

2011

# PPCD Research Report

## Judicial Workload in Washington State



Permanency Planning for  
Children Department

National Council of Juvenile and  
Family Court Judges

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## Executive Summary

The *Judicial Workload in Washington State* assessment examines juvenile dependency workload and judicial resources across Washington State. By determining current judicial resources and estimated workloads, researchers calculated the judicial resources needed on county and statewide levels in order to conduct “sufficient” and “thorough” hearings in accordance with the practices outlined in the *RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges’ seminal work on juvenile dependency court best practices. Sufficient hearings are characterized by brief discussion of key topics, low stakeholder engagement and inconsistent judicial inquiry. Conversely, thorough hearings include substantive discussion of key dependency topics, high levels of stakeholder engagement and consistent judicial inquiry. Conducting thorough hearings based on the practices in the *RESOURCE GUIDELINES* has been proven to result in children spending less time in foster care, thereby saving significant resources in the long run and resulting in better outcomes for children and families.<sup>1</sup> NCJFCJ, in partnership with the Washington Administrative Office of the Courts, conducted an assessment of judicial workload and resources in relation to hearing quality in Washington State in order to enhance juvenile dependency best practice implementation and, ultimately, improve outcomes for children and families.

Analysis from the statewide judicial workload assessment revealed that 25 of the 39 jurisdictions (64%) in Washington State have adequate judicial resources to conduct **sufficient** hearings. However, the remaining 14 (26%) jurisdictions require substantial additional resources in order to conduct sufficient hearings. Overall, in order to meet juvenile dependency workload demands for sufficient practice, Washington’s courts could benefit from 9 to 10 additional judicial officers devoted solely to juvenile dependency cases.

In order to consistently conduct **thorough** juvenile dependency hearings, 20 of the 39 jurisdictions (51%) in Washington State do not have adequate judicial resources. The 19 jurisdictions that do have adequate judicial resources tend to be more rural jurisdictions. Overall, Washington’s courts could benefit from 18 additional judicial officers overseeing juvenile dependency hearings to conduct thorough hearings in all jurisdictions.

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<sup>1</sup> National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (1995). *RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving court practice in child abuse and neglect cases*. Reno, NV: Author.

### Judicial Workload and Hearing Quality

Judges and commissioners (herein judicial officers) address many complex issues in dependency cases. Federal legislation, such as the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 and the Fostering Connections Act of 2008, has increased judicial responsibilities and expanded the court's role in protecting abused and neglected children. Given the complex demands of dependency cases, high volumes of caseloads and state and federal mandates, courts need adequate judicial resources to ensure safe and timely permanency for children and families.

Adequate judicial resources allow judicial officers to conduct thorough hearings and are critical to a court's ability to safely implement the law and protect children. Thorough practice hearings are considered a "best practice" within the framework of the *RESOURCE GUIDELINES*, the nationally recognized standards for judicial practice in dependency cases, and are distinguished by substantive discussions of key dependency topics, high levels of stakeholder engagement, and consistent judicial inquiry.<sup>2</sup> Key dependency hearing topics include reasons for removal, reasonable efforts to prevent removal, the applicability of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), parties who should be present, services offered and their appropriateness, placement of the child, visitation, cultural needs, and reasonable efforts to return the child home, if removed. In this assessment, hearings that include substantial discussion and engagement on these issues are considered *thorough hearings*.

**Thorough** hearings include substantive discussion of key dependency topics, high levels of stakeholder engagement and parent presence, and consistent judicial inquiry.

Research from the Courts Catalyzing Change<sup>3</sup> initiative found that thorough hearings lead to better placement outcomes for children and youth involved in the dependency court system.<sup>4</sup> Specifically, non-relative foster care placements decreased while family placements increased. The likelihood of family reunification was also significantly higher when judicial officers engaged parties in the dependency process through inquiry and clear communication. In addition to thoroughness of discussion, engagement of parties is considered a key factor related to timely reunification.<sup>5</sup> While thorough and

<sup>2</sup> NCJFCJ (1995). *RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving court practice in child abuse and neglect cases*. Reno, NV: Author.

<sup>3</sup> The Courts Catalyzing Change: Achieving Equity and Fairness in Foster Care Initiative (CCC), led by the NCJFCJ, funded by Casey Family Programs and supported by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), brings together judicial officers and other systems' experts to set a national agenda for court-based training, research, and reform initiatives to reduce the disproportionate representation of children of color in dependency court systems. For more information see [www.ncjfcj.org](http://www.ncjfcj.org).

<sup>4</sup> National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (2011). *Right from the start: The CCC preliminary protective hearing benchmark study report—testing a tool for judicial decision-making*. Reno, NV: Author.

<sup>5</sup> Wood, S.M., & Russell, J.R. (2011). Effects of parental and attorney involvement on reunification in juvenile dependency cases. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33, 1730-1741.

engaging hearings have important consequences for children and families, they tend to last longer (see Table 1), and many jurisdictions may not have adequate judicial resources to conduct thorough hearings. In these instances, jurisdictions commonly conduct sufficient hearings.

