicant in the submission of a completed *Appeal from a Modification Decision Form* to the State Court Administrator.
- C. A submitted *Appeal from a Modification Decision Form* shall include:
- i. The reason for disagreement with the previous determinations; and
 - ii. The remedy sought.
- D. The State Court Administrator shall provide a decision on the appeal in writing as expeditiously as possible, but in no event, no more than sixty (60) days from the date of appeal. In resolving appeals, the State Court Administrator is authorized to

independently investigate the facts surrounding the appeal and has the discretion to utilize appropriate dispute resolution processes or other methods, including but not limited to, designating an appropriate neutral to assist in resolving the issues in controversy.

- E. All appeals received by the State Court Administrator and the corresponding responses to the appeals shall be maintained by the Administrative Office of the Courts for three (3) years.

X. SERVICE ANIMALS

- A. Reasonable Modifications shall be made to the court's policies, practices, and procedures to permit the use of Service Animals by Individuals with Disabilities. Service Animals are permitted to accompany Individuals with Disabilities in all areas of the Facility where the public is normally permitted. Service Animals must be under the control of their handlers at all times. Service Animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the Service Animal's work or the handler's Disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the handler must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. Service Animals must be housebroken.
- B. Individuals with Service Animals may be asked if the animal is a Service Animal and inquire into the service the animal provides and into the training the animal has received. However, an individual shall not be required to show identification or certification of the Service Animal's status or of the individual's Disability.
- C. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as Service Animals. The use of an emotional support animal will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the presiding judge.

XI. PUBLIC NOTICE

- A. A public notice in the same form as Appendix C, which is attached to this Policy, shall be posted in visible places at each Facility where Court Proceedings, programs, services, or activities are held. The public notice shall be posted, at a minimum, in the following locations: the Supreme Court Clerk's office, the Chancery Court Clerk's office, each District Court, and each Circuit Court Clerk's office. The public notice shall identify the Statewide ADA Coordinator, the Chief Legal Officer, and the State Court Administrator. Such public notice shall also provide a website address where a copy of this Policy, implementation guidance, and forms may be obtained electronically.
- B. If the courthouse Facility within which Court Proceedings, programs, services, or activities are provided are inaccessible, a public notice shall be posted on the outside of the building or at another such location at or near the building that is readily accessible.

XII. RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

- A.** The Wyoming Judicial Branch reserves the right to interpret, change, or rescind this Policy in whole or in part, at any time without prior notice.
- B.** The Wyoming Judicial Branch expressly reserves sovereign immunity and specifically retains all immunities and defenses available to it as a sovereign.

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Appendix A

WYOMING JUDICIAL BRANCH

ADA Modification Request Form

Please fill out this form to request a modification under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Submit your completed form with as much advance notice as possible, but in any event the request should be made no less than five (5) business days before the date for which the modification is sought. You may submit a paper copy or email this form. All requests for modifications will be given due consideration and if necessary, may require an interactive process between the requester and the Statewide ADA Coordinator to determine the best course of action.

Enter the first Date the accommodation is needed: _____

Enter the final date the accommodation is needed: _____

Court location where the accommodation is needed (required): _____

Case name or court case number (if known): _____

All of the below information is required unless otherwise stated.

Name of person requesting accommodation, (first, middle and last names): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP code: _____

Phone number: _____ Cell number (if any): _____

Email address: _____

The person requesting accommodation(s) is a: ☐ Plaintiff ☐ Defendant ☐ Juror ☐ Witness

☐ Other: _____ in this case.

(Continued on Next Page)

What specific accommodation(s) are you requesting?

Please provide any additional information that might be useful in reviewing your accommodation request.

This form is being completed by: ☐ the person requesting the accommodation(s).
☐ someone other than the person requesting accommodation(s).

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Please provide your relationship to the person requesting the accommodation: _____

Note: If you DO NOT have an EMAIL ADDRESS you can print a copy of this ADA request form.
Please copy and send the completed request form to the Statewide ADA Coordinator.

Wyoming Judicial Branch Statewide ADA Coordinator

NAME:

Contact Info:

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Appendix B

WYOMING JUDICIAL BRANCH

ADA Appeal from a Request for Modification

State Court Administrator Review requested. (Specify reason and the remedy you want):

DATE: _____

(Signature of Person Requesting Review)

STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR REVIEW

I have reviewed the original request for modification, the offer of alternate modification OR the denial of modification and the reason for the denial, and the reason that this review has been requested and find as follows: _____

DATE: _____

STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR



PUBLIC NOTICE

The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against any qualified individual with a disability. The Wyoming Judicial Branch does not permit discrimination against any individual on the basis of physical or mental disability in accessing its judicial programs. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Wyoming Judicial Branch will provide reasonable accommodations to allow qualified individuals with disabilities to access all of its programs, services and activities.

If you need assistance, have questions or need additional information, please contact your Statewide ADA Coordinator:

Wyoming Judicial Branch Statewide ADA Coordinator

Name:

Contact Info:

If you need assistance, have questions or need additional information, you may also contact the Administrative Office of the Courts, Chief Legal Officer by mail, telephone, or email as follows:

Ben Burningham, Chief Legal Officer

2301 Capitol Ave

Cheyenne, WY 82001

(307) 777-6565

BBurningham@courts.state.wy.us

The Wyoming Judicial Branch Americans with Disabilities Act Policy Regarding Access to Judicial Programs, and relevant forms may be found online at www.courts.state.wy.us.

WYOMING JUDICIAL BRANCH

Spoken Language Interpreter Policy

This Policy governs spoken language ~~interpreters interpretation in by~~ the courts and offers guidelines for access to the courts by persons with Limited English Proficiency. For sign language interpretation please refer to the Sign Language Interpreter Policy.

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Court Proceeding** – Any hearing, trial, or other appearance before the circuit court, district court, chancery court, and the Wyoming Supreme Court in an action, appeal, or other proceeding conducted by a Judicial Officer.
- B. **Court Interpreter Program Manager** – An employee of the Wyoming Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) responsible for administering the Wyoming Interpreter Program.
- C. **Judicial Officer** – A justice, judge, commissioner, or magistrate authorized to preside over a Court Proceeding.
- D. **Language Interpreter** – ~~A Language Interpreter who is an independent contractor pursuant to contract or is an independent contractor as defined by IRS Revenue ruling 87-41 who is authorized to provide language interpreter services for the Wyoming Judicial Branch as set forth in this Policy.~~ A Language Interpreter may be Professionally Certified, Registered, or Qualified as defined belowherein.
- E. **Limited English Proficient (LEP) Person** – An individual who does not speak English as their primary language and who has limited ability to speak or understand the spoken English Language.
- F. **Professionally Certified Interpreter** – A Language Interpreter who has achieved the Professionally Certified designation on the Roster by completing the steps set forth in Section II(B).~~certification by a recognized interpreter certification program and who is on a roster of interpreters, if any, maintained by another jurisdiction. Professionally Certified Interpreters are listed on Wyoming's Interpreter Roster, maintained by the Wyoming Supreme Court and posted on the Wyoming Judicial Branch website. Professionally Certified Interpreters must attend Wyoming's interpreter orientation program.~~
- G. **Qualified Interpreter** – A Language Interpreter who is not Professionally Certified or Registered, as defined herein, but has been qualified by the local court. ~~Qualified Interpreters are not listed on the Interpreter Roster maintained by the Wyoming Supreme Court.~~
- H. **Registered Interpreter** – A Language Interpreter who has not achieved certification but has met minimum professional competency standards as outlined hereinin Section II(B).
- I. **Wyoming Interpreter Roster (Roster)** – A list of Language Interpreters as described in Section II of this Policy.

