



## Superior Court 00100.861.

### Mission Statement

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#### **Superior Court:**

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

#### **Drug Court:**

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

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

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

### Function

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

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

Since its inception, Drug Court has served 1383 participants with 439 graduates. (This year due to the new legislative rulings regarding Blake, Drug Court has recognized 11 participants for their efforts and dismissed their charges, these are not considered or counted as graduates.) Drug Court reduced recidivism, returned participants to work and school, reunited families and participants became active members of the community reducing need for community services. Clallam County has been able to provide more services and treatment opportunities to more participants than any county of comparable size.

**L.I.F.T. Court** (Living in Families Together) operates for high risk dependency cases that involve mental illness and/or addiction and alcoholism. Participants are referred by the court, social workers, attorneys, treatment providers or themselves. Participants are reviewed on a weekly basis for parenting, housing, legal, recovery/mental health issues and counseling compliance. Since its inception in August 2008, L.I.F.T. Court has served 266 parents and 324 children. 98 parents have graduated, and 142 children have achieved permanency without the need for a trial. L.I.F.T. Court reduced recidivism, returned parent and children to school and/or work, reunited families, reduced the need for additional supervision, and created participants who are interested in their communities and want to be part of the greater good.

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

## Trends/Events

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**Blake Decision:** In February of 2021, the Supreme Court declared former RCW 69.50.4013 unconstitutional, invalidating the crime of felony possession of a controlled substance. As a result, thousands of convicted individuals were able to have their convictions vacated and possibly resentenced. The court continues to work closely with the public defender's and prosecutor's offices to handle these matters as efficiently as possible. Our case numbers indicate that in 2021 a total of (102) cases were brought before the court, in 2022 a total of (82) cases, and in 2023 through June a total of (173) cases have been reviewed and addressed on our regularly scheduled court calendars before our presiding judicial staff without the need to use Pro Tem Court Commissioners. Since 2021 a total of (357) Blake cases have been addressed by the court date without any additional costs incurred by the court.

**Unified Guardianship Act (UGA):** As of January 1, 2021, the State of Washington enacted a new statute (RCW 11.130.195) that requires all courts to begin appointing guardian ad litem attorneys and court visitors to represent parties involved in minor guardianship cases. The average hours per case can range from 5-20 hours total, and \$45/\$100 per hour for attorney/court visitor fees. In 2021 there were a total of (27) cases filed, in 2022 a total of (43), and in 2023 (7) cases filed through June 30, 2023, for a total number of (77) appointments since 2021 after the entry of this statute. In addition, the Administrative Office of the Courts offered funding to courts to help cover these additional costs.

**Evictions:** Superior Court has worked closely with local stakeholders to put in place court orders and processes necessary to handle the end of the eviction moratorium in Clallam County resulting in the implementation and new processes authorized by the Washington Legislature. In August 2021 two orders were entered by Clallam County Superior Court announcing the Eviction Resolution Pilot Program and Right to Counsel for Indigent Defendants in Unlawful Detainer Proceedings. Both Northwest Justice and Peninsula Dispute Resolution Center are now able to assist landlords and tenants with questions about evictions. This has been a successful transition and implementation regarding new eviction procedures.

**Zoom and Video Conferencing:** The court continues to provide remote appearance options for courtroom proceedings that started due to the COVID Pandemic which began in March 2019. We have become increasingly innovative and creative providing Zoom meetings for participants to appear by telephone and video conference in all four courtrooms and from the jail. By adding Zoom we have provided advanced access to courts for the public and court participants. This process has continued and is now our "new normal" for the courtrooms and jail as it received positive results for court participation during the pandemic.

**Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA):** Superior Court continues to move forward and be a strong supporter of the State Supreme Court's decision in 2022 that courts must be dedicated to the monitoring of cases and participants throughout the dependency process. In April 2022 Superior Court created an ICWA committee and began a ICWA Court which has been held once a month before a team of court professionals focusing on individualized attention for each case. Since the inception of this program, the court has provided oversight to approximately many families and currently has 35 children engaging in court services. Although ICWA Court is a child welfare court, the distinction is that families can expect engagement that is delivered with cultural humility that is solution oriented and with enhanced empathy. The L.I.F.T. Court and FJCIP Coordinators have both been a critical part of this successful program.

**Protection Orders:** In 2022 the Washington Legislature enacted a global approach to protection orders. This approach required coordination with District Court and the Clerk in the implementation of e-filing. Superior Court continues to work with District Court and the Court Clerk's office in providing these new procedures and instructions for the public to utilize to comply with the mandatory legal requirements required by the Legislature.

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

**L.I.F.T. Court - Reunification Day Picnic:** L.I.F.T. Court will be hosting our third annual Family Reunification Day celebration picnic on August 12, 2023. Each year a Reunification Day celebration committee meets over the course of three months to plan and prepare for all of the arrangements and details of this event. The Parents for Parents Coordinator, Michelle Warren, is leading the committee this year along with the support of the L.I.F.T. Court and FJCIIP Coordinators and the committee members. This year we plan to hold the event at Lincoln Park and have food, games, prizes and family photos taken by a volunteer photographer, along with several guest speakers.