In contrast to thorough hearings, *sufficient hearings* cover many important dependency topics, but are characterized by brief discussions of key topics, low levels of parent engagement, and inconsistent judicial inquiry into several topics, such as the applicability of ICWA and the cultural needs of families. As a result, children may remain in care longer than necessary and experience poorer placement outcomes, and families may not receive appropriate services or fully understand the dependency process. Furthermore, failure to fully explore ICWA applicability is a significant issue in many states, particularly in the state of Washington. Native American children are currently over-represented in the foster care system and failure to inquire about ICWA applicability may result in even more Native American children in care without application of the higher standard for removal for Native American children.

Judicial workload relates directly to the ability of courts to implement best practices, conduct thorough hearings, and achieve preferred outcomes. Overburdened judicial officers do not have adequate time to conduct thorough hearings and fully engage all parties through meaningful discussion. For some jurisdictions more judicial officers may be needed, while for others, practice changes or program improvements may achieve desired differences without additional resources.

**Sufficient** hearings consist of brief discussions of key dependency topics, low levels of stakeholder engagement, and inconsistent judicial inquiry.

### **Measuring Judicial Workload**

In the fall of 2007, the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), partnered with the Permanency Planning for Children Department (PPCD) of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) to conduct a multi-year assessment of juvenile dependency practice and workload (Washington Workload Study). Building on established strategies to determine judicial workload,<sup>6</sup> the PPCD worked with judicial officers who regularly oversaw dependency cases in Spokane, King, and Mason Counties to measure judicial workload in a way that reflected the complexity of dependency cases, assessed the quality of hearing practice, and objectively determined judicial resource needs.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>See Hardin, H., Yuan, Y., Larsen, J., Gatowski, S., & Rubio, D. (2008). *Court performance measures in child abuse and neglect cases: Guide to judicial workload assessment*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau: Washington, D.C.: Retrieved from: <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/publications/courttoolkit.html>.

<sup>7</sup>Dobbin, S., Gatowski, S., Russell, J., Summers, A. (2010). *Judicial workload in Washington state dependency cases*. National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, Reno, NV.

Judicial officers completed time logs that documented the start and end time of dependency hearings, the level of discussion of key items, the level of discussion of court reports, and noted when there was not sufficient time to discuss any given issue. Judicial officers coded the level of discussion in hearings on a scale from one to four. A score of one indicated no discussion, a two was minimal discussion (i.e., statement only), a three indicated sufficient discussion (i.e., more than a statement about the topic, but not thorough discussion), and a score of four indicated substantive discussion (i.e., fully discussing all aspects of a topic/follow-up questions on a topic). Judicial officers also completed off the bench time logs documenting their daily activities to determine the amount of time spent preparing for and following up on dependency hearings. Involvement by judicial officers was critical to the success of the overall design of the baseline workload assessment.<sup>8</sup>

Judicial resources were measured as the number of full time equivalent (FTE) judicial officers that heard dependency cases. In Spokane, King and Mason Counties, several judicial officers heard dependency cases. The amount of time each judicial officer spent on dependency cases contributed to the total FTE judicial resources in their jurisdiction. For example, if a jurisdiction employed five full-time judicial officers, each of whom spent 20% of their time on dependency cases (one full day in a five day work week), that jurisdiction had a total of 1.00 FTE judicial officers overseeing dependency cases.

PPCD researchers estimated judicial resource needs in each jurisdiction based on an equation that incorporated the current level of judicial resources, the number of hearings in one year, the number of judicial work days in one year, average hearing time estimates, and estimates of hearing preparation and follow up time.<sup>9</sup> The estimated judicial resource needs were then compared to current judicial resources in order to generate judicial resource recommendations, in terms of additional FTE allocations of judicial officers, for each jurisdiction.

### **Findings: Juvenile Dependency Workload**

Spokane, King, and Mason Counties were included in the initial assessment because of their demographic, population, and workload differences. King County is an urban jurisdiction with a large caseload; Mason County is rural and suburban with relatively few dependency cases; and Spokane County is a mix of both urban and suburban demographics. Despite these differences, findings were similar across the three jurisdictions.

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<sup>8</sup> For more on the initial Workload Study, see Dobbin, S., Gatowski, S., & Summers, A. (2010). *Measuring judicial work in dependency cases: Lessons learned from Washington State*. National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, Reno, NV.

<sup>9</sup> A more detailed explanation of the judicial workload and resource needs calculation can be found in Appendix A.

In order to calculate judicial workload and resources, researchers first generated estimates of the time required for sufficient and thorough hearings (Table 1). Analysis of the judicial time logs revealed that, across all hearing types, hearings with sufficient discussion (scores ranging from 2.8 to 3.2) typically lasted an average of 20 minutes, although there was substantial variation across hearings. Hearing times ranged from one minute to two hours and discussion varied from little to no discussion to substantive discussion of all issues. Hearings with thorough discussion (scores ranging from 3.5 to 4.0) lasted an average of 28 minutes, with the exception of emergency shelter hearings, which lasted an average of 60 minutes.

