

## State Court Improvement Program 2025 Annual Self-Assessment Report

This self-assessment is intended as an opportunity for Court Improvement Programs (CIPs) to review progress on CIP projects, joint program planning and improvement efforts with the child welfare agency, and the ability to integrate (Continuous Quality Improvement) CQI successfully into practice. The self-assessment process is designed to help shape and inform ongoing strategic planning and should include meaningful discussion with the multi-disciplinary task force and others as needed and candid reflection of key CIP staff. The self-assessment is primarily focused on assessing efforts undertaken to date while the strategic plan maps out efforts going forward. Questions are designed to solicit candid responses that help CIPs apply CQI and identify support that may be helpful.

### CQI Analyses of Required Projects

*It is ok to cut and paste responses from last year, updating according to where you currently are in the process, and, if you do so, highlight text to show anything that is new. Complete the descriptions for CQI stages you have progressed through or are in. Though some upcoming stages will be inapplicable, consider whether your team may have preliminary thoughts that are relevant to those questions. Please also indicate if you need assistance from your federal or Capacity Building partners in a particular phase.*

## **Joint Project with the Child Welfare Agency:**

**Project title:** Safety Summit Project

### **Provide a concise description of the joint project selected in your jurisdiction.**

The Safety Summit Project is the result of a training partnership between the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). Originating from a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) strategy initiative (Strategy 4.2), Safety Summits have been held in eight Washington counties: [King County](#), [Kitsap County](#), [Pierce County](#), [Chelan County](#), and [Mason County](#) in 2021, [Spokane County](#) and [Grays Harbor County](#) in 2022, [Snohomish County](#) in 2024, and [Clark County](#), [Thurston County](#), and [Yakima County](#) in 2025.

Safety Summits provide local court jurisdictions with high-quality training on safety framework practices within the context of a guided change management process that includes organization, planning, action, and evaluation phases. Safety Summits revolve around a half-day training event

that focuses on helping local dependency court systems develop a shared understanding of how to assess and talk about child safety. Using a crosswalk of the ABA Child Safety Guide (Safety Framework) and the DCYF Child Safety Framework, this training teaches systems how to effectively apply the safety framework to crucial aspects (safety assessment, safety planning, conditions for return, family time, and case planning) of cases in tangible ways that ultimately result in a more effective dependency system and better outcomes for families. Importantly, the Safety Summit event is delivered by a cross-system team of trainers, including the CIP, DCYF, Office of Public Defense, and Washington Association of Child Advocate Programs.

The final hour of the Safety Summit involved action planning sessions where summit attendees are guided through two breakout room activities (one mixed-discipline; one discipline-specific). Using the information gathered from the action planning, CIP worked with each site to create a Strategic Plan that included the shared system vision, discipline group action steps, and the support available through CIP to assist in implementing the plan and supporting any resulting projects. Sites are at various stages in working through their strategic plans. The training materials, video recording, and strategic plans for all Safety Summit sites can be found in each site's respective [online HUB](#).

As part of our cross-system child safety training initiative with DCYF, Dr. Alicia Summers and the Center for Legal and Judicial Innovation and Advancement (CLJIA; formerly National Capacity Building Center for Courts) conducted the [2021 Washington Baseline Safety Hearing Quality Report](#) in seven court communities across the state. The findings from this evaluation are being used to identify opportunities for increasing shared understanding of safety and encouraging improvements in practice, along with providing baseline data to measure changes in process and outcomes associated with the Safety Summits. Four sites that held Safety Summits in 2021 were evaluated 3-5 months post-training to compare practice to the baseline hearing quality assessment. This hearing quality evaluation report by Dr. Alicia Summers from the Capacity Building Center for Courts presents the methods and findings from that pre-post safety framework training evaluation in the [2022 Washington Safety Decision-Making Hearing Quality Evaluation Report](#), which is publicly available. The findings of the evaluation were also sent to all participating sites, DCYF leadership, and other statewide partner agencies. The Safety Summit State Advisory Committee closely reviewed the findings of the pre-post hearing quality study to identify areas of positive practice change and opportunities for enhanced efforts (*see Phase IV below*).

Identify the specific safety, permanency, or well-being outcome(s) this project is intended to address. If this effort is linked to any agency measures, e.g. CFSR measures, please note those.

**Safety Outcome 2 – Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.**

*Permanency Outcome 1 – Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.*

Cross-system safety training was a Washington State DCYF Program Improvement Plan (PIP) strategy initiative (Strategy 4.2).

As a result of cross-disciplinary training and coaching, court partners and DCYF staff will understand and articulate consistent child safety language in court hearings, including:

- the current assessment of safety in the home (safety threats, child vulnerability, and parent protective capacity);

- safety planning;
- conditions of return;
- supervision and plan for family time; and
- case plan, including requirements to dismiss the case.
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Caseworkers will submit a current DCYF Safety Assessment/Safety Plan with their standard Court Report

**Approximate date that the project began:** July 1, 2020

**Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?**

Phase V. Evaluation/assessment

**How was the need for this project identified? (Phase I)**

The need was identified through our Hearing Quality Project, which sought to apply the ABA Safety Guide to the context of Family Time (parent/child visit) decisions by courts. When introduced to the ABA framework for assessing safety, judicial officers found it useful and requested additional training for themselves and for court partners. The CFSR findings reflected a need for DCYF staff to improve their understanding and application of the department’s safety framework, utilizing critical thinking and assessment to drive practice. During 2020, CIP, DCYF staff and the court system-focused PIP team reviewed the data and identified that inconsistent application of DCYF’s safety framework impacts permanency decisions. Root cause analysis of CFSR results determined that caseworkers do not have consistent support and oversight to complete required shared planning meetings and integrate the Safety Framework into practice. This results in an inability to clearly communicate safety threats to children, parents, the court, and court partners and to create individualized case plans that accurately identify needed services to support timely permanency.

