



WASHINGTON  
COURTS

**September 19, 2011**

**TO:** Linda Merelle, Counsel, House Early Learning and Human Services  
**FROM:** Lynne Alfasso, AOC Data Dissemination Administrator  
**RE:** The Judicial Information System (JIS) and Juvenile Offense Records

## **I. What is the Judicial Information System?**

Local courts enter information on cases into a statewide electronic information system called the Judicial Information System (JIS). The JIS is maintained by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). The JIS contains information on cases from the municipal, district, superior, and appellate courts. The JIS is not an imaging system, so it does not contain copies of actual documents filed with the court.

The courts use the JIS to help them manage their cases and to record fees, fines, and penalties paid to the court. The courts also use the JIS to maintain statewide case information on a person. For example, courts are required by statute to review the information in the JIS on the parties when a request is made for a protective order.

The JIS software application used for cases filed in the superior court is called SCOMIS. SCOMIS has information on these types of cases:

- Adult criminal
- Civil cases (personal injury, contracts, real property, etc.)
- Family law
- Probate and Guardianship
- \*Adoption and Paternity
- \*Mental Illness/Alcohol
- \*Juvenile Dependency
- Juvenile Offense

\*Cases marked with an asterisk (\*) are confidential case types, as required by statute. All of the other case types are open to public access unless sealed by court order.

## **II. Legal Requirements for Access to Cases**

Article I, section 10 of the Washington Constitution requires that justice be administered openly. To carry out that requirement, the Supreme Court has adopted court rules providing for access to public case information:

**A. Supreme Court General Rule of Court (GR) 31 - Access to Court Records**

(a) Policy and Purpose. It is the policy of the courts to facilitate access to court records as provided by Article I, Section 10 of the Washington State Constitution. Access to court records is not absolute and shall be consistent with reasonable expectations of personal privacy as provided by article 1, Section 7 of the Washington State Constitution and shall not unduly burden the business of the courts.

(b) Scope. This rule applies to all court records, regardless of the physical form of the court record, the method of recording the court record or the method of storage of the court record. Administrative records are not within the scope of this rule. Court records are further governed by GR 22.

...

(d) The public shall have access to all court records except as restricted by federal law, state law, court rule, court order, or case law.

**B. The Legislature has Adopted Statutes Governing Public Access to Juvenile Cases**

Access to juvenile offense cases is governed by RCW Chapter 13.50:

**RCW 13.50.050 Records Relating To Commission Of Juvenile Offenses**

(1) This section governs records relating to the commission of juvenile offenses, including records relating to diversions.

(2) The official juvenile court file of any alleged or proven juvenile offender shall be open to public inspection, unless sealed pursuant to subsection (12) of this section.

...

**C. The Legislature has Adopted Statutes Requiring User Fees for the JIS**

The legislature requires that users other than courts and city and county agencies doing the business of the courts pay fees to use the JIS. The fees are used for the operation of the system.

**RCW 2.68.010 Judicial information System Committee (JISC) – Fees**

The judicial information system committee, as established by court rule, shall determine all matters pertaining to the delivery of services available from the judicial information system. The committee may establish a fee schedule for the provision of information services and may enter into contracts with any person, public or private, including the state, its departments, subdivisions, institutions, and agencies. However, no fee may be charged to county or city governmental agencies within the state of Washington using the judicial information system for the business of the courts.

**RCW 2.68.030 Schedule of User Fees**

The judicial information system committee shall develop a schedule of user fees for in-state noncourt users and all out-of-state users of the judicial information computer system and charges for judicial information system products and licenses for the purpose of distributing and apportioning the full cost of operation and continued development of the system among the users. The schedule shall generate sufficient revenue to cover the costs relating to (1) the payment of salaries, wages, other costs including, but not limited to the acquisition, operation, and administration of acquired

information services, supplies, and equipment; and (2) the development of judicial information system products and services. As used in this section, the term "supplies" shall not be interpreted to delegate or abrogate the state purchasing and material control director's responsibilities and authority to purchase supplies as provided in chapter [43.19](#) RCW.

### III. Indexes

There are two indexes of court cases that are available by subscription from AOC that contain juvenile offense information from the JIS.

#### A. Public Superior Court (SCOMIS) Criminal Index

- This index is available for subscription at a cost of \$1,800 per year.
- It contains data on Adult Criminal and Juvenile Offense case dispositions.
- It is produced the second week of every quarter for the previous quarter and covers case dispositions within the previous five (5) years of the date of the quarterly extract.
- The information is produced in a .txt format and is located on a section of the AOC website that is accessible to subscribers by means of a password.

The data elements in the index for juvenile offense cases are as follows:

Data Element	Example of Data
County	Klickitat
Case Number	11-8-12345-1
Name	Last name, First Name Middle Name
Date of Birth	01-01-1996
Sex Code	M
Juvis Number	
PCN Number	1234567891011
File Date	03/01/2011
Case Type	J
Case Title	St of WA v. Last Name, First Name Middle Name
Resolution Code	DSM
Resolution Description	DISMISSAL WITHOUT TRIAL
Resolution Date	04/01/2011
Completion Code	JODF
Completion Description	JUDGMENT/ORDER/DECREE FILED
Completion Date	04/01/2011
Status Code	CMPL
Status Description	COMPLETED/RECOMPLETED
Status Date	04/01/2011
CLJ Appeals Flag	N

Subscribers sign a subscription agreement which includes provisions that subscribers only have a license to use the data while they are subscribers. Subscribers are required to update their copy of the data as updates are published by AOC. A sample contract is attached as Appendix 1.

**B. Public Superior Court (SCOMIS) Criminal and Civil Index**

- This index is available for subscription at a cost of \$840 per year.
- It is produced every six months with weekly updates.
- It contains information on cases filed in the superior court, including juvenile offender cases.
- The information is produced in a .txt format and is located on a section of the AOC website that is accessible to subscribers by means of a password.

The data elements in the index for juvenile offense cases are as follows:

<b>Data Element</b>	<b>Example of Data</b>
County	Skagit Superior Court
Name	Last Name, First Name Middle Name
Case Number	11-8-12345-6
Party's Connection to Case	Def
Class of Offense	Misd
Filing Date	01-03-11
Birthdate	10-10-95

Subscribers sign a subscription agreement which includes provisions that subscribers only have a license to use the data while they are subscribers. Subscribers are required to update their copy of the data as updates are published by AOC. A sample contract is attached as Appendix 2.

**IV. Case-by-Case Docket Information**

The other subscription method of accessing JIS case information is by way of a subscription to JIS that allows the subscriber to access case docket information on a case-by-case basis from the AOC website. This service is called **JIS-Link**.

- The cost to subscribe is a registration fee of \$100. Thereafter, subscribers pay only when they use the service. Subscribers pay 6½ cents per keyboard command entered into the JIS (a user will need to execute several commands to view a case docket.)
- Juvenile offense case dockets can be viewed in JIS-Link.
- A copy of the subscription agreement is attached as Appendix 3.
- The case docket displays information such as the court name, case number, case title, type of offense, filing date, dates of hearings and documents filed, and descriptions of hearing and documents filed.