<b>Table 1. Average Hearing Times (in minutes)</b>		
<b>Hearing Type</b>	<b>Sufficient Practice</b>	<b>Thorough Practice</b>
Emergency Shelter	33	63
Disposition	16	30
Review	18	24
Permanency*	16	32

The amount of time judges devote to dependency cases off the bench is critical to understanding judicial workload and resource needs. Further analysis of the judicial time logs revealed that, although judicial officers spent the majority of their dependency-related time on the bench, they also spent a large portion of their time (43% of their total dependency hours) preparing for and following up on dependency hearings. On average, in a given week, judicial officers worked 41 hours, and spent 16 of those hours overseeing juvenile dependency cases (Figure 1). Judicial officers therefore spent 39% of their time each week preparing for, hearing, and following up on juvenile dependency cases for a FTE of 0.39.

After estimating average hearing lengths (Table 1) and the average amount of time spent overseeing dependency hearings (Figure 1), researchers calculated the level of judicial resources—in terms of FTE allocations of personnel—needed in each jurisdiction in order to conduct sufficient and thorough practice hearings. Mason County, with the lightest workload of the three sites and an allocation of 0.09 FTE judicial officers, had adequate judicial resources to conduct sufficient and thorough hearings. Spokane County, with a heavier workload and 2.00 FTE judicial officers, also had adequate judicial resources to meet sufficient practice needs, but needed an additional 0.45 FTE judicial officers in order to conduct thorough hearings. King County, with the heaviest workload of the study sites and 2.30 FTE judicial officers, needed an additional 1.4 FTE judicial officers in order to conduct sufficient hearings. In

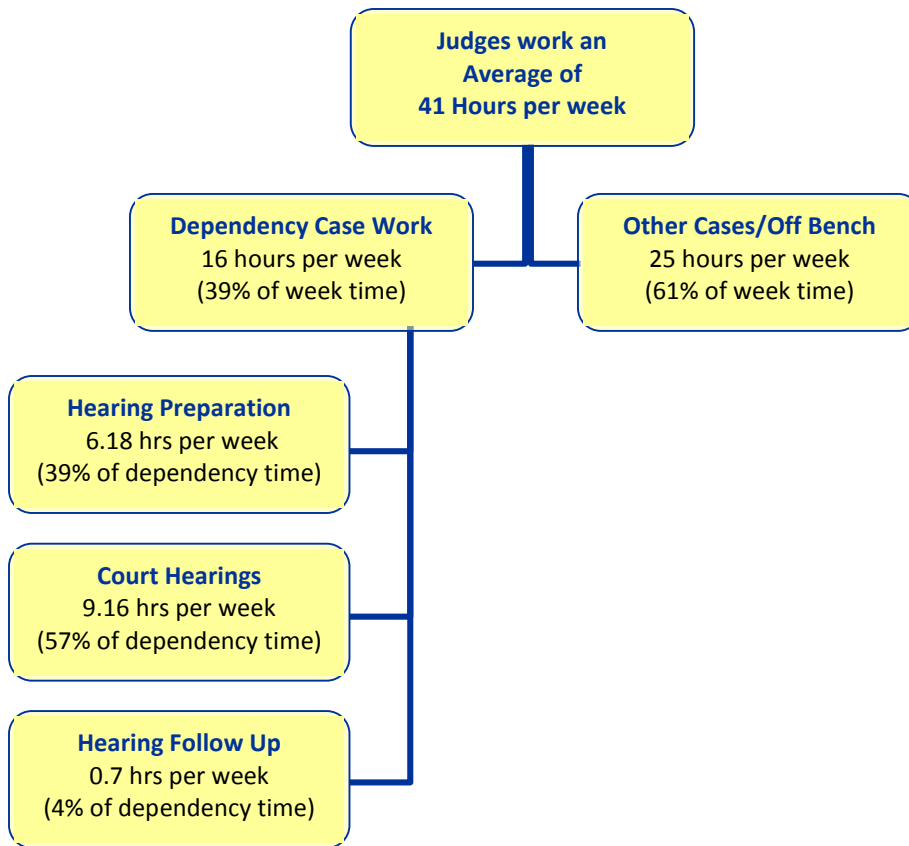
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\*The *RESOURCE GUIDELINES* recommend that permanency hearings last 60 minutes to accommodate thorough discussion. Judicial time logs from the baseline assessment indicated that, on average, thorough permanency hearings would last 32 minutes.



addition to the resources needed for sufficient hearings, King County required an additional 3.5 FTE judicial officers in order to conduct thorough hearings.

