



December 30, 2021

**TO:** Honorable Denny Heck, President of the Senate  
Honorable Laurie Jinkins, Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Brad Hendrickson, Secretary of the Senate  
Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives

**FROM:** Dawn Marie Rubio, State Court Administrator, AOC  
Christopher Stanley, Chief Financial & Management Officer, AOC

**RE:** 2021 Operating Budget, Section 115 (14) pg. 10, Report to Legislature

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The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) received \$8,000,000 of the general fund-state appropriation for fiscal year 2022 for distribution to local courts for costs associated with the court-appointed attorney and visitor requirements set forth in the Uniform Guardianship Act, RCW 11.130.

As part of this legislation we are required to provide a report per the following language:

*“No later than December 31, 2021, the administrative office of the courts will provide a report on distributions to local courts including, but not limited to, the amount provided to each court, the number of guardianship cases funded at each court, costs segregated by attorney appointments and court visitor appointments, the amount of any pro rata reductions, and a recommendation on how to forecast distributions for potential future funding by the legislature.”*

At this time, the AOC has determined that a forecast for potential future distributions would be indeterminate. Not enough data has been collected during the current fiscal year to provide a basis for estimating potential future costs. Many Articles of the bill will not be effective until January 2022, thus the AOC expects that beginning at that time and throughout the remainder of the fiscal year, costs and available data will increase and allow for a more accurate forecast.

Table 1 on the following page provides the requested data. There were no pro rata reductions.

**Table 1 – Reimbursements to Superior Courts for Court-Appointed Attorneys and Court Visitors in Minor Guardianships, July 1, 2021 – December 23, 2021**

<b>Superior Court</b>	<b>Total Amount Allocated by County for FY 22 (see A below)</b>	<b>Amount Reimbursed (see B below)</b>	<b>Number of Minor Guardianship Cases Reimbursed</b>	<b>Number of Attorney Appts Reimbursed</b>	<b>Number of Court Visitor Appts Reimbursed</b>
Adams	\$ 10,146	\$ 0			
Asotin	\$ 58,569	\$ 337.75	2	2	
Benton	\$ 221,825	\$ 5,743.25	5	5	
Chelan	\$ 85,779	\$ 0			
Clallam	\$ 127,745	\$ 0			
Clark	\$ 671,932	\$ 23,757.55	24	24	3
Columbia	\$ 2,306	\$ 0			
Cowlitz	\$ 198,305	\$ 0			
Douglas	\$ 33,205	\$ 0			
Ferry	\$ 7,379	\$ 0			
Franklin	\$ 66,409	\$ 0			
Garfield	\$ 3,689	\$ 0			
Grant	\$ 110,682	\$ 0			
Grays Harbor	\$ 155,416	\$ 2,775.00	4	4	
Island	\$ 67,332	\$ 0			
Jefferson	\$ 33,205	\$ 0			
King	\$ 1,571,223	\$ 0			
Kitsap	\$ 269,787	\$ 7,479.16	10	8	2
Kittitas	\$ 35,972	\$ 375.00	2	2	
Klickitat	\$ 19,831	\$			
Lewis	\$ 215,369	\$ 3,482.00	6	6	
Lincoln	\$ 23,981	\$			
Mason	\$ 95,002	\$			
Okanogan	\$ 46,579	\$			
Pacific	\$ 36,894	\$ 1,110.00	2	2	
Pend Oreille	\$ 16,602	\$			
Pierce	\$ 1,017,352	\$11,900.30	28	25	13
San Juan	\$ 6,918	\$			
Skagit	\$ 149,421	\$ 13,567.50	14	14	
Skamania	\$ 6,456	\$			
Snohomish	\$ 716,205	\$			
Spokane	\$ 779,385	\$ 5,600.00	5	5	
Stevens	\$ 55,341	\$			
Thurston	\$ 399,839	\$ 2,957.30	7	7	
Wahkiakum	\$ 3,689	\$			
Walla Walla	\$ 73,788	\$			
Whatcom	\$ 153,110	\$			
Whitman	\$ 28,593	\$ 665.88	1		1
Yakima	\$ 424,742	\$			
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 8,000,003</b>	<b>\$ 79,750.69</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>19</b>

A - Allocations for FY 22 were made based on projected need for both minor guardianships (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022) and adult guardianships (January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022.) UGA adult guardianship provisions become effective January 1, 2022.

B - Appointments of minor guardianships have been negatively impacted by difficulty in recruiting qualified applicants to fill appointments. This recruitment difficulty has been attributed to several factors including: the pandemic, the case type change from child custody to minor guardianship with some attorneys reported as unwilling to move from family court, uncertainty regarding family court facilitator's ability to assist pro se litigants on minor guardianships (clarified in amended Court General Rule 27 effective July 27, 2021) and limited statewide training opportunities for guardians ad litem and court visitors. (The second statewide training occurred December 9-10, 2021.) It is anticipated that the courts will face fewer appointment difficulties when the UGA's adult guardianship provisions become effective January 1, 2022.