At the request of Washington State CIP, the CLJIA conducted a baseline evaluation of safety decision making practices of seven courts in Washington State. The following themes emerged:

- vulnerabilities, protective capacities, and conditions for return are rarely discussed at
- hearings;
- safety analysis and discussions of safety planning rarely occur in court;
- safety-related justifications for supervised family time were rarely articulated;
- need for child welfare and court professionals to better understand and be able to articulate
- how case plan progress relates to safety.

The author of the evaluation, Dr. Alicia Summers, provided the following suggestions for improvement:

- enhance understanding of all stakeholders through multidisciplinary trainings;
- engage parents to better understand concepts and language regarding safety considerations;
- enhance training of professionals around safety planning, conditions for return home, and

- case planning;
- enhance training to ensure knowledge translates to behavior change, where practice aligns
- with understanding of safety training concepts.

In the most current iteration of the Program Improvement Plan (PIP), the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) identifies the below root cause in Goal Area 4: Permanency. DCYF collaborated with the courts and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of PIP strategies to address this need:

*“The lack of consistent support and oversight for caseworkers to complete ongoing shared planning meetings and integrate the Safety Framework into practice results in an inability to clearly communicate safety threats to children, parents, the court, and court partners and to create individualized case plans that accurately identify needed services to support timely permanency.”*

### **What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II).**

Deliver interdisciplinary safety guide training:

SO THAT a shared understanding and language of safety is created;

SO THAT sufficient information is collected;

SO THAT threats of danger are identified and protective capacities are accurately assessed throughout the life of the case;

AND THAT the likely harms of removal for each child are assessed;

SO THAT effective safety plans and case plans are created;

SO THAT a child remains in the home whenever possible;

OR THAT if a child is placed out-of-home, appropriate family time is ordered and conditions of return home are identified and understood;

SO THAT all parties are clear as to what strategies and services are necessary to achieve permanency;

SO THAT safe and lasting permanency is achieved in each and every case.

### **Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? If yes, what is it? (Phase III)**

Strategy 4.2: DCYF staff and court partners will develop, understand, and articulate consistent language regarding DCYF’s Safety Framework and implement changes in caseworker and court practice related to the Safety Framework.

**4.2.1** Establish a short-term multi-disciplinary workgroup of IDCC subgroup members, FJCIP coordinators, field AGO, HQ program managers, DCYF field, CIP, the Alliance, and other identified stakeholders to:

- Develop a crosswalk of DCYF Safety Framework, safety principles and existing court safety-related training and guidance.
- Identify impacted/related procedures and forms.
- Identify supportive resources available (i.e. safety framework posters for courtrooms)

- Make revisions (as needed) to current judicial/multi-disciplinary Child Safety Framework training as determined through the crosswalk including guidance for judges on specific questions related to safety threats and conditions for return home to be addressed at every court hearing.

**4.2.3** Implement training, post-training supports such as peer exchanges and coaching, and supportive resources (including handouts, tools, and posters) in FJCIP jurisdictions to include:

- Providing information on updates to safety training (as a result of 4.2.1) and schedule of available trainings at the annual dependency training for judicial officers and FJCIP Coordinators
- Providing training to judges, multi-disciplinary partners, AGOs, and DCYF staff in FJCIP jurisdictions that have not completed the training, that identify safety principles that will be discussed at every Court hearing.
- Providing supportive resources to those who have already been trained per any changes or adjustments to the training curriculum.

**4.2.4** Once the training is completed, incorporation of the concepts learned and practiced in the training will occur including:

- Judges asking questions related to safety threats and conditions for return home
- Attorneys asking questions within the Safety Framework
- Caseworkers submitting with their Court Report an updated safety assessment with the current active safety threat(s) clearly articulated. The Court Report will include conditions for return home, which clearly delineate what behavioral change, and supports are necessary to achieve reunification.

CIP created a state-level, cross-system Safety Summit State Advisory Committee (SSSAC) to guide the development and delivery of a cross-system safety framework training program that would result in individual court systems being able to make real practice change in safety practices which was named the “Safety Summit Project”. The team adapted the existing Safety Framework training curriculum (from the [ABA Child Safety Guide](#)) to include a crosswalk of the safety assessment and planning practices used by DCYF. This work guided the half-day cross system Safety Summit curriculum and local cross-system teams in planning the summit and enacting their strategic plans.

CIP provided general organization, coordination, tracking, monitoring of the Safety Summit Project, which included the following:

- Serves as point-of-contact for all inquiries related to Safety Summits, including receiving and coordinating requests from interested sites;
- Convenes SSAC and facilitates SSAC meetings;
- Leads updates of training curriculum including updates to content, graphics, and practice activities;
- Works with local court sites and systems partners to fulfill pre-requisite requirements;
- Guides local sites through the three-phase process of Safety Summit participation;
- Facilitates site Planning Team meetings (2);
- Provide facilitation and technology support for Safety Summit training events (two staff);
- Utilizes information collected at Safety Summit training event to create a draft of a
- Strategic Plan for sites;

- Assist sites in finalizing their Strategic Plan; and
- Support sites in implementing action plan items contained in the Strategic Plan (e.g., additional training; developing resources/tools; providing funding for product development).