**Figure 1. Juvenile Dependency Practice Averages**



Following the release of the initial workload assessment, juvenile dependency stakeholders in Spokane, King, and Mason Counties continued to focus on practice improvements. King County added one part-time judge to juvenile dependency cases, changed their dependency calendaring system, implemented a mediation program, and piloted a parent mentoring program that seeks to engage parents in the dependency process. Mason County also improved the dependency calendaring system, and judicial officers increased their focus on improving hearing quality. Spokane County implemented several best practices that boost stakeholder engagement and allow for more consistent judicial inquiry. Overall, each jurisdiction identified and implemented best practices to more consistently conduct thorough hearings, alleviate judicial workload, and improve outcomes for children and families.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Summers, A., Wood, S. M., & Russell, J. (2011). Assessing efficiency and workload implications of the King County mediation pilot. *Journal of Juvenile Justice*, 1, 48-59. NCJFCJ (2011). *Evaluation of the Parent to Parent Program in King County, Washington*. Reno, NV: Author. NCJFCJ (2011). *Washington workload site assessment: Spokane*. Reno, NV: Author.

## Statewide Assessment

In 2011, the Washington Workload Study expanded statewide to assess judicial workload and resource needs across the state. Along the lines of the initial assessment, the statewide assessment accounts for the judicial time necessary to process dependency cases (both on and off the bench), as well as the thoroughness of hearings. The statewide assessment addresses the following questions:

- What are the **current** judicial resources in each jurisdiction in the state of Washington?
- What are the **estimated** judicial resources needs in each jurisdiction in the State of Washington in order to conduct sufficient and thorough practice hearings?
- After considering the current and estimated judicial resources, what **additional** judicial resources does each jurisdiction need to conduct sufficient and thorough hearings?

The goal of this report is to provide judges and state policymakers with objective data on the current judicial resources and estimated judicial resources needed in Washington to handle juvenile dependency cases in accordance with best practices.

### Methods and Data

The current assessment utilizes a mixed methods approach to determining statewide juvenile dependency workload that is very similar to the calculation employed in the initial assessment. The analysis utilizes the hearing time estimates for sufficient and thorough practice, and the preparation and follow up time estimates that were calculated in the initial workload assessment. The Washington State AOC provided data on the number and types of hearings in each county, which were averaged over three years. Averaging the hearing caseloads over three years provides a more robust workload estimate by accounting for changes in the number of hearings conducted from year to year.

To determine current judicial resources, PPCD researchers conducted interviews with court officers in each jurisdiction. Interviewers collected information on the number of judicial officers working in each jurisdiction and the amount of time judicial officers spend hearing dependency cases each week or month. The time spent on dependency cases, as reported by the court officers, was then converted into an FTE number of judicial officers (judicial resources).

Estimated judicial resource needs for each jurisdiction were calculated with an equation that accounts for the complexity and quality of dependency hearings. The estimated needs were subtracted from the current judicial resources in order to determine what additional (if any) judicial resources were needed in each jurisdiction. Jurisdictions with judicial resource needs equal to or greater than 0.20 FTE are recognized as needing substantial additional judicial resources; 0.20 FTE, or 20% of a full time workload, is equal to one full day of work in a five day work week, and is a considerable amount of work for jurisdictions to simply shift resources as needed.

## **Results**

Judicial workload data were collected for all 39 jurisdictions in Washington State. Statewide, there are 256 judges and commissioners overseeing all dockets. Of the 256 judicial officers, 73 (28%) spend some or all of their time overseeing dependency cases, resulting in a statewide juvenile dependency FTE of 15.02 judicial officers. Most jurisdictions (20 of 39) have only one judicial officer hearing all dependency cases, and in some instances a single judge or commissioner hears dependency cases in more than one jurisdiction. Thirty-nine percent (15 of 39) of Washington's jurisdictions have two to three judicial officers handling dependency casework part time, while the remaining 10% (4 of 39) have between four and six judicial officers hearing dependency cases part time. No jurisdictions have more than six judicial officers overseeing dependency cases, and no jurisdiction has more than 3.00 FTE judicial officers.

### **Judicial Resources Needed for Sufficient Practice**

Many jurisdictions in Washington State are adequately staffed to conduct sufficient hearings (Figure 2). Thirty-eight percent (15 of 39) of jurisdictions have more than adequate or just the right amount of resources to conduct sufficient practice hearings and tend to be more rural, less populated jurisdictions. Twenty-six percent (10 of 39) may benefit from additional judicial resources, but currently have judicial resources within the 0.20 FTE threshold for needing substantial additional resources.

Although most jurisdictions are adequately or nearly adequately staffed for sufficient hearings, 36% (14 of 39) of jurisdictions require substantial additional resources just to conduct sufficient hearings. Urban and suburban jurisdictions appear to face challenges even meeting the needs of sufficient practice workload demands; the majority of the jurisdictions that need additional resources to conduct sufficient hearings are more densely populated.

The current statewide juvenile dependency FTE is 15.02 judicial officers. The estimated statewide need for conducting sufficient hearings is 24.62 FTE judicial officers. Washington could therefore benefit from an additional nine to ten judicial officers in order to meet the workload needs for sufficient hearings. Additional judicial officers would help courts, particularly those located in more populous counties, meet current workload needs.