## Goals

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### **Superior Court:**

1. We continue to ensure safe and secure courtrooms for the protection of litigants, witnesses, spectators, and courthouse personnel. We actively monitor, update and provide emergency radios for all courthouse offices in order to communicate with Courthouse Security providing for quick responses when requested. The court continues to believe that the best approach to courtroom security is a countywide approach to courthouse security. Implementation of the minimum standards set forth in GR 36 remain a minimum standard that the court believes should be implemented, including a single point of entry monitored by armed security officers and walk-thru screening. In 2022 we were successful in applying for funding to provide for courthouse security cameras and door scanners, and more recently a security assessment; however, we are still working toward installation of an emergency broadcast notification system throughout the courthouse and County.
2. In June 2022, a Supreme Court decision was made regarding GR 42, Indigent Defense, stating that "Superior Courts and courts of limited jurisdiction shall neither manage nor oversee public defense services, including public defense contracts and assigned counsel lists." This decision has impacted the courts not only by eliminating attorney contract agreements with the courts and assignment of attorney appointments related to criminal cases, but also removed the funding of these services from the court budget to manage and provided to the Board of County Commissioners to manage. This transition and decision has caused some confusion and difficulty for the court when making decisions to appoint an attorney to represent defendants.
3. Superior Court is devoted to working on courtroom modernization projects by making audio/visual and other technological improvements to bring the courtrooms to current standards. We recently updated all of our courtrooms and jails by installing new courtroom recording and video technology from Justice AV Solutions (JAVS) to provide more options for viewing exhibits and videos for viewing by jurors, witnesses and the public. We also now have the ability to provide video conferencing when witnesses are unable to appear in court, and improved technology and hardware for four courtroom video carts with an Elmo and laptop for participants to use during court proceedings.

4. In March of 2018 Clallam County was chosen to participate in and has continued to be successful in a program called "Parents for Parents." This program provides education, mentoring and increased engagement in the Dependency system with the help of a Parent for Parent Coordinator and Parent Allies to promote safe and timely reunification of children with their parents. This program now offers participants two Dependency classes for strengthening and developing family relationships. Since the inception of this successful program there have been a total of 192 participants, with 34 active cases and 7 new participants in 2023.
5. The Court provides 24-hour coverage for law enforcement search warrants and wire orders. In addition, we work to further the accessibility of substance use disorder services for individuals incarcerated in the Clallam County jail. Our Drug Court participants can now use a texting check-in program called "One Step" to help communicate with participants by providing free texting and tracking of appointments and schedules.

**Drug Court:**

1. Provide an alternative to traditional criminal procedures for defendants committing offenses due to drug addiction.
2. Provide team training to enhance the effectiveness of both Adult and Juvenile Drug Court Teams and individual team members.
3. Utilize existing financial resources effectively.
4. Explore alternatives to State funded inpatient treatment placements for participants needing more help than is available through intensive outpatient treatment.
5. Continue to work with our established Criminal Justice Treatment Account (CJTA) steering committee that serves as a countywide forum charged with submitting an annual plan with the Salish Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization (SBHASO) for disposition of funds provided from the CJTA.
6. Work to further the accessibility of substance use disorder services for individuals incarcerated in the Clallam County jail through telehealth services.
7. Develop a more robust prosocial activities program for Drug Court participants and strengthen the alumni participation and retention.

**L.I.F.T. Court:**

L.I.F.T. Court has a new Family Court Commissioner, Elizabeth Stanley. We continue to have L.I.F.T. Court weekly; two weeks with the Court Commissioner presiding, and the other two weeks are a group check-in court ran by the L.I.F.T. Court Coordinator. We are working towards increasing our participant numbers and adding a possible free daycare option in the Family Conference room located next to the courtroom. This will help participants/families and should increase attendance for L.I.F.T. Court.

**Workload Indicators**

	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	6/30/23 Actual
Cases Filed:			
Criminal	357	401	149
Civil	630	758	395
Domestic	379	273	151

Probate/Guardianship	517	565	280
Adoption/Paternity	130	86	50
Mental Illness	166	137	49
Juvenile Non-Offender	168	250	110
Juvenile Offender	60	102	45
Total Cases Filed	2,407	2,572	1,229
Non-Trial Proceedings:			
Civil/Juvenile	3,659	3,282	1,431
Criminal/Juvenile Offender	5,610	5,303	2,221
Total Non-Trial Proceedings	9,269	8,585	3,652
Trials:			
Civil Non-Jury Trial	50	37	23
Civil Jury Trials	0	3	0
Criminal Jury	15	18	9
Criminal Non-Jury Trials	13	4	3
Total Trials	78		35
Drug Court:			
Adult, Juvenile Court Participants	82	59	57
Adult, Juvenile Drug Court Graduates	9	10	7
L.I.F.T. Court:			
Adult clients served in L.I.F.T. Court	21	15	12
Children served in L.I.F.T. Court	29	24	17

## Grant Funding Sources

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

## Revenues

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	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	6/30/23 Actual	2024 Budget
Taxes	0	0	0	0
Licenses and Permits	0	0	0	0
Intergovernmental Revenues	573,105	99,108	70,406	253,870
Charges for Goods and Services	227,716	246,152	158,565	372,710
Fines and Forfeits	521	0	26	0
Miscellaneous Revenues	1,473	388	0	0
Other Financing Sources	0	0	0	0
Transfers In	0	0	0	0
General Tax Support	669,963	1,332,465	567,305	1,130,168
Total	1,472,778	1,678,113	796,302	1,756,748

## Expenditures

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	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	6/30/23 Actual	2024 Budget
Salaries and Wages	810,988	861,315	469,811	1,026,960

Personnel Benefits	186,287	193,322	104,556	218,633
Supplies	14,560	23,460	20,074	25,457
Other Services and Charges	372,951	600,026	201,861	478,418
Intergovernmental Services	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlays	87,992	0	0	7,280
Interfund Payments for Services	0	0	0	0
Transfers Out	0	0	0	0
Total	1,472,778	1,678,123	796,302	1,756,748

## Staffing

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	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
Full Time Equivalent	8.75	8.75	8.75	9.25