II. WYOMING INTERPRETER ROSTER

- A.** There shall be a Wyoming Interpreter Roster (Roster) maintained by the Wyoming Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and posted on the Wyoming Judicial Branch website. Professionally Certified Interpreters and Registered Interpreters shall be included on the Roster. Qualified Interpreters shall not be included on the Roster.
- B.** To receive the designation of a Professionally Certified Interpreter in the State of Wyoming, the Language Interpreter shall:
 - 1. Attend the two (2) day Wyoming interpreter orientation with a minimum of eighty percent (80%) attendance of the entire orientation, and one hundred percent (100%) attendance of the Wyoming specific component;
 - 2. Complete and return the *Wyoming Interpreter Service Provider Interest Form*, which is attached hereto as Appendix A, and can be found on the Wyoming Judicial Branch website;
 - 3. Pass the Wyoming interpreter written exam with a score of eighty percent (80%) or higher. A score lower than eighty percent (80%) requires the Language Interpreter to complete the two (2) day Wyoming interpreter orientation again;
 - 4. Provide evidence of certification in a recognized interpreter certification program, and provide evidence that the Language Interpreter is on a roster of interpreters maintained by another jurisdiction, or provide similar credentialing which the Court Interpreter Program Manager deems appropriate for interpreting in the Wyoming courts; and
 - 5. Take the *Wyoming Interpreter Oath*, which is attached to this Policy as Appendix B, and can be found on the Wyoming Judicial Branch website.
- C.** To receive the designation of a Registered Interpreter in the State of Wyoming, the Language Interpreter shall:
 - 1. Attend the two (2) day Wyoming interpreter orientation with a minimum of eighty percent (80%) attendance of the entire orientation, and one hundred percent (100%) attendance of the Wyoming specific component;
 - 2. Complete and return the *Wyoming Interpreter Service Provider Interest Form*, which is attached to this Policy as Appendix A;
 - 3. Pass the Wyoming interpreter written exam with a score of eighty percent (80%) or higher. A score lower than eighty percent (80%) requires the Language Interpreter to complete the two (2) day Wyoming interpreter orientation again;
 - 4. Pass the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) with a score of Advanced-Mid or better. If a score of Advanced-Mid or better is not attained, the Language Interpreter may retake the OPI after a ninety (90) day waiting period. A score of Advanced-Mid or higher must be attained within one (1) year of attending the Wyoming interpreter orientation; and
 - 5. Take the *Wyoming Interpreter Oath*, which is attached to this Policy as Appendix B.

III. APPOINTMENT OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

- A.** The court shall appoint and pay for language interpretation in Court Proceedings relating

to the following case types, subject to Section III(C):

1. Felony and Misdemeanor;
 2. Forcible Entry or Detainer;
 3. Juvenile Delinquency and CHINS;
 4. Protection Orders;
 5. Abuse and Neglect;
 6. Paternity and Support when covered under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act;
 7. Relinquishment and Termination of Parental Rights;
 8. Mental Health- Title 25.
- B.** The court may, in its discretion, appoint and pay for an interpreter for any LEP party to any Court Proceeding.
- C.** For those cases listed in Sections III(A) and III(B), the court may pay for language interpretation services in the following circumstances:
1. During Court Proceedings when an individual related to a case, a victim, witness, parent, legal guardian, or minor charged as a juvenile is an LEP Person, as determined by the court.
 2. To facilitate communication outside of the Judicial Officer's presence to allow a Court Proceeding to continue as scheduled, including pretrial conferences between defendants and prosecuting attorneys to relay a plea offer immediately prior to a court appearance.
 3. During contempt proceedings when loss of liberty is a possible consequence.
 4. During mental health evaluations performed for the purpose of aiding the court in determining competency.
- D.** The court shall not arrange, provide, or pay for language interpretation to facilitate communication with attorneys, prosecutors, or other parties related to a case involving LEP Persons for the purpose of gathering background information, investigation, trial preparation, client representation, or any other purpose that falls outside of the Court Proceedings, except as delineated in Section III(C). Prosecutors and attorneys are expected to provide and pay for language interpretation that they deem necessary for case preparation and general communication with parties outside of Court Proceedings.
- E.** For cases other than those listed in Sections III(A) through III(C) above, the parties may provide and arrange for their own interpretation services. Failure by the parties to provide and arrange for language interpretation services will not require a continuance of hearings.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

- A.** All Language Interpreters provided by the courts shall sign an oath to abide by the *Interpreter's Code of Ethics*, which is attached to this Policy as Appendix C, and can be found on the Wyoming Judicial Branch website.

- B. To ensure that Court Proceedings are interpreted as accurately as possible, courts are strongly encouraged to appoint a Language Interpreter according to the following preference list: (1) Professionally Certified Interpreters; (2) Registered Interpreters; and (3) Qualified Interpreters.
- C. When a Language Interpreter is not listed on the Roster, the court shall conduct a *voir dire* inquiry of the Language Interpreter to determine the Language Interpreter's credentials prior to utilizing the services of the Language Interpreter in a Court Proceeding. The *voir dire* inquiry applies to family members and friends of parties involved in the case used as Language Interpreters. The court shall make the following findings in open court on the record:
 - 1. A summary of the unsuccessful efforts made to obtain a Professionally Certified Interpreter or Registered Interpreter; and
 - 2. A finding that the proposed Language Interpreter appears to have adequate language skills, knowledge of interpreting techniques, and familiarity with interpreting in a court setting; and
 - 3. A finding that the proposed Language Interpreter has read, understands, and will abide by the *Interpreter's Code of Ethics*, attached as Appendix C to this Policy.

V. COURT RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN APPOINTING LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

- A. Absent exigent circumstances, the court should arrange, provide, and pay for two (2) or more Language Interpreters during the following proceedings to prevent interpreter fatigue and the concomitant loss of accuracy in interpretation:
 - 1. Court Proceedings scheduled to last three (3) hours or more; or
 - 2. Court Proceedings in which multiple languages other than English are involved.
- B. When two (2) Language Interpreters are used, one Language Interpreter will act as the proceedings interpreter and the other a support interpreter. The proceedings interpreter provides language interpretation services for all LEP Persons, while the support interpreter is available to assist with research, vocabulary, equipment, or other issues. The proceedings interpreter and the support interpreter should, when possible, alternate roles every thirty (30) minutes.
- C. If two (2) Language Interpreters are not reasonably available as set forth in Section V(A), the Language Interpreter should be given no less than a ten (10) minute break for every fifty (50) minutes of interpreting, when possible.