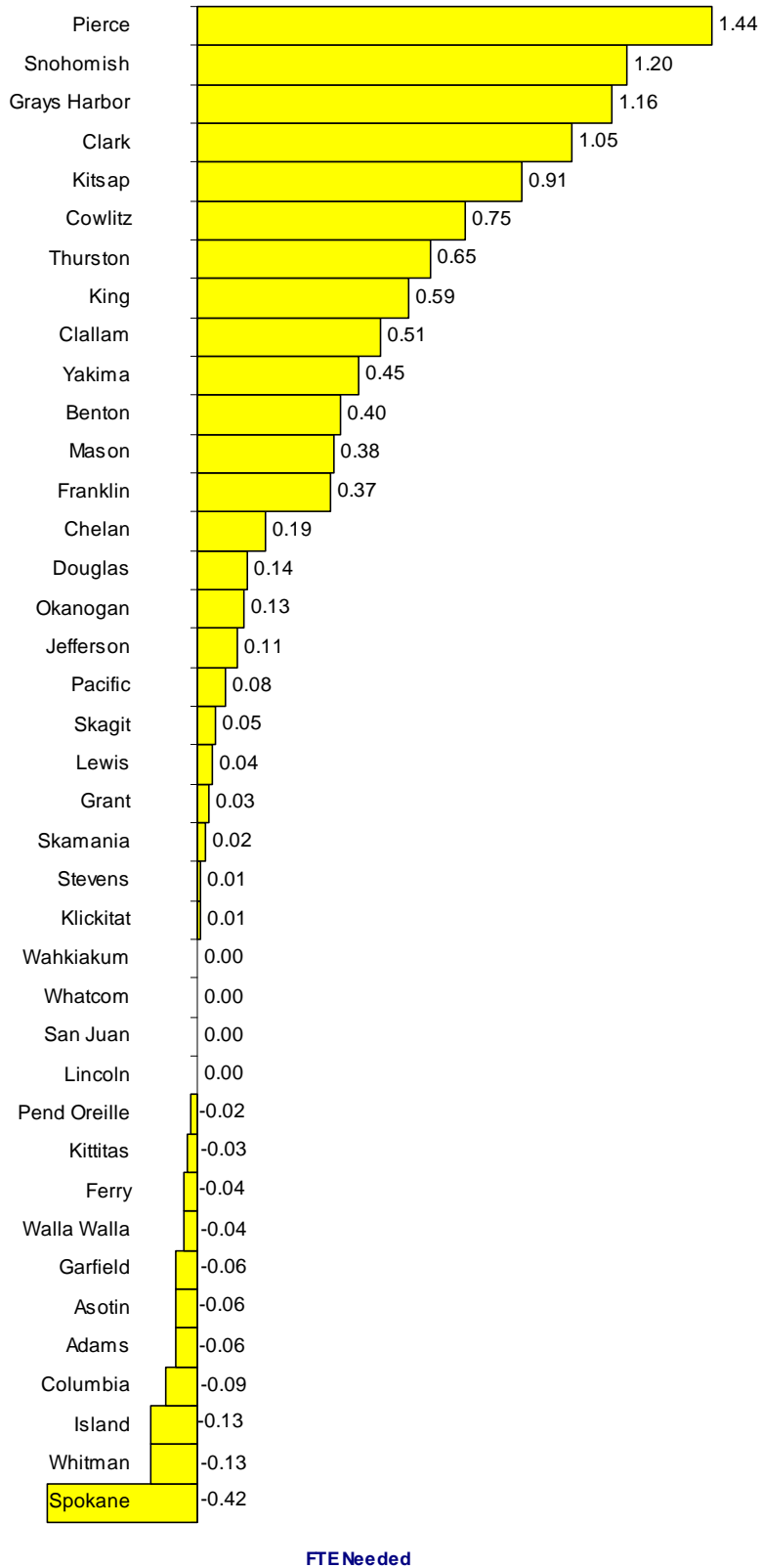
### **Judicial Resources Needed for Thorough Practice**

Thirty-eight percent of jurisdictions have adequate judicial resources for sufficient hearings, but when hearing length estimates increase to account for thorough hearings, only 23% (9 of 39) have adequate resources to currently conduct thorough hearings (Figure 3). An additional 26% (10 of 39) of jurisdictions could benefit from further allocations of resources, but are within the threshold for needing substantial additional resources.