**If your solution/intervention includes training, please provide a title and brief description of any training(s).**

Safety Summits revolve around a half-day virtual training event that focuses on helping local dependency court systems develop a shared understanding of how safety is assessed. Within the context of a crosswalk of the ABA Child Safety Guide (“Safety Framework”) and DCYF’s Child Safety practice, this training shows systems how to effectively apply the Safety Framework to crucial aspects of cases in tangible ways that ultimately result in a more effective dependency system and better outcomes for families. The final hour of the Safety Summit involved action planning sessions where summit attendees were guided through two breakout room activities (one mixed-discipline; one discipline-specific). FYJP used the action planning information generated at the summits to create drafts of Strategic Plans for each of the counties participating in the project. Safety Summit sites received a strategic plan that contained the shared process and outcome visions for the system, defined action steps for discipline groups, and support available from FYJP to implement system improvements at the local level.

**What has been done to implement the project? (Phase IV)**

Safety Summits were held in five Washington counties in 2021 (King County, Kitsap County, Pierce County, Chelan County, and Mason County), two counties in 2022 (Spokane County and Grays Harbor County), one county in 2024 (Snohomish County), and three counties in 2025 (Clark County, Thurston County, and Yakima County). Each site formed a cross-system planning team and held two facilitated planning meetings in advance of the summit event. Depending on when the summit was held and the capacity of the system, sites are in various stages of the post-summit system improvement process. CIP provided technical assistance and project management support to sites in the implementation of their plans (e.g., facilitating post-summit strategic planning meetings; hearing timing; funding printing/laminating produced resources).

County	Event Date	# Attendees
King County	October 4, 2021	107
Kitsap County	October 20, 2021	107
Pierce County	October 27, 2021	188
Chelan County	December 8, 2021	64

Mason County	December 9, 2021	67
Spokane County	February 10, 2022	163
Grays Harbor County	May 6, 2022	49
Snohomish County	April 19, 2024	127
Clark County	January 15, 2025	123
Thurston County	February 25, 2025	72
Yakima County	June 12, 2025	71

**Safety Summit 1.0** refers to the basic safety training administered to cross-system court communities at Safety Summit events. Over the past reporting year, the Safety Summit State Advisory Committee worked to update the training curriculum that is delivered at Safety Summits. The need for redesign was driven by a need to align with the new statutory provisions contained in state Senate Bill 6109, passed by the Washington State Legislature in 2024. [SB 6109](#) requires that “the court shall give great weight to the lethality of high-potency synthetic opioids and public health guidance from the department of health related to high-potency synthetic opioids, including fentanyl...” when making removal and placement decisions. The curriculum was updated to include educational content on high-potency synthetic opioids (HPSO), along with weaving parental use of HPSO into hypothetical practice scenarios. This updated curriculum has been presented to three local jurisdictions during the reporting period (Clark County, Thurston County, and Yakima County).

**Safety Summit 2.0:** The Safety Summit State Advisory Committee continues to work on creating more advanced training opportunities for court communities that have completed the Safety Summit 1.0. These targeted training opportunities will provide deep dives into the different aspects of the Safety Framework and will help participants develop a practical understanding of the application of the Safety Framework in dependency cases. The Safety Summit State Advisory Committee put out a survey to all past Safety Summit participants regarding which aspect(s) of the Safety Framework they wanted additional training on. Of note, one of the top results was “Conditions for Return”, which was also noted as an area needing continued improvement on the post-summit quality hearing observation study. The Safety Summit State Advisory Committee is currently designing a virtual curriculum using a flipped classroom structure that will provide training on the top areas of need emerging from the survey results (e.g., Conditions for Return; Assessing Safety Pre vs. Post Fact-Finding).

**How are you or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V).** *Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc.) and what results you have, if any. If you have already evaluated your effort, what do the data show, and how did you use these data to modify or expand the project?*

In 2020, Dr. Alicia Summers and the Capacity Building Center for Courts conducted hearing quality evaluations in seven court communities across the state (which included all of the 2021 Safety Summit sites). The evaluation employed a multi-method approach (hearing observation, case file review, and stakeholder interviews) to assess current practice related to safety decision making in child welfare. Findings overall indicated that court systems, even those that demonstrated high understanding of the safety framework, were not applying the safety framework in practice. This was indicated by a lack of discussion about safety-related issues in hearings, including: ongoing assessments of safety, safety-related justifications for supervised family time, and how the case plan is intended to address safety threats. This evaluation provided the baseline data for the Safety Summit project. Dr. Summers conducted the second round of hearing quality evaluations in February and March of 2022. The [2022 Washington Safety Decision-Making Hearing Quality Evaluation Report](#) by Dr. Summers presents the methods and findings from that pre-post Safety Summit training evaluation. In addition, a summary infographic was created to summarize the most significant findings of the evaluation (see [Top Findings Infographic](#)).

Results of the evaluation showed statistically significant findings across multiple safety-related measures at the Shelter Care Hearing. Overall, there was a significant increase in discussion of safety assessment factors, including a 32% increase in discussion of specific safety threats and a 35% increase in discussion of efforts to prevent removal. A 16% increase in discussion of safety planning was also observed. In addition, there was a 21% increase in discussion regarding why supervision is needed during family time visitation to ensure safety. Findings also showed that after the Safety Summit, there was an increase in judicial inquiries into agency efforts to prevent removal and verbal reasonable efforts findings. Judicial officers were also more likely to inquire into the vulnerabilities of the child and family time visitation post-Safety Summit. Finally, the evaluation found a 35% increase in the number of documents submitted prior to the hearing that contained a safety analysis, including reference to protective capacity (31%), vulnerabilities (39%), and conditions for return (34%). More documents contained contextual safety information about the parent's overall parenting practice. In fact, 100% of post-summit shelter care documentation included an analysis of safety and addressed specific safety threats. The hearing quality evaluation also identified areas where changed had been expected but was not observed, indicating where enhanced efforts are needed in future learning opportunities. Most significantly, findings showed that judicial officers rarely inquired about safety planning and conditions for return. In addition, judicial officers rarely made active inquiry into contextual safety factors (e.g., nature and extent of maltreatment; circumstances related to maltreatment; child's functioning).