VI. UTILIZATION OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

- A. The following guidelines and limitations apply to the utilization of Language Interpreters:
 - 1. Language Interpreters are bound by an oath of confidentiality and impartiality, and serve as officers of the court; therefore, the use of one Language Interpreter by more than one individual in a case is permitted.
 - 2. The court is not obligated to appoint a different Language Interpreter when a Language

Interpreter has previously provided interpretation services during a Court Proceeding for another individual in the same case or in a different case.

3. Any individual may provide and arrange for interpretation services to facilitate attorney-client communication if interpretation services exceeding those provided by the court are desired.

VII. USE OF COURT PERSONNEL AS INTERPRETERS

- A. A court employee may not interpret Court Proceedings except as follows:
 1. Prior to using a court employee as a Language Interpreter, the court shall make findings in open court on the record summarizing the unsuccessful efforts made to obtain a Language Interpreter who is not a court employee; and
 2. The court employee will not be paid wages or benefits in addition to the employee's regular compensation as a court employee. The court employee will not receive any interpreter service fees established in this Policy.

VIII. INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS AND IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS

- A. An interpreter should be one whose record of conduct justifies the trust of the courts, witnesses, jurors, attorneys, parties, and the public.
- B. Language Interpreters are not entitled to interpret on behalf of the courts or in Court Proceedings. Instead, the provision of interpretation services by Language Interpreters rests within the discretion of each Judicial Officer.
- C. Professionally Certified Interpreters and Registered Interpreters are not entitled to have their names included on the Roster. The Roster is maintained at the discretion of the Wyoming AOC.
- D. The AOC shall investigate complaints and impose sanctions against Language Interpreters to protect the integrity of Court Proceedings and the safety of the public.
- E. Sanctions may be imposed upon a Language Interpreter when:
 1. The Language Interpreter is unable to adequately interpret the Court Proceedings;
 2. The Language Interpreter knowingly makes a false interpretation;
 3. The Language Interpreter knowingly discloses confidential or privileged information obtained while serving as a Language Interpreter;
 4. The Language Interpreter knowingly fails to disclose a conflict of interest;
 5. The Language Interpreter fails to appear as scheduled without good cause; or
 6. An alternate sanction is deemed appropriate in the interest of justice.
- F. Complaints.
 1. A complaint against a Language Interpreter must be in writing, signed by the complainant, and delivered via mail or email to the Court Interpreter Program Manager at:

Wyoming Supreme Court
c/o Court Interpreter Program Manager
2301 Capitol Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
interpreters@courts.state.wy.us

2. The complaint shall state the date, time, place, and nature of the alleged improper conduct. The complaint shall include the names, titles, and telephone numbers of possible witnesses. If the complainant is unable to communicate in written English, the complainant may submit the complaint in his/her primary language.
3. The Court Interpreter Program Manager may take immediate action, upon receipt and review of the complaint, if deemed necessary to protect the integrity of the courts, including immediately removing the Professionally Certified Interpreter or Registered Interpreter from the Roster for the pendency of the investigation. In any case where the Court Interpreter Program Manager deems it necessary to remove the Professionally Certified Interpreter or Registered Interpreter from the Roster, notice shall be sent by certified mail to the Language Interpreter.

G. Investigation and Report.

1. Upon receipt by the Court Interpreter Program Manager of a written complaint against a Language Interpreter or upon its own initiative based on suspicion of misconduct, the Court Interpreter Program Manager shall investigate the alleged improper conduct of the Language Interpreter.
2. The Court Interpreter Program Manager shall seek and receive such information and documentation as is necessary for the investigation.
3. The rules of evidence do not apply, and the Language Interpreter is not entitled to representation by counsel.
4. The Court Interpreter Program Manager shall provide a written report of the investigation results, along with a recommendation on any action to be taken, to the State Court Administrator within sixty (60) days of the complaint or start of the investigation.
5. The report and recommendation shall be provided to the Language Interpreter by certified mail at the same time it is provided to the State Court Administrator. The Language Interpreter shall have fifteen (15) days from receipt to respond to the report and recommendation of the Court Interpreter Program Manager.

H. Findings and Possible Sanctions.

1. Upon receipt of the report and recommendations of the Court Interpreter Program Manager and the Language Interpreter's response, if any, the State Court Administrator may take any of the following actions to protect the integrity of the courts and the safety of the public:
 - a) Dismiss the complaint;
 - b) Issue a written reprimand against the Language Interpreter;
 - c) Specify corrective action with which the Language Interpreter must fully comply in

order to remain on the Roster, including, but not limited to, the completion of educational courses and/or retaking one or more parts of the of the Wyoming interpreter orientation, written exam, or oral proficiency interview;

- d) Suspend the Language Interpreter from the Roster for a specified period of time, or until corrective action is completed; or
 - e) Remove the Language Interpreter from the Roster indefinitely.
2. Written notice of any action taken by the State Court Administrator will be sent via certified mail to the Language Interpreter and the complainant. Written notice will also be provided to Judicial Officers and court staff if sanctions are imposed against the Language Interpreter.

IX. REMOTE INTERPRETING

- A. Remote interpretation may be utilized to facilitate access to the courts by LEP ~~P~~persons as may be determined by the court.
- B. Courts, at their discretion, may utilize KUDO, a remote interpretation platform.
- C. The Roster will designate Language Interpreters who have obtained KUDO certification.
- D. To receive KUDO certified designation on the Roster, a ~~Language~~ Interpreter must:
 - 1. Set up a KUDO profile/account;
 - 2. Complete a self-guided course provided by KUDO, The Interpreter Journey;
 - 3. Attend a one (1) hour live KUDO webinar provided by KUDO and provide the ~~Wyoming Administrative Office of the Courts-Court Interpreter Program Manager, or designee,~~ with a certificate of completion; and
 - 4. Attend a thirty (30) minute webinar provided by the ~~Wyoming Administrative Office of the Courts~~AOC.

X. RECORDING OF PROCEEDING

The court may order that the testimony of the person for whom interpretation services are provided, and the interpretation, be recorded for use in verifying the official transcript of the Court Proceeding. If an interpretation error is believed to have occurred based on a review of the recording, a party may file a motion requesting that the court direct that the official transcript be amended and the court may grant further relief as it deems appropriate.

XI. ACCESS TO SERVICES

Based on current Policy, court interpreting services are only provided in the cases detailed under Sections III(A) through III(C). This Policy reflects a commitment to consistency and fairness in the provision of interpreting services for LEP Persons statewide, a recognition of the serious nature and possible consequences of Court Proceedings for individuals who come into contact with the courts, and the need to allocate limited financial resources most effectively.

XII. FACILITATING THE USE OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

To facilitate the use of the most qualified Language Interpreter available, the ~~Wyoming Supreme Court~~AOC or its designated agent(s) shall administer the training and testing of Language Interpreters and post the Roster on the Wyoming Judicial Branch.

XIII. PAYMENT

Guidance for payment of Language Interpreters is contained in Appendix D of this Policy. Appendix D may be amended from time to time as necessary. Amendments to Appendix D may be made without requiring the reissuance of this Policy.