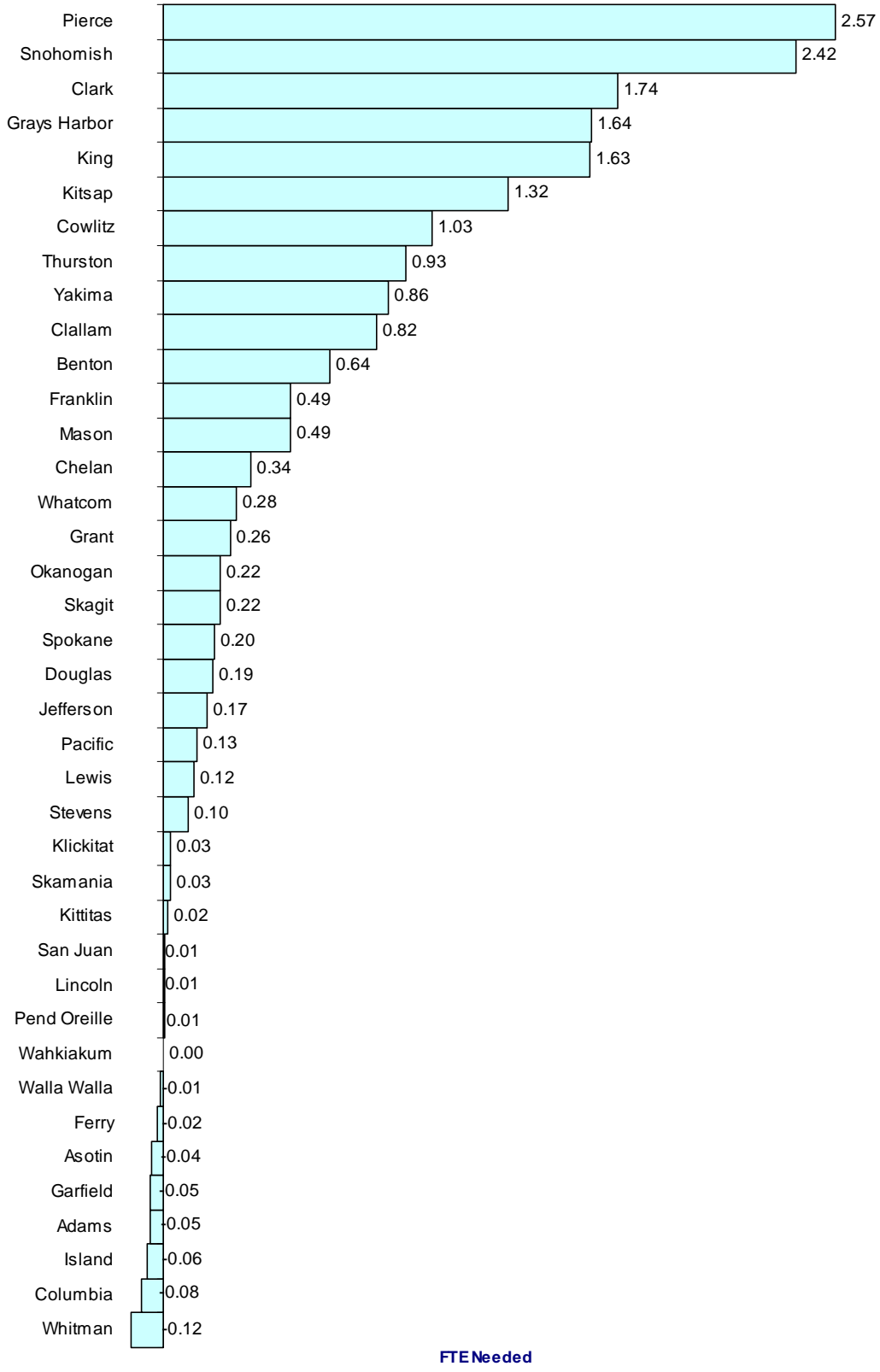
The remaining 51% (20 of 39) of jurisdictions do not have adequate resources to implement best practices and conduct thorough hearings. Heavily populated jurisdictions in Washington are not the only counties facing substantial resource needs; several jurisdictions that currently do not have enough judicial resources are rural.

The estimated statewide need for conducting thorough hearings is 33.50 FTE judicial officers. The current statewide FTE is 15.02; Washington could benefit from 18 additional judicial officers in order for courts to fully implement best practices and conduct thorough hearings in all jurisdictions.

**Figure 2. Additional FTE Resources Needed for Sufficient Practice**



**Figure 3. Additional FTE Resources Needed for Thorough Practice**



## Limitations

Like all estimates of this type, the current assessment does have some limitations. The workload calculations were developed from the baseline assessment based on the reporting from three jurisdictions. These jurisdictions varied in size and workload (in terms of the number of judicial officers and number of hearings) and the findings, while consistent in terms of the time spent preparing for and following up on dependency cases, were used to develop workload estimates for all jurisdictions in the State of Washington. Applying the preparation and follow up time estimate from three specific counties to all counties may result in FTE overestimations for some jurisdictions and underestimates for others.

Additionally, the statewide workload estimates are based on a 2000 hour work year. Judicial officers may work less than this due to judicial trainings, vacations, sick leave, or other on the bench activities that may interfere with judicial oversight of dependency cases. If so, jurisdictions would need more judicial resources than those presented here.

Also, this assessment cannot reflect changes over time and offers a “snapshot” of a moving image, as the judicial resources each jurisdiction requires may change over time. For example, sudden sharp increases in cases filed from 2009 to 2010, without accompanying increases in judicial resources, are likely to result in significantly larger estimates of judicial resource needs. Although researchers utilized a three year workload average, which may mitigate some of the challenge to measuring judicial workload, some jurisdictions may be more (or less) capable of handling current workload or conducting thorough hearings than presented in this report.

Finally, this assessment cannot account for differences in practice between the jurisdictions that may improve efficiency of court practice, such as mediation or family team decision meetings. Consequently, the judicial resources estimates may be higher than necessary for some jurisdictions.