In addition to continued monitoring by the Safety Summit State Advisory Committee, CIP plans to utilize existing hearing quality observation efforts to provide ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Safety Summit Project. Over the past reporting year, CIP has partnered with the Washington Center for State Court Research (WSCCR) to develop a Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool. The tool was originally created as a mechanism for continuously assessing the impacts of the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227) on the dependency courts. This effort also includes a partnership with the University of Washington's School of Public Health which has supplied skilled graduate students to observe and code Shelter Care Hearings. Several of the safety measures utilized by Dr. Alicia Summers in her pre-post hearing quality study were included in this tool and could be utilized to assess to impacts of future safety training efforts. The majority (4/6) of the counties that volunteered to participate in the

observation had previously held a Safety Summit (Chelan County, King County, Pierce County, Spokane County). The two remaining counties held Safety Summits after the conclusion of the observation (Clark County and Snohomish County). Overall, data from 123 Shelter Care Hearings was analyzed. Post-HB1227, there has been an increased focus on potential harm. Judges discussing the potential harms of removing children from their families rose by 30%, from 12% to 42%. There was also a 26% increase in judges balancing the threat of removal against the potential harms of keeping children at home, promoting a more nuanced approach to decision-making. Additionally, judges are 24% more likely to verbally discuss reasonable efforts to prevent removal on the record.

**Have there been notable factors that delayed or accelerated this effort?**

The Safety Summit Project has experienced significant delays over the past reporting year due to barriers created by the Department of Children, Youth, & Families (DCYF). A fundamental tenet of the Safety Summit Project is that child safety is fluid and constantly changes during a case depending on the circumstances of the family. Courts are able to engage in meaningful decision making when they have access to current, accurate safety information. Further, other legal and system partners are best able to advocate for their clients (in and out of court) when they have updated safety information. The collective consensus that having updated safety information is paramount to ensuring procedural justice and improving outcomes for families was the driving force behind DCYF’s agreement to attach the current assessment of safety (and safety plan for in-home cases) to every Court Report throughout the life of a case in the seven PIP sites. The Safety Summit 1.0 curriculum was built around this commitment to DCYF practice change.

Throughout the delivery of the Safety Summit Project to the seven PIP sites in 2021 and 2022, the CIP and Safety Summit State Advisory Committee was repeatedly told by DCYF program staff that the agency planned to roll out this practice change statewide after the conclusion of the PIP report, assuming the results of our pre-post hearing observation study were positive. Unsurprisingly, the success of the Safety Summit Project, as evidenced by the pre-post hearing quality observation study, resulted in other non-PIP counties requesting to hold the Safety Summit Project in their court communities during 2023. There was also a strong need from courts for safety training to prepare for the then-imminent enactment of the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227), which made significant changes to how dependency courts consider child safety.

When the Safety Summit State Advisory Committee started exploring holding Safety Summits in non-PIP sites, we discovered that DCYF’s commitment to rolling out the practice change statewide had not been formalized or agreed upon by leadership. A request for changing the policy governing this practice was submitted by internal DCYF staff to DCYF leadership. When DCYF leadership eventually did consider this change in policy, it was rejected without any formal explanation provided. CIP’s understanding of the reasoning behind this decision is that DCYF leadership thought that case workers were “already experiencing too much change. CIP has received no new information or updates on this process over the reporting period.

The Safety Summit State Advisory Committee is committed to continuing the Safety Summit Project and has been working with DCYF Regional Administrators (RA) and Area Administrators (AA) over the past year to secure DCYF commitment to practice change within individual counties. DCYF Region 3 has committed all five counties in the region to the practice change (Snohomish County, Whatcom County, Skagit County, Island County, and San Juan County). The counties in Region 4 (King County) and Region 5 (Pierce County and Kitsap County) were all PIP counties and therefore have already committed to the practice change. The remaining 31 counties in Washington are contained in Regions 1, 2, and 6. None of

these regions have committed to the practice change as a whole, although some counties within those Regions have been able to hold Safety Summits because an RA or AA was willing to make a county-specific commitment to the practice change.

The Safety Summit Project has been immensely successful and has benefited from the dedication and collaboration of the DCYF program staff on the Safety Summit State Advisory Committee. However, DCYF leadership has not facilitated the practice changes advocated by their own safety staff. CIP staff have attempted to impress the importance of this project on DCYF. CIP remains hesitant to dedicate significant time and capacity to partner on the CFSR/PIP unless there are explicit, written responsibilities of the agency and external mechanisms to ensure accountability.

In 2024 the Washington State Legislature passed SB 6109 which was primarily aimed at clarifying removal standards in cases involving high-potency synthetic opioids. SB 6109 also provided funding for the hiring of a full-time Dependency Training Specialist to coordinate training for courts around issues of safety and substance use. Since starting in November 2024, the Dependency Training Specialist has assumed leadership of the Safety Summit Project. Having a staff person dedicated to this specific area of work has notably accelerated the implementation of Safety Summit 1.0 and development of Safety Summit 2.0.

**What assistance or support would be helpful from the CLJIA or the Children’s Bureau to help move the project forward?**

Any support in working with DCYF leadership to revisit the statewide practice of attaching current safety assessments/plans to court reports throughout the life of a case would be helpful.