**WYOMING JUDICIAL BRANCH
COURT INTERPRETER SERVICE PROVIDER
INTEREST FORM**

SECTION 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Last Name | First Name | M.I. | Date |
| Home Phone Number | Cell Phone Number | Other Phone Number | |
| Personal E-mail Address | | | |
| List locations you are available to provide interpreter services | | or | <input type="checkbox"/> Check for Statewide |

SECTION 2: INTERPRETING EXPERIENCE

| | |
|--|--|
| Native Language | Languages for which you interpret |
| List any courts where you are currently providing interpreting services | |

SECTION 3: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I hereby certify that the information in this document is accurate. I understand that any false statements, omissions, or misrepresentations that I indicate on this form may be grounds for immediate suspension of interpreting services within the Wyoming Court System as well as removal from the roster of registered court interpreters in Wyoming.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Signature of Interpreter Service Provider | Date |
| Printed Name | |

APPENDIX B

Wyoming Interpreter's Oath

STATE OF WYOMING) IN THE CIRCUIT/DISTRICT COURT
) ss
COUNTY OF _____) _____ JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Interpreter's Oath

I, _____, do solemnly swear or affirm under penalty of law that I will interpret accurately, completely and impartially, using my best skill and judgment from the English language into the _____ language, and from the _____ language into the English language, all statements made, oaths administered, and all questions and answers, in accordance with the standards prescribed by law, the Interpreter's Code of Ethics, and any guidelines for court interpreting set by this Court or the Wyoming Judicial Branch.

Printed Name

Signature

Subscribed and affirmed before me this

_____ day of _____, 20____.

Name and title of person
Administering oath

APPENDIX C

Interpreter's Code of Ethics

Canon 1: Accuracy and Completeness

Language Interpreters shall render a complete and accurate interpretation or sight translation, without altering, omitting, or adding anything to what is stated or written, and without explanation.

Canon 2: Representation of Qualifications

Language Interpreters shall accurately and completely represent their certifications, training, and pertinent experience.

Canon 3: Impartiality and Avoidance of Conflict of Interest

Language Interpreters shall be impartial, unbiased and shall refrain from conduct that may give an appearance of bias. Language Interpreters shall disclose any real or perceived conflict of interest.

Canon 4: Professional Demeanor

Language Interpreters shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the dignity of the court and shall be as unobtrusive as possible.

Canon 5: Confidentiality

Language Interpreters shall keep confidential all matters interpreted and all conversations overheard between counsel and client. Interpreters should not discuss a case pending before the court.

Canon 6: Restriction of Public Comment

Language Interpreters shall not publicly discuss, report, or offer an opinion concerning a matter in which they are or have been engaged, even when that information is not privileged or required by law to be confidential.

Canon 7: Scope of Practice

Language Interpreters shall limit themselves to interpreting and translating, and shall not give legal advice, express personal opinions to individuals for whom they are interpreting, or engage in any other activities which may be construed to constitute a service other than interpreting or translating while serving as an interpreter.

Canon 8: Assessing and Reporting Impediments to Performance

Language Interpreters shall assess their ability to deliver services for which they are contracted at all times.

When Language Interpreters have any reservation about their ability to satisfy an assignment competently, they shall immediately convey that reservation to the appropriate Judicial authority Officer.

Canon 9: Duty to Report Ethical Violations

Language Interpreters shall report to the proper authority any effort to impede their compliance with any law, any provision of this Code, or any other official policy governing court interpreting and legal translating.

Canon 10: Professional Development

Language Interpreters shall continually improve their skills and knowledge and advance the profession through activities such as professional training and education and interaction with colleagues and specialist in related fields.

APPENDIX D

I. PAYMENT OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS AND OTHER LEP-RELATED SERVICES

A. Compensation Rate for Language Interpreters. Language Interpreters should be compensated at the following rate, where possible:

1. Professionally Certified: \$55/hr.
2. Registered: \$40/hr.
3. Qualified: \$25/hr.

The Language Interpreter's certification status and the language availability in the judicial district and the state may require a higher compensation rate.

B. Minimum Time Compensation. Unless otherwise agreed to, Language Interpreters shall be paid a thirty (30) minute minimum. Language Interpreters shall be paid by the hour in thirty (30) minute increments. Time shall be determined by using the next highest thirty (30) minute increment (i.e., 2 hours 4 minutes equals 2 hours 30 minutes). This time shall include any pre-assignment prep time (i.e., remote interpretation) in which the court has requested of the Language Interpreter to attend.

C. Payment for Travel Time. At the discretion of the court, a Language Interpreter may be paid the State of Wyoming's allowable mileage reimbursement rates or half the hourly Language Interpreter rate for travel time. In extraordinary circumstances, the Language Interpreter may be paid the full hourly Language Interpreter rate for travel when round-trip travel exceeds one hundred fifty (150) miles.

D. Overnight Travel. In the case of trials or hearings exceeding one (1) day duration, Language Interpreters may be compensated for food and lodging at the state rate when round-trip travel of one hundred twenty (120) miles or greater is required to secure the best qualified Language Interpreter. To receive reimbursement for food or lodging expenses, the Language Interpreter must receive written authorization from the court for the expenses ~~in advance of the actual expenditure~~. Reimbursement of allowed food and lodging expenses will be made only if itemized receipts are provided and expenses are within the allowable ranges as defined by the State of Wyoming fiscal procedures.

E. Cancellation Policy. A Language Interpreter whose assignment is cancelled within seventy-two (72) hours of the assigned start time shall be paid for the scheduled time up to a maximum of sixteen (16) hours as determined by the presiding judge in the cancelled matter. If the assignment is cancelled with more than seventy-two (72) hours' notice, the scheduling court ~~is under no obligation to~~ shall not pay a cancellation fee.

WYOMING JUDICIAL BRANCH

~~Spoken-Sign~~ Language Interpreter Policy

This Policy governs ~~sign-spoken~~ language interpretation in the courts and offers guidelines for access to the courts by persons ~~with Limited English Proficiency who are Deaf, Mute, and Hard-of-Hearing~~. For ~~sign-spoken~~ language interpretation please refer to the ~~Sign-Spoken~~ Language Interpreter Policy.