## Conclusion

In order to conduct best practice hearings and increase the likelihood of improved outcomes for children and their families, the majority of Washington's courts are not adequately staffed. Based on estimates from the baseline assessment, one third of the jurisdictions do not have the resources to oversee hearings and ensure they have sufficient discussion, which may indicate many hearings are being cut short. When hearings are cut short, discussion around key issues that can move the case forward may not be meeting even sufficient levels, which may ultimately lead to more hearings and longer time in care. Research has already demonstrated that thorough hearings, with substantive discussion of key topics, can improve outcomes for children and families.<sup>11</sup> In fact, in the study, the jurisdictions with the most improvement in level of discussion, also showed the greatest improvement in rates of children being returned home or placed with relatives instead of non-relative foster care. Further, when there is substantive discussion, there is a greater opportunity to engage parents in the process, something that has also been shown to increase timely reunification.<sup>12</sup> Adequate judicial resources can help ensure that judicial officers have time to conduct substantive hearings with discussion of all key issues.

In times of fiscal stress, it can be challenging to allocate the resources necessary to conduct thorough hearings. For some jurisdictions, additional resources to add judicial officers are not feasible. When additional resources are not available, practice changes may help alleviate some of the burden. For example, the use of non-hearing alternatives (e.g., mediation, family team decision meetings, and parent mentoring programs), as well as practice reforms (e.g., time-certain calendaring and a one-family one-judge model) could be effective tools to allow judicial officers the opportunity to conduct best practice hearings.<sup>13</sup>

Ultimately, it is essential for jurisdictions to ensure that judicial officers have the resources they need to conduct substantive hearings. Whether the resources are in the form of extra judicial officers or implementing practices to improve efficiency, it only matters that there is an ability to provide meaningful discussion and engagement of parties at hearings. Substantive discussion translates directly to better engagement of parents and better outcomes for families involved in the dependency system.

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<sup>11</sup> National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (2011). *Right from the start: The CCC preliminary protective hearing benchcard study report—testing a tool for judicial decision-making*. Reno, NV: Author.

<sup>12</sup> Wood, S. M., & Russell, J. R. (2011). Effects of parental and attorney involvement on reunification in Juvenile dependency cases. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33, 1730-1741.

<sup>13</sup> Reports on various practices that improve efficiency are available from the Permanency Planning for Children Department and may be found online at [www.ncjfcj.org](http://www.ncjfcj.org).



## Appendix A: Calculating Judicial Workload

In the statewide assessment, judicial workload is calculated based on an equation that utilizes the average number of hearings, average hearing time estimates, preparation and follow up time estimates, the number of available judicial work hours, and the current FTE in each county in Washington. Table 2 and the explanation below present a hypothetical county to demonstrate the judicial workload calculation and the basis for the analysis presented in this report.

<b>Table 2. Judicial Workload Calculation Variables Hypothetical County</b>	
<b>Average Number of Hearings</b> (per year)	1266
<b>Total Hearing Time</b> (hours per year)	
Sufficient Practice	443
Thorough Practice	625
<b>Total Prep Time</b> (hours per year)	
Sufficient	335
Thorough	524
<b>Total Follow Up Time</b> (hours per year)	
Sufficient	27
Thorough	38
<b>Total Hours Needed for Dependency</b> (per year)	
Sufficient	805
Thorough	1186
<b>FTE Needed</b>	
Sufficient	0.40
Thorough	0.57
<b>Current FTE</b>	0.35
<b>Additional Judicial Resources Needed</b>	
Sufficient Practice	0.05
Thorough Practice	0.22

## Calculating Sufficient Practice

The calculation begins with the average number of hearings conducted in each jurisdiction in one year and the amount of time each hearing is expected to take. The statewide study accounts for different types of hearings, each of which varies in length depending on the type of hearing and the quality of the hearing (see Table 1).

Based on the number of hearings conducted, the number of hours every jurisdiction spends on dependency hearings was calculated as follows (with the hypothetical county as an example).

$$98 \text{ (Shelter Hearings)} * 33 \text{ (Minutes)} = 3234 \text{ minutes (or 53.9 hours)}$$

The same formula was used for each hearing type—emergency shelter, adjudication/disposition, permanency/review and motion hearings—and then summed to provide the total hours the jurisdiction spends on dependency hearings, which can be found above in Table 2.