**Hearing Quality Project:**

**Project title:** Shelter Care Hearing Observation

**Provide a concise description of the hearing quality project selected in your jurisdiction.**

Since the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227) passed the state legislature in 2021, CIP has been at the forefront of statewide efforts to prepare dependency courts for the implementation of the new law. Part of these efforts included collaboration with the Washington Center for Court Research (WSCCR) to develop a plan to monitor HB 1227 implementation, which involved creation of the Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool which was designed to collect data at initial shelter care court hearings before and after HB 1227 to assess alignment with new legal requirements and evaluate changes in court practice.

**Approximate date that the project began:**

April 2023

**Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?**

Phase V

### **How was the need for this project identified? (Phase I)**

In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227), to emphasize the importance of child well-being within their families and communities. Effective July 2023, KFTA introduced significant changes to shelter care court procedures in cases of child abuse and neglect. These changes include emergency removal standards, early notification processes, discovery procedures, assignment of counsel, safety assessments, in-home pre-fact-finding, prevention services, housing assistance, and placement considerations for relatives or suitable individuals. HB 1227 also contains a number of new provisions that directly impact administrative court processes and procedures, including that all discoverable materials be provided prior to the Shelter Care Hearing and the requirement to hold an additional Shelter Care Hearing any time a child is removed during the life of a case. The many statutory changes made by HB 1227 were intended to create a more equitable Shelter Care process that results in better outcomes for all families, with anticipated outcomes including:

- Decrease in overall number of child removals;
- Reduction of racial/ethnic disparities;
- Decrease in number of Dependency Petitions filed;
- Increase in number of children who return/remain home at the Shelter Care Hearing;
- Increase in utilization of prevention services (safety plans) during the Shelter Care process;
- Less time spent in out-of-home care for children who are removed;
- Increase in percentage of kinship placements (relatives and suitable others) at the Shelter Care Hearing.

The magnitude of the statutory changes made in HB 1227 created the need for a robust data evaluation plan for monitoring the impacts of HB 1227 on dependency court systems. The FWCC's Data & Evaluation Workgroup created a sustainable plan for identifying, collecting, tracking, and evaluating system process and outcomes associated with HB 1227. This group's objective was to collaborate and document what will change as a result of HB 1227 and what would be quantifiable, visible, and trackable in the courtroom from the perspective of each dependency professional. The plan created by the Data & Evaluation Workgroup included development of a court observation tool for assessing the impacts of HB 1227 on court process and practice at Shelter Care Hearings.

### **What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II)**

Create a HB 1227 hearing observation tool for evaluating quality of Shelter Care Hearing practices in local courts:

SO THAT relevant data points can be collected;

SO THAT any significant changes, patterns, and trends can be assessed;

SO THAT the quality of practice at Shelter Care Hearing can be analyzed;

SO THAT the quality of Shelter Care Hearing practice prior to HB 1227 can be compared to the quality of Shelter Care Hearing practices after HB 1227 goes into effect;

SO THAT any impacts of HB 1227 in improving the quality of practice at Shelter Care Hearings can be determined;

AND THAT the effectiveness of tools and resources created by CIP to support HB 1227 implementation can be assessed;

SO THAT effective tools, resources, and future learning opportunities can be developed to support quality Shelter Care Hearing practice;  
AND THAT court communities can accurately assess their policies and practices;  
SO THAT court communities have the skills, knowledge and capacity to hold quality Shelter Care Hearings;  
SO THAT children are not unnecessarily removed from their homes;  
AND THAT when children are removed from the home they do not remain out of the home longer than necessary.

**Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? If yes, what is it? (Phase III)**

Creation and implementation of a *Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool* to accurately capture relevant data points and provides valuable insights into the implementation of new practices during the Shelter Care Hearing. Researchers will use this tool to collect and analyze performance measure data that can be used to evaluate the impacts of the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227) on the quality of the Shelter Care Hearing process. Local court systems will have the knowledge and capacity to utilize the *Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool* in the continuous evaluation and quality improvement of their Shelter Care Hearing process.

**If your solution/intervention includes training, please provide a title and brief description of any training(s).**

**What has been done to implement the project? (Phase IV)**

Since April 2023, the CIP has supported WSCCR in partnering with graduate students from the University of Washington's School of Public Health to develop and evaluate an observation tool for shelter care hearings. Development of the tool involved multiple stages. A comprehensive review of relevant materials, including the HB 1227 bill, academic literature, national reports of hearing quality, and available resources was conducted. Next, key system partners involved in dependency proceedings were interviewed, including professionals from the Office of Public Defense (OPD), the Parents for Parents (P4P) coordinator, and a representative from DCYF. These interviews focused on the changes brought by HB 1227 and how the changes could impact the professional roles and court practices. One of the HB 1227 authors was also interviewed to gain insights into the legislative background and intended purpose of the statutory changes contained in the bill. Using these data, WSCCR compiled a list of significant data elements. Collaborating with the Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance (JCAMP) Community of Practice, and the Capacity Building Center for Courts (CBCC) helped us incorporate industry benchmarks and best practices into our tool. The Data & Evaluation Workgroup were also instrumental in defining the tool's objective and creating a comprehensive list of data elements. Dr. Alicia Summers also provided guidance on identifying the most critical data elements and condensing them into a concise format.

After designing the initial draft of the tool, we solicited feedback from the CBCC, Data & Evaluation Workgroup, DCYF, OPD, Attorney General's Office, and P4P to ensure the tool adequately captured the major changes associated with HB 1227. Based on this feedback, we modified the tool and tested it in the field with volunteer court sites (all part of the Family & Juvenile Court Improvement Program). The primary objective of testing was to assess how the tool is functioning in real-world courtrooms. Although the tool had been created based on research and input from many important groups in the dependency community, we needed to ensure that it would work well when used during shelter care hearings. The goal was to identify any elements that might be missing and to determine necessary modifications based on the observations made during court proceedings.

The Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool includes a detailed list of attendees at hearings, assessments of questions asked by judges, breadth and depth of discussion, judicial engagement, and involvement of attorneys and social workers. It also evaluates the active participation and advocacy of legal representatives, services ordered for parents and children, considerations related to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), accommodations for incarcerated parents, interpreter provisions, and placement decisions. Additionally, the tool records placement decisions, visitation, and family time details, along with efforts to prevent removal. A designated section allows observers to note any additional observations during the hearing. CIP assisted WSCCR is adapting the Shelter Care Hearing Observation Tool into a fillable electronic format that allows for the easy merging and compiling of aggregate data.

Following the tool's finalization, a codebook was created to assist research assistants and future observers in using the tool. The codebook explains how to interpret and fill out each element, providing clarity and increasing validity. It was developed in close contact with the tool's creators and modeled after the Nebraska Court's Procedures Manual and Codebook to ensure consistency and professionalism.

Court observations took place from July through September 2023, which coincided with the implementation of HB1227 (effective July 1, 2023). Of note was an overall decrease in dependency petition filings at the state level. For instance, in one county, there has been a substantial 70% reduction in dependency petition filings during the summer months, with only four petitions filed in July.

Three observers (Principal Research Associate and two Research Assistants) conducted the court observations. They selected Shelter Care Hearings conducted via Zoom based on notifications from courts and the availability of the observers. Court staff from each county would inform the observers about upcoming shelter care hearings through email and provide the Zoom links for attendance. Due to the short notice of these hearings, ranging from 72 hours to less than 24 hours in advance, it was challenging for all three observers to attend the same hearings. Most often, two observers attended a hearing, and occasionally only one researcher observed a particular hearing. In order to ensure reliability and adequately test the tool we aimed to watch multiple hearings. We used an iterative process to refine the tool, collecting feedback from each observer and adjusting the tool and codebook accordingly.

*Implementation:* Over the past reporting year, following extensive field testing, the Shelter Care Observation Tool has been finalized and is now available for use by dependency courts across Washington State. Courts can use this tool to assess and reflect on their shelter care hearing practices and determine how well they align with the requirements of HB 1227. The tool has been posted on the [FJCIP website](#), and our state team is available to provide technical support. Coordinators can receive one-on-one guidance on how to apply the tool in real courtroom settings. We also plan to offer at least two statewide training sessions in the coming months and will continue to be available to answer questions and offer support as courts begin using the tool.

To assist with implementation, we have also prepared a comprehensive codebook that explains each element of the observation form and offers step-by-step guidance for conducting and reviewing hearings, either live or through audio recordings. Together, these resources are designed to help courts strengthen their practices under HB 1227, promote thoughtful decision-making, and uphold the law's intent to preserve family connections and support safe, timely reunification.

*Petition Analysis:* To complement the courtroom observations, researchers are conducting a text mining analysis of 150 dependency petitions from King, Clark, Pierce, Spokane, Thurston and Snohomish counties. These petitions were linked to the same cases included in our shelter care hearing study. The sample was evenly split between cases filed before and after HB 1227 took effect on July 1, 2023.

Dependency petitions are often the first and only document a judge sees before making decisions about whether a child should be removed from the home. Using a combination of manual review and computer-assisted text mining, we tracked changes across nine key topics, including living conditions, substance use, mental health, physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, safety concerns, criminal justice involvement, and engagement with community services.

The preliminary results (shown below) reflect the proportion of total petition content devoted to each topic:

- Substance use and criminal justice involvement were mentioned less often after HB 1227 took effect (substance use: from 13% to 6.6%; criminal justice: from 8.2% to 5.7%). This may suggest a growing awareness that not all background risk factors meet the new legal standard for removal, especially if there is no clear, current link to danger in the home.
- Physical abuse and sexual abuse were mentioned more often post-implementation (physical abuse: 8.7% to 10%; sexual abuse: 0.7% to 1.4%). This indicates greater emphasis on specific, present dangers, which aligns with HB 1227's requirement to justify removal based on imminent risk of harm.
- Engagement with community services increased (from 5.2% to 7.9%). This likely reflects improved documentation of efforts to support families through in-home or community-based services, which are key components of HB 1227.
- Mentions of neglect remained steady (both around 4.25%). These ongoing concerns continue to be part of case narratives but did not change significantly in response to the law.

This petition analysis, when combined with our court observation findings, gives us a more complete picture of how HB 1227 is shaping practice, from how cases are written up to how they are heard in court. It can inform improvements in training, petition drafting, and courtroom decision-making, ensuring the system remains focused on safety, prevention, and keeping families together whenever possible.

**How are you or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project?** (Phase V). *Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc.) and what results you have, if any. If you have already evaluated your effort, what do the data show, and how did you use these data to modify or expand the project?*

Researchers conducted 123 structured observations of shelter care hearings in counties including King, Clark, Pierce, and Spokane, 44 observed live via Zoom and 79 coded from court-provided audio recordings. The sample includes 58 hearings conducted before implementation and 65 hearings after the law went into effect. Overall, the post-HB1227 landscape displayed a more comprehensive, detailed, and focused approach to legal proceedings. The improvements observed across various metrics indicate a shift toward a more involved and considerate process, emphasizing parental involvement, thorough assessments, and a more proactive approach in ensuring the child's safety and well-being. CIP will be utilizing these results in future training and technical assistance efforts, along with sharing the findings with all relevant system partners, including representatives from the state legislature.

A major accomplishment over the last reporting period was expanding the sample to include 40 additional hearings from Snohomish County (20 pre-HB 1227 and 20 post-implementation). These were recently coded and integrated into the full dataset, increasing the sample size from 124 to 160 hearings. While the Snohomish data are not yet included in the findings shared below, we will soon re-run our analyses to include them and assess whether observed trends remain consistent across a broader, more representative set of cases.