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. Auditory Device** – Any device that can be used to create a sound that can be heard by Hard-of-Hearing Persons, such as a hearing aid or FM system.
- ~~A.B.~~ Court Proceeding** – Any hearing or trial or other appearance before the circuit court, district court, chancery court, and the Wyoming Supreme Court in an action, appeal, or other proceeding conducted by a Judicial Officer.
- C. Court Interpreter Program Manager** – An employee of the Wyoming Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) responsible for administering the Wyoming Interpreter Program.
- D. Deaf Person** – A person who has hearing loss so severe there is little or no functional hearing.
- ~~B.E.~~ Hard-of-Hearing Person** – A person who has hearing loss but has enough residual hearing that an Auditory Device enables the person to process speech.
- F. Judicial Officer** – A justice, judge, commissioner, or magistrate authorized to preside over a Court Proceeding.
- G. Mute Person** – A person who is unable to speak.
- ~~C.H.~~ Real Time Captioning** – A method in which captions are simultaneously prepared and transmitted at the time of origination by a software application or a court reporter using a software application.
- ~~D.I.~~ Sign Language Interpreter** – An independent contractor as defined by IRS Revenue ruling 87-41 who is authorized to provide sign language interpreter services for the Wyoming Judicial Branch as set forth in this Policy. A Sign Language Interpreter may be Professionally Certified, Registered, or Qualified as defined herein.
- ~~E. Limited English Proficient (LEP) Person~~** – ~~An individual who does not speak English as their primary language and who has limited ability to speak or understand the spoken English Language.~~
- ~~F.J.~~ Professionally Certified Sign Language Interpreter** – A Sign Language Interpreter who has achieved the Professionally Certified designation on the Roster by completing the steps set forth in Section II(B).
- ~~G.K.~~ Qualified Sign Language Interpreter** – A Sign Language Interpreter who is not Professionally Certified or Registered, as defined herein, but has been qualified by the local court.

H.L. Registered Sign Language Interpreter – A Language Interpreter who has not achieved certification but has met minimum professional competency standards as outlined in Section II(B).

I.M. Wyoming Interpreter Roster (Roster) – A list of Language Interpreters as described in Section II of this Policy.

II. WYOMING INTERPRETER ROSTER

- A.** There shall be a Wyoming Interpreter Roster (Roster) maintained by the Wyoming Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and posted on the Wyoming Judicial Branch website. Professionally Certified Sign Language Interpreters and Registered Sign Language Interpreters shall be included on the Roster. Qualified Sign Language Interpreters shall not be included on the Roster.
- B.** To receive the designation of a Professionally Certified Sign Language Interpreter in the State of Wyoming, the Sign Language Interpreter shall:
1. Attend the two (2) day Wyoming interpreter orientation with a minimum of eighty percent (80%) attendance of the entire orientation, and one hundred percent (100%) attendance of the Wyoming specific component;
 2. Complete and return the *Wyoming Interpreter Service Provider Interest Form*, which is attached hereto as Appendix A, and can be found on the Wyoming Judicial Branch website;
 3. Pass the Wyoming interpreter written exam with a score of eighty percent (80%) or higher. A score lower than eighty percent (80%) requires the Sign Language Interpreter to complete the two (2) day Wyoming interpreter orientation again;
 4. Provide evidence of holding at least one of the following sign language interpreter credentials from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID): SC:L, NIC, NIC-A, NIC-M, CI, CT, NAD V, and /or CDI or a similar credential deemed appropriate by the Court Interpreter Program Manager~~certification in a recognized interpreter certification program, and provide evidence that the Language Interpreter is on a roster of interpreters maintained by another jurisdiction, or provide similar credentialing which the Court Interpreter Program Manager deems appropriate for interpreting in the Wyoming courts;~~ and
 5. Take the *Wyoming Interpreter Oath*, which is attached to this Policy as Appendix B, and can be found on the Wyoming Judicial Branch website.
- C.** To receive the designation of a Registered Interpreter in the State of Wyoming, the Language Interpreter shall:
1. Attend the two (2) day Wyoming interpreter orientation with a minimum of eighty percent (80%) attendance of the entire orientation, and one hundred percent (100%) attendance of the Wyoming specific component;
 2. Complete and return the *Wyoming Interpreter Service Provider Interest Form*, which is attached hereto as Appendix A;
 3. Pass the Wyoming interpreter written exam with a score of eighty percent (80%) or higher. A score lower than eighty percent (80%) requires the Language Interpreter to

complete the two (2) day Wyoming interpreter orientation again;

4. ~~Pass the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) with a score of Advanced-Mid or better. If a score of Advanced-Mid or better is not attained, the Language Interpreter may retake the OPI after a ninety (90) day waiting period. A score of Advanced-Mid or higher must be attained within one (1) year of attending the Wyoming interpreter orientation.~~ Provide evidence of holding at least one of the following sign language interpreter credentials from RID: NAD III, NAD IV, or a similar credential deemed appropriate by the Court Interpreter Program Manager; and
5. Take the Wyoming interpreter oath, which is attached to this Policy as Appendix B.

III. APPOINTMENT OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

- A. The court shall appoint and pay for sign language interpretation in Court Proceedings relating to the following case types, subject to Sections III(C) and III(D):
 1. Felony and Misdemeanor;
 2. Forcible Entry or Detainer;
 3. Juvenile Delinquency and CHINS;
 4. Protection Orders;
 5. Abuse and Neglect;
 6. Paternity and Support when covered under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act;
 7. Relinquishment and Termination of Parental Rights;
 8. Mental Health- Title 25;
 - 8.9. In all civil or criminal cases in which a Deaf or Mute Person is a party or in a grand jury proceeding where the person is a witness when a petition requesting a Sign Language Interpreter is filed pursuant to W.S. 5-1-109.
- B. The court may, in its discretion, appoint and pay for ~~an~~ Sign Language Interpreter for any ~~LEP-Deaf, Mute, and Hard-of-Hearing~~ party to any Court Proceeding.
- C. For those cases listed in Sections III(A) and III(B), the court may pay for sign language interpretation services in the following circumstances:
 1. During Court Proceedings when an individual related to a case, a victim, witness, parent, legal guardian, or minor charged as a juvenile is a ~~LEP-Deaf, Mute, or Hard-of-Hearing~~ Person, as determined by the court.
 2. To facilitate communication outside of the Judicial Officer's presenceto allow a Court Proceeding to continue as scheduled, including pretrial conferences between defendants and prosecuting attorneys to relay a plea offer immediately prior to a court appearance.
 3. During contempt proceedings when loss of liberty is a possible consequence.
 4. During mental health evaluations performed for the purpose of aiding court in determining competency.

- D. If the court determines, in consultation with the Deaf, Mute, or Hard-of Hearing Person, that an alternate form of communication will effectively translate Court Proceedings, the court may utilize an Auditory Device or Real-Time Captioning to communicate the Court Proceedings to a Deaf, Mute, or Hard-of Hearing Person.
- E. The court shall not arrange, provide, or pay for sign language interpretation to facilitate communication with attorneys, prosecutors, or other parties related to a case involving ~~LEP~~ Deaf, Mute, or Hard-of-Hearing Persons for the purpose of gathering background information, investigation, trial preparation, client representation, or any other purpose that falls outside of the Court Proceedings, except as delineated in Section III(C). Prosecutors and attorneys are expected to provide and pay for language interpretation that they deem necessary for case preparation and general communication with parties outside of Court Proceedings.
- F. For cases other than those listed in Sections III(A) through III(C) above, the parties may provide and arrange for their own sign language interpretation services. Failure by the parties to provide and arrange for sign language interpretation services will not require a continuance of hearings.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