The total hearing hours are then multiplied by ratios of judicial preparation and follow up time to calculate the number of hours spent preparing and following up on hearings in a year. The ratios were developed in the baseline assessment and reflect that judges spend, on average, 55% of their time in hearings and 41% of their time preparing for hearings. Judges also spend an average of 3% of their time following up on hearings.

$$443 \text{ (Total Hearing Hours)} * (0.4166 / 0.55) = 335 \text{ (Hours of Prep Time)}$$

$$443 \text{ (Total Hearing Hours)} * (0.0333 / 0.55) = 27 \text{ (Hours of Follow Up Time)}$$

The total hearing hours, preparation, and follow up time are then summed to calculate the number of hours each jurisdiction needs to spend on dependency-related work each year.

$$443 + 335 + 27 = 805 \text{ (Dependency Hours)}$$

The total number of hours spent on juvenile dependency-related work is then divided by the number of available hours in the work year to determine the number of FTE judicial officers needed to meet the sufficient demands of the juvenile dependency workload. For this calculation, 2000 available judicial hours were used along the rationale that judicial officers work an average of 40 hours a week 52 weeks per year. After subtracting major holidays and other time off 2000 hours is a feasible estimate for the number of hours worked in a year.

$$805 \text{ (Dependency Hours)} / 2000 \text{ (Judicial Hours)} = 0.40 \text{ (FTE)}$$

This jurisdiction would need 0.40 FTE judicial officers to meet sufficient workload demands. The jurisdiction is currently devoting 0.35 FTE to the juvenile dependency workload. Although this is very close to meeting the staffing needs for conducting business as usual, a judicial officer could spend an additional 5% of his or her time hearing dependency cases.

### **Calculating Thorough Practice**

The same formula as outlined above was used to calculate judicial resources needed for thorough practice, with the key exception of estimating longer total hearing times in the first step (not shown). The FTE resources required for thorough practice in this jurisdiction was calculated as:

$$1186 \text{ (Dependency Hours)} / 2000 \text{ (Judicial Hours)} = 0.57 \text{ (FTE)}$$

In order to enhance judicial practice and conduct thorough hearings consistent with best practices guidelines, this jurisdiction would need 0.57 FTE judicial officers. Taking into account the 0.35 FTE judicial officers currently handling dependency casework, this jurisdiction needs 0.22 additional FTE judicial officers. That is, there needs to be one judicial officer devoting 22% of his or her time to overseeing dependency cases, which is the equivalent of one full day of work.

## Appendix B: Statewide Resources

County	Number Judicial Officers	Number Judicial Officers on Dependency	Current FTE	Estimated FTE Needed for Sufficient Practice	Additional FTE Needed for Sufficient Practice	Estimated FTE Needed for Thorough Practice	Additional FTE Needed for Thorough Practice
Adams	1	1	0.08	0.02	-0.06	0.03	-0.05
Asotin	1	1	0.125	0.07	-0.06	0.09	-0.04
Benton	9	1	0.21	0.61	0.40	0.85	0.64
Chelan	4	1	0.20	0.39	0.19	0.54	0.34
Clallam	4	1	0.20	0.71	0.51	1.02	0.82
Clark	13	3	1.05	2.10	1.05	2.79	1.74
Columbia	1	1	0.125	0.04	-0.09	0.05	-0.08
Cowlitz	5	1	0.25	1.00	0.75	1.28	1.03
Douglas	4	1	0.025	0.16	0.14	0.21	0.19
Ferry	3	3	0.08	0.04	-0.04	0.06	-0.02
Franklin	9	2	0.07	0.44	0.37	0.56	0.49
Garfield	4	1	0.06	0.004	-0.056	0.005	-0.055
Grant	4	2	0.60	0.63	0.03	0.86	0.26
Grays Harbor	3	1	0.40	1.56	1.16	2.04	1.64
Island	2	2	0.40	0.27	-0.13	0.34	-0.06
Jefferson	4	1	0.05	0.16	0.11	0.22	0.17
King	39	4	2.30	2.89	0.59	3.93	1.63
Kitsap	10	2	0.45	1.36	0.91	1.77	1.32
Kittitas	2	1	0.125	0.10	-0.03	0.14	0.02
Klickitat	2	2	0.05	0.06	0.01	0.08	0.03
Lewis	4	2	0.25	0.29	0.04	0.37	0.12
Lincoln	1	1	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.01
Mason	7	3	0.09	0.47	0.38	0.58	0.49
Okanogan	4	1	0.05	0.18	0.13	0.27	0.22
Pacific	2	2	0.035	0.11	0.08	0.16	0.13
Pend Oreille	3	3	0.075	0.06	-0.02	0.08	0.01
Pierce	29	2	2.05	3.49	1.44	4.62	2.57
San Juan	1	1	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.04	0.01
Skagit	6	2	0.35	0.40	0.05	0.57	0.22
Skamania	2	1	0.025	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.03
Snohomish	15	3	1.05	2.25	1.20	3.47	2.42
Spokane	18	6	2.00	1.58	-0.42	2.20	0.20
Stevens	4	4	0.25	0.26	0.01	0.35	0.10
Thurston	11	4	0.25	0.90	0.65	1.18	0.93
Wahkiakum	4	1	0.006	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
Walla Walla	3	2	0.20	0.16	-0.04	0.19	-0.01
Whatcom	6	1	0.55	0.55	0.00	0.83	0.28
Whitman	1	1	0.20	0.07	-0.13	0.08	-0.12
Yakima	11	1	0.70	1.15	0.45	1.56	0.86
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>15.02</b>	<b>24.62</b>	<b>9.60</b>	<b>33.50</b>	<b>18.48</b>