## Key Findings

- On average, there was an increase in the average length of shelter care hearings, from 78 minutes to 93 minutes, that is 20% increase
- Post-HB 1227, there was a 17-percentage-point increase (from 69% to 86%) in parental attendance. The increase was particularly notable for mothers, with a 15-percentage point increase in attendance. Fathers also showed a positive change, with an 8-percentage point increase. Attending hearings allows parents to voice their concerns, share insights into their family situation, and present information that might not be documented elsewhere. For CASA/GAL: we also documented increase in attendance, from 5% to 18%.
- Post-HB1227, judges seem to be engaging with parents more interactively. We found a rise (45%) in judges addressing parents directly. Furthermore, there has been a 14% increase in conversations regarding the future stages and a 12% drop in judge interruptions points to a change in focus toward active listening.
  - *Overall, these results show a positive trend towards a more parent-centered approach in interactions during shelter care hearings.*
- Post-HB1227, there has been an increased focus on potential harm. Judges discussing the potential harms of removing children from their families rose by 30%, from 12% to 42%. There was also a 26% increase in judges balancing the threat of removal against the potential harms of keeping children at home, promoting a more nuanced approach to decision-making. Additionally, judges are 24% more likely to verbally discuss reasonable efforts to prevent removal on the record.

#### **Have there been notable factors that delayed or accelerated this effort?**

Partnering with graduate students from the University of Washington's School of Public Health significantly accelerated this effort. Involving students in this research project supplied much needed capacity for observing and coding hearings. It also provided practical experience for the students in research design and methodology, along with strengthening CIP's relationship with the university and community.

#### **What assistance or support would be helpful from the CLJIA or the Children's Bureau to help move the project forward?**

- Connections with other jurisdictions that have implemented similar reforms or research projects, allowing sharing of best practices and lessons learned.
- Assistance with creating a plan for sustaining the project beyond the initial stages, which may involve securing ongoing funding or integrating the observation tool into standard court practices.

## **Quality Legal Representation Project:**

**Project title:** Legal Training Capacity and Resource Enhancement

#### **Provide a concise description of the quality legal representation project selected in your jurisdiction.**

The *Legal Training Capacity and Resource Enhancement* project aims to improve legal representation in Washington State dependency cases by updating chapters of the *Washington State Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook* and creating corresponding e-course training modules. Through a

collaborative process with attorney partners and leveraging Articulate360 technology, the project ensures that judicial officers, attorneys, and child welfare professionals have access to consistent, role-specific, and legally accurate training resources. Ultimately, the project seeks to strengthen advocacy, support procedural justice, and improve outcomes for children and families involved in dependency proceedings.

**Approximate date that the project began:** November 2024

**Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?**

Phase IV: Plan, Prepare, and Implement

**How was the need for this project identified? (Phase I)**

[Washington State Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook](#): The Washington State Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook (Benchbook) outlines the state and federal statutory requirements for judicial officers hearing cases involving the welfare of children. The Benchbook contains topical sections as well as statutory and case law citations, including hyperlinks. This is an invaluable resource for judicial officers presiding over cases involving youth. Benchbook chapters are available to read online or download as a PDF. Chapters can be accessed using the navigation side bar on the right. Revisions to the Benchbook are overseen by the Benchbook Advisory Group (BAG). Members of this multi-disciplinary partnership coordinate with subject matter experts to author/revise Benchbook chapter content and take an active role in the editing process. While the Benchbook was originally designed for and is primarily used by judicial officers, many attorneys and other child welfare system partners may also find it to be informative and helpful. The first iteration of the Benchbook was published in 2011 and remains one of the frequently accessed resources on the Family & Youth Justice Programs' website. While CIP has made updates a priority in recent years, a significant number of chapters are still out-of-date. The slow progression in chapter updates has been largely due to a lack of legal partner capacity in making these time-intensive proposed revisions.

[Statewide Dependency Trainer Group](#): CIP staff are a part of a statewide group of training coordinators that includes attorney trainers from the Office of Public Defense, Office of Civil Legal Aid, Attorney General's Office, and Akin (parent with lived experience). The Statewide Dependency Trainer Group meets on a regular basis to discuss overlapping training needs and coordinate joint efforts. This group identified a statewide need for generalized training on the dependency court system and process that contains the same core information that judicial officers receive but can be adapted to meet the needs of specific attorney roles (e.g., parent attorneys). The group created a collaborative process that aims to utilize updated content of Washington State Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook to create e-course modules for dependency courts and adapted to meet the role-specific training needs of the attorney partners. The attorney trainers bring a vast wealth of legal experience and knowledge whereas CIP staff contribute advanced expertise in instructional design and e-course creation.

[Articulate 360 Training](#): CIP started using Articulate360 Software Suite in 2022 to create online e-courses and tools (e.g., iDecide). Over time, the products created by CIP using Articulate360 became so popular that the Office of Public Defense, Office of Civil Legal Aid, and Akin decided to purchase licenses for their trainers. The cross-system congruency in instructional design platform greatly increases the ability of content sharing among agencies and has furthered the need to create collaborative, defined processes for creating and sharing digital training content. This sharing of content not only increases the efficiency and consolidation of training efforts, it also helps ensure that training content across courts and legal partners is consistent and in alignment with current law. At the request of these training partners, CIP will be offering bi-monthly training for the

Statewide Dependency Trainer Group on how to use the software to create courses. CIP staff will also provide technical assistance to these training partners to answer questions, help resolve issues and consult on course design.