- A. All Sign Language Interpreters provided by the courts shall sign an oath to abide by the *Interpreter's Code of Ethics*, which is attached to this Policy as Appendix C, and can be found on the Wyoming Judicial Branch website.
- B. To ensure that Court Proceedings are interpreted as accurately as possible, courts are strongly encouraged to appoint a Sign Language Interpreter according to the following preference list: (1) Professionally Certified Sign Language Interpreters; (2) Registered Sign Language Interpreters; and (3) Qualified Sign Language Interpreters.
- C. When a Sign Language Interpreter is not listed on the Roster, the court shall conduct a *voir dire* inquiry of the Sign Language Interpreter to determine the Sign Language Interpreter's credentials prior to utilizing the services of the Sign Language Interpreter in a Court Proceeding. The *voir dire* inquiry applies to family members and friends of parties involved in the case used as Sign Language Interpreters. The court shall make the following findings in open court on the record:
 - 1. A summary of the unsuccessful efforts made to obtain a Professionally Certified Sign Language Interpreter or Registered Sign Language Interpreter; and
 - 2. A finding that the proposed Sign Language Interpreter appears to have adequate language skills, knowledge of interpreting techniques, and familiarity with interpreting in a court setting; and
 - 3. A finding that the proposed Sign Language Interpreter has read, understands, and will abide by the *Interpreter's Code of Ethics*, attached as Appendix C to this Policy.

V. COURT RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN APPOINTING SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

- A. Absent exigent circumstances, the court should arrange, provide, and pay for two (2) or

more Sign Language Interpreters during Court Proceedings scheduled to last more than one (1) hour the following proceedings to prevent interpreter fatigue and the concomitant loss of accuracy in interpretation.:

~~1. Court Proceedings scheduled to last three (3) hours or more; or~~

~~2. Court Proceedings in which multiple languages other than English are involved.~~

- B. When two (2) Sign Language Interpreters are used, one Sign Language Interpreter will act as the proceedings interpreter and the other a support interpreter. The proceedings interpreter provides language interpretation services for all ~~LEP~~ Deaf, Mute, or Hard-of-Hearing Persons, while the support interpreter is available to assist with research, vocabulary, equipment, or other issues. The proceedings interpreter and the support interpreter should, when possible, alternate roles every thirty (30) minutes.
- C. If two (2) Sign Language Interpreters are not reasonably available as set forth in Section V(A), the Sign Language Interpreter should be given no less than a ten (10) minute break for every fifty (50) minutes of interpreting, when possible.

VI. UTILIZATION OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

- A. The following guidelines and limitations apply to the utilization of Sign Language Interpreters:
 - 1. Sign Language Interpreters are bound by an oath of confidentiality and impartiality, and serve as officers of the court; therefore, the use of one Sign Language Interpreter by more than one individual in a case is permitted.
 - 2. The court is not obligated to appoint a different Sign Language Interpreter when a Sign Language Interpreter has previously provided interpretation services during a Court Proceeding for another individual in the same case or in a different case.
 - 3. Any individual may provide and arrange for interpretation services to facilitate attorney-client communication if interpretation services exceeding those provided by the court are desired.

VII. USE OF COURT PERSONNEL AS SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

- A. A court employee may not interpret Court Proceedings except as follows:
 - 1. Prior to using a court employee as a Sign Language Interpreter, the court shall make findings in open court on the record summarizing the unsuccessful efforts made to obtain a Sign Language Interpreter who is not a court employee; and
 - 2. The court employee will not be paid wages or benefits in addition to the employee's regular compensation as a court employee. The court employee will not receive any interpreter service fees established in this Policy.

VIII. INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS AND IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS

- A. An interpreter should be one whose record of conduct justifies the trust of the courts, witnesses, jurors, attorneys, parties, and the public.

- B. Sign Language Interpreters are not entitled to interpret on behalf of the courts or in Court Proceedings. Instead, the provision of interpretation services by Sign Language Interpreters rests within the discretion of each Judicial Officer.
- C. Professionally Certified Sign Language Interpreters and Registered Sign Language Interpreters are not entitled to have their names included on the Roster. The Roster is maintained at the discretion of the Wyoming AOC.
- D. The AOC shall investigate complaints and impose sanctions against Sign Language Interpreters to protect the integrity of Court Proceedings and the safety of the public.
- E. Sanctions may be imposed upon a Sign Language Interpreter when:
 - 1. The Sign Language Interpreter is unable to adequately interpret the Court Proceedings;
 - 2. The Sign Language Interpreter knowingly makes a false interpretation;
 - 3. The Sign Language Interpreter knowingly discloses confidential or privileged information obtained while serving as a Sign Language Interpreter;
 - 4. The Sign Language Interpreter knowingly fails to disclose a conflict of interest;
 - 5. The Sign Language Interpreter fails to appear as scheduled without good cause; or
 - 6. An alternate sanction is deemed appropriate in the interest of justice.
- F. Complaints.
 - 1. A complaint against a Sign Language Interpreter must be in writing, signed by the complainant, and delivered via mail or email to the Court Interpreter Program Manager at:

Wyoming Supreme Court
c/o Court Interpreter Program Manager
2301 Capitol Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
interpreters@courts.state.wy.us
 - 2. The complaint shall state the date, time, place, and nature of the alleged improper conduct. The complaint shall include the names, titles, and telephone numbers of possible witnesses. If the complainant is unable to communicate in written English, the complainant may submit the complaint in his/her primary language.
 - 3. The Court Interpreter Program Manager may take immediate action, upon receipt and review of the complaint, if deemed necessary to protect the integrity of the courts, including immediately removing the Professionally Certified Sign Language Interpreter or Registered Sign Language Interpreter from the Roster for the pendency of the investigation. In any case where the Court Interpreter Program Manager deems it necessary to remove the Professionally Certified Sign Language Interpreter or Registered Sign Language Interpreter from the Roster, notice shall be sent by certified mail to the Sign Language Interpreter.
- G. Investigation and Report.
 - 1. Upon receipt by the Court Interpreter Program Manager of a written complaint against

a Sign Language Interpreter or upon its own initiative based on suspicion of misconduct, the Court Interpreter Program Manager shall investigate the alleged improper conduct of the Sign Language Interpreter.

2. The Court Interpreter Program Manager shall seek and receive such information and documentation as is necessary for the investigation.
3. The rules of evidence do not apply, and the Sign Language Interpreter is not entitled to representation by counsel.
4. The Court Interpreter Program Manager shall provide a written report of the investigation results, along with a recommendation on any action to be taken, to the State Court Administrator within sixty (60) days of the complaint or start of the investigation.
5. The report and recommendation shall be provided to the Sign Language Interpreter by certified mail at the same time it is provided to the State Court Administrator. The Sign Language Interpreter shall have fifteen (15) days from receipt to respond to the report and recommendation of the Court Interpreter Program Manager.

H. Findings and Possible Sanctions.

1. Upon receipt of the report and recommendations of the Court Interpreter Program Manager and the Sign Language Interpreter's response, if any, the State Court Administrator may take any of the following actions to protect the integrity of the courts and the safety of the public:
 - a) Dismiss the complaint;
 - b) Issue a written reprimand against the Sign Language Interpreter;
 - c) Specify corrective action with which the Sign Language Interpreter must fully comply in order to remain on the Roster, including, but not limited to, the completion of educational courses and/or retaking one or more parts of the of the Wyoming interpreter orientation or; written exam, ~~or oral proficiency interview~~;
 - d) Suspend the Sign Language Interpreter from the Roster for a specified period of time, or until corrective action is completed; or
 - e) Remove the Sign Language Interpreter from the Roster indefinitely.
2. Written notice of any action taken by the State Court Administrator will be sent via certified mail to the Sign Language Interpreter and the complainant. Written notice will also be provided to Judicial Officers and court staff if sanctions are imposed against the Sign Language Interpreter.

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- A. Remote interpretation may be utilized to facilitate access to the courts by ~~LEP-Deaf, Mute, and Hard-of-Hearing P~~ersons as may be determined by the court.
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1. Set up a KUDO profile/account;
 2. Complete a self-guided course provided by KUDO, The Interpreter Journey;
 3. Attend a one (1) hour live KUDO webinar provided by KUDO and provide the Court Interpreter Program Manager, or designee, with a certificate of completion; and
 4. Attend a thirty (30) minute webinar provided by the AOC.

~~X. RECORDING OF PROCEEDING~~

~~The court may order that the testimony of the person for whom interpretation services are provided, and the interpretation, be recorded for use in verifying the official transcript of the Court Proceeding. If an interpretation error is believed to have occurred based on a review of the recording, a party may file a motion requesting that the court direct that the official transcript be amended and the court may grant further relief as it deems appropriate.~~

XI.X. ACCESS TO SERVICES

Based on current Policy, court interpreting services are only provided in the cases detailed under Sections III(A) through III(C). This Policy reflects a commitment to consistency and fairness in the provision of interpreting services for LEP-Deaf, Mute, and Hard-of-Hearing Persons statewide, a recognition of the serious nature and possible consequences of Court Proceedings for individuals who come into contact with the courts, and the need to allocate limited financial resources most effectively.

XII.XI. FACILITATING THE USE OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

To facilitate the use of the most qualified Sign Language Interpreter available, the AOC or its designated agent(s) shall administer the training and testing of Sign Language Interpreters and post the Roster on the Wyoming Judicial Branch.

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Guidance for payment of Sign Language Interpreters is contained in Appendix D of this Policy. Appendix D may be amended from time to time as necessary. Amendments to Appendix D may be made without requiring the reissuance of this Policy.



**WYOMING JUDICIAL BRANCH
COURT INTERPRETER SERVICE PROVIDER
INTEREST FORM**

SECTION 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Last Name | First Name | M.I. | Date |
| Home Phone Number | Cell Phone Number | Other Phone Number | |
| Personal E-mail Address | | | |
| List locations you are available to provide interpreter services | | or <input type="checkbox"/> | Check for Statewide |

SECTION 2: INTERPRETING EXPERIENCE

| | |
|--|--|
| Native Language | Languages for which you interpret |
| List any courts where you are currently providing interpreting services | |

SECTION 3: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I hereby certify that the information in this document is accurate. I understand that any false statements, omissions, or misrepresentations that I indicate on this form may be grounds for immediate suspension of interpreting services within the Wyoming Court System as well as removal from the roster of registered court interpreters in Wyoming.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Signature of Interpreter Service Provider | Date |
| Printed Name | |

APPENDIX B

Wyoming Interpreter's Oath

STATE OF WYOMING) IN THE CIRCUIT/DISTRICT COURT
) ss
COUNTY OF _____) _____ JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Interpreter's Oath

I, _____, do solemnly swear or affirm under penalty of law that I will interpret accurately, completely and impartially, using my best skill and judgment from the English language into the _____ language, and from the _____ language into the English language, all statements made, oaths administered, and all questions and answers, in accordance with the standards prescribed by law, the Interpreter's Code of Ethics, and any guidelines for court interpreting set by this Court or the Wyoming Judicial Branch.

Printed Name

Signature

Subscribed and affirmed before me this

_____ day of _____, 20____.

Name and title of person
Administering oath

APPENDIX C

Interpreter's Code of Ethics

Canon 1: Accuracy and Completeness

Sign Language Interpreters shall render a complete and accurate interpretation or sight translation, without altering, omitting, or adding anything to what is stated or written, and without explanation.

Canon 2: Representation of Qualifications

Sign Language Interpreters shall accurately and completely represent their certifications, training, and pertinent experience.

Canon 3: Impartiality and Avoidance of Conflict of Interest

Sign Language Interpreters shall be impartial, unbiased and shall refrain from conduct that may give an appearance of bias. Sign Language Interpreters shall disclose any real or perceived conflict of interest.

Canon 4: Professional Demeanor

Sign Language Interpreters shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the dignity of the court and shall be as unobtrusive as possible.

Canon 5: Confidentiality

Sign Language Interpreters shall keep confidential all matters interpreted and all conversations overheard between counsel and client. Interpreters should not discuss a case pending before the court.

Canon 6: Restriction of Public Comment

Sign Language Interpreters shall not publicly discuss, report, or offer an opinion concerning a matter in which they are or have been engaged, even when that information is not privileged or required by law to be confidential.

Canon 7: Scope of Practice

Sign Language Interpreters shall limit themselves to interpreting and translating, and shall not give legal advice, express personal opinions to individuals for whom they are interpreting, or engage in any other activities which may be construed to constitute a service other than interpreting or translating while serving as an interpreter.

Canon 8: Assessing and Reporting Impediments to Performance

Sign Language Interpreters shall assess their ability to deliver services for which they are contracted at all

times. When Sign Language Interpreters have any reservation about their ability to satisfy an assignment competently, they shall immediately convey that reservation to the appropriate Judicial authority Officer.

Canon 9: Duty to Report Ethical Violations

Sign Language Interpreters shall report to the proper authority any effort to impede their compliance with any law, any provision of this Code, or any other official policy governing court interpreting and legal translating.

Canon 10: Professional Development

Sign Language Interpreters shall continually improve their skills and knowledge and advance the profession through activities such as professional training and education and interaction with colleagues and specialist in related fields.

APPENDIX D

I. PAYMENT OF **SIGN** LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS AND OTHER **LEP**-RELATED SERVICES

A. **Compensation Rate for Sign Language Interpreters.** Sign Language Interpreters should be compensated at the following rate, where possible:

1. Professionally Certified: \$55/hr.
2. Registered: \$40/hr.
3. Qualified: \$25/hr.

The Sign Language Interpreter's certification status and ~~the language~~ availability in the judicial district and the state may require a higher compensation rate.

B. **Minimum Time Compensation.** Unless otherwise agreed to, Sign Language Interpreters shall be paid a thirty (30) minute minimum. Sign Language Interpreters shall be paid by the hour in thirty (30) minute increments. Time shall be determined by using the next highest thirty (30) minute increment (i.e., 2 hours 4 minutes equals 2 hours 30 minutes). This time shall include any pre-assignment prep time (i.e., remote interpretation) in which the court has requested of the Sign Language Interpreter.

C. **Payment for Travel Time.** At the discretion of the court, a Sign Language Interpreter may be paid the State of Wyoming's allowable mileage reimbursement rates or half the hourly Sign Language Interpreter rate for travel time. In extraordinary circumstances, the Sign Language Interpreter may be paid the full hourly Sign Language Interpreter rate for travel when round-trip travel exceeds one hundred fifty (150) miles.

D. **Overnight Travel.** In the case of trials or hearings exceeding one (1) day duration, Sign Language Interpreters may be compensated for food and lodging at the state rate when round-trip travel of one hundred twenty (120) miles or greater is required to secure the best qualified Sign Language Interpreter. To receive reimbursement for food or lodging expenses, the Sign Language Interpreter must receive written authorization from the court for the expenses. Reimbursement of allowed food and lodging expenses will be made only if itemized receipts are provided and expenses are within the allowable ranges as defined by the State of Wyoming fiscal procedures.

E. **Cancellation Policy.** A Sign Language Interpreter whose assignment is cancelled within seventy-two (72) hours of the assigned start time shall be paid for the scheduled time up to a maximum of sixteen (16) hours as determined by the presiding judge in the cancelled matter. If the assignment is cancelled with more than seventy-two (72) hours' notice, the scheduling court shall not pay a cancellation fee.

Judicial Council

December 12, 2022

NEWSLETTER

Judicial Council Members: Chief Justice Kate Fox (Chair), Justice Lynne Boomgaarden, Justice Kari Gray, Judge Catherine Wilking, Judge Catherine Rogers, Judge Joseph Bluemel, Judge Nathaniel Hibben, Judge John Prokos, Judge Wendy Bartlett

Newsletter Items

Chancery Court

The Chancery Court celebrates its first year of operation on December 1, 2022. Litigants filed 15 cases during the Chancery Court's first year. These 15 cases involved 36 different parties, 29 unique attorneys, and 6 primary case types—breach of contract (5), internal business affairs (3), Uniform Trust Code (4), business agreement (1), breach of fiduciary duty (1), and business transactions involving financial institution (1). These first-year numbers track those of similar jurisdictions. For instance, West Virginia's business court received 14 cases during its first year. Iowa's received 10 cases. Notably, most business courts that started as pilot projects have become full-time fixtures in state judicial systems. The successful trajectory of business courts nationwide suggests Wyoming's Chancery Court will experience a steady increase in new case filings.

Budget

The BFY23 Supplemental Budget has been submitted to LSO. This year's exception requests include:

Administration: Three positions in AOC. Total request is \$356,629. The positions include:

- Data trainer
- Staff attorney – federal compliance
- Audio and visual support

Judicial Nominating Commission: An increase of \$30,000 to allow

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| | <p>commission members to use alternative methods of travel, reducing time spent traveling for meetings.</p> <p><u>Branchwide Resources:</u> An increase of \$50,000 for hiring commissioners and magistrates who can handle limited judicial processes for judges, allowing them to take leave as needed.</p> <p><u>Circuit Court and District Court in Teton County:</u> An increase of \$30,240 in circuit court and \$25,920 in district court to cover the increase in the housing allowance that went into effect July 1, 2022.</p> <p>In addition to the requests above, the Judicial Branch is asking for ARPA funds to pay for a consultant to assist with preparations for the possible transition of treatment courts to the Branch.</p> <p>The governor’s fiscal profile includes requests for increased employee compensation. This will be a discussion item at the December meeting.</p> |
| <p>Judicial Branch Applications</p> | <p>District Court FullCourt Enterprise</p> <p>Circuit Court – Digital Records are underway with a tentative Pilot date in Campbell County Circuit Court in January of 2023. This is an exciting project where trial courts will begin to look at how a court can function without paper. The Applications team continues to work with the Circuit Court Subject Matter Expert Committee to look for improvements to the use of FCE in the courts. Earlier this year, the Applications team worked on improving the License Compliance process and it is in the final stages of working on a Bankruptcy process and corresponding guide for the Circuit Court Clerks to follow.</p> <p>District Court – The Judiciary is halfway through the FullCourt Enterprise rollout in the District Courts. Throughout 2023 FCE will be implemented in the remaining 11 courts. The first courts to go to FCE in 2023 will be Sheridan and Johnson County District Courts. The Applications team has begun working with those courts to get them prepared for the migration and they will be training in January. The permissions for chambers have recently been expanded in their home courts allowing more flexibility with reminders and providing the ability to create and maintain Document Templates. Using these templates, Chambers can generate documents directly from FCE and have certain case information populate into those documents</p> |

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| | <p>automatically.</p> <p>Clearview Jury – The final merge process for 2022 is underway. The Applications team is working closely with the IT Team and the vendor to have potential Juror pools updated with the latest information from the Secretary of State’s Office Voter’s Registration List and the Department of Transportation Driver’s License List. This full merge process happens twice a year, and the updated lists are then compared to the USPS National Change of Address four times a year.</p> <p>EFiling – Albany, Fremont, and Laramie County District Courts are now eFiling in all case types. It has been a bit of a bumpy start into eFiling, but the Applications team is working very closely with both vendors (File and Serve Express and Justice Systems Inc.) to resolve issues as quickly as possible. Natrona County will be ready to take eFilings before the end of this year. With every new court added to eFiling, more is learned about the unique challenges our state faces due to its rural nature, and the administrative office will continue to work with the vendors to improve the systems to meet the state’s needs. In the new year, eFiling will be implemented in additional courts beginning in the spring with a targeted completion of eFiling to all District Courts by the end of the Summer of 2024.</p> |
| Judicial Branch Technology | <p>Information Technology</p> <p>The IT Division continues to work in several different areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Security Cameras have been installed in the Chancery Court. • Work has begun installing all the new Security Cameras in the Wyoming Supreme Court Building. • The new helpdesk configuration is underway with a new system - ConnectWise. • New remote site servers have been provisioned, and the team is working on a rollout schedule. • The entire SQL Environment has been updated to the 2019 version. • Fingerprint scanners have been deployed in a few courts to test Windows Hello. |

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| | <p>Courtroom Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Douglas – tentative install of March/April 2023 due to new courthouse. • Wheatland – tentative install of January/February 2023 due to courthouse remodel. • Rawlins install due to courthouse remodel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CC Courtroom A/V move – week of Feb 13th ○ DC Courtroom A/V move – week of Mar 20th |
| New Judges | <p>Kate McKay has been selected to fill the District Court Judge position that will be left vacant by Judge Tyler in the 9th Judicial District, Sublette County.</p> <p>The selection process is underway for the selection of Circuit Court Judges in the Ninth Judicial District, Sublette County, and the Ninth Judicial District, Fremont County (Riverton).</p> |
| Children’s Justice Project | <p>At the September 2022 Council meeting representatives from the Health and Human Services Children’s’ Bureau attended and presented on the upcoming Child and Family Services Review that will be taking place over the next year. The CFSR is a periodic review of state child welfare systems conducted by the Children’s Bureau to evaluate conformity with federal child welfare requirements, determine what is happening to children and families as they engage in child welfare services, and assist states in helping children and families achieve positive outcomes. At the end of the review, the Department of Family Services will develop a Program Improvement Plan to address areas identified as in need of improvement.</p> |