**What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II)**

Creation of a collaborative process with attorney partners for updating chapters of the Washington State Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook (“Benchbook”) and creation of corresponding e-course modules.

SO THAT chapters within the Benchbook are updated;

SO THAT judicial officers, attorneys, and other system partners have access to procedural guidance that aligns with current law and practice;

AND THAT accurate content is available for CIP to create corresponding e-course modules for each chapter;

SO THAT judicial officers, attorneys, and other system partners have access to high-quality online training on the process and procedures of dependency cases;

AND THAT CIP shares the raw back-end files for e-course creation with the attorney partners;

SO THAT attorney partners can adapt the e-course module content to be attorney role-specific;

SO THAT attorney partners can deploy modified e-course modules on their agencies’ respective internal Learning Management Systems (LMS);

SO THAT attorneys have access to role-specific training that is in alignment with current law and practice;

SO THAT attorneys representing parties in dependency cases have the knowledge, understanding, and skills necessary to meaningfully engage in hearing advocacy;

SO THAT attorneys have increased capacity for providing high quality representation to their clients;

SO THAT procedural justice is ensured and system efficiency is supported;

SO THAT children are not unnecessarily removed from their homes;

AND THAT children achieve timely permanency when they are removed from their home;

AND THAT systemic inequities are reduced;

SO THAT families experience improved outcomes in dependency cases.

**Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? If yes, what is it? (Phase III)**

Yes, a solution/intervention has been identified and is currently being implemented.

The intervention involves a collaborative process with attorney partners to update key chapters of the Washington State Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook and to develop corresponding e-course training modules using Articulate360, in addition to increasing training partner capacity to use Articulate360. The modules that are developed will be:

- Used to provide consistent, high-quality online training to judicial officers, attorneys, and child welfare professionals.
- Adapted by attorney partners to create role-specific training for various legal positions (e.g., parent attorneys).
- Shared across agencies to ensure legal accuracy, alignment with current practices, and training efficiency.

This solution directly addresses the identified needs of outdated Benchbook content and the lack of accessible, standardized attorney training.

**If your solution/intervention includes training, please provide a title and brief description of any training(s).**

**E-Learning Modules:** The e-learning modules developed through this project will be included in [CIP's Dependency 101 for Judicial Officers Online Course](#). This course provides foundational training on the Washington State dependency court process, based on updated chapters from the *Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook*. Developed using Articulate360, the modules are designed for judicial officers, attorneys, and other system partners. Each module delivers consistent, legally accurate procedural guidance and is adaptable for specific legal roles (e.g., parent attorneys).

**System Partner Training:** Bi-monthly training sessions on Articulate360 and ongoing instructional design support for legal system partners.

**What has been done to implement the project? (Phase IV)**

CIP has taken several strategic steps since the project began in November 2024. A collaborative process was established with attorney partners to update key chapters of the Washington State Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook. These updates are now actively being translated into high-quality, legally accurate e-learning modules using the Articulate360 platform. The following chapters have been updated since the project began: [Children in Need of Services \(CHINS\)](#); [Representation for Children and Youth](#); [Parent Representation in Child Welfare Proceedings](#); [Shelter Care](#); [Fact-Finding Hearing](#); [Disposition Hearing](#); [Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children \(ICPC\)](#).

CIP has also started building and offering foundational e-learning content, including the *Dependency 101 for Judicial Officers Online Course*, to ensure consistent and role-specific training. At the same time, CIP is training and providing technical assistance to dependency system trainers from the Office of Public Defense, Office of Civil Legal Aid, and Akin to expand their capacity to create and adapt these modules for use in their agencies' learning management systems. The following modules have been created since the project began: [Shelter Care](#); [Fact-Finding](#); [Disposition Hearing](#).

The implementation also includes the sharing of backend e-course files with legal partners, enabling content customization for role-specific legal training. Bi-monthly training sessions on Articulate360 and ongoing instructional design support have begun, helping ensure sustainability and cross-system consistency.

**How are you or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V).** *Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc.) and what results you have, if any. If you have already evaluated your effort, what do the data show, and how did you use these data to modify or expand the project?*

**Benchbook Chapter Updates:** We are using milestone tracking to monitor the completion of revised chapters in the Washington State Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook. Progress is reviewed in collaboration with the Benchbook Advisory Group to ensure legal accuracy and timely advancement.

**E-Course Development and Deployment:** The creation and publication of each e-course module via Articulate360 is tracked through internal project management systems. Modules are reviewed for quality, legal accuracy, and alignment with updated Benchbook content prior to release. CIP is able to see how many average views per month each course module has and is currently working to implement a learning management system, or related alternative, which will provide key course analytics such as usage data, completion rates, and post-course evaluations.

**Cross-System Coordination:** The Statewide Dependency Trainer Group serves as a key venue for shared monitoring. Regular meetings allow for updates, peer review, and alignment of efforts across agencies, ensuring consistency and responsiveness to emerging needs.

**Have there been notable factors that delayed or accelerated this effort?**

A significant accelerant has been the widespread adoption of the Articulate360 platform by system partners, including the Office of Public Defense, Office of Civil Legal Aid, and Akin. This shared use of a common instructional design platform has streamlined collaboration, enabled efficient content sharing, and increased consistency in training products across agencies. It has also strengthened the sustainability of training efforts by allowing attorney partners to adapt and deploy modules directly within their internal learning systems.

However, there have also been notable delays. One key challenge has been the inconsistent availability of system partners for the bi-monthly Articulate360 training sessions, which are essential for building shared capacity and ensuring progress in e-course development. Additionally, staff turnover within the Attorney General's Office, namely the decision to not rehire for their Training Coordinator position, has impacted continuity and slowed contributions to content development and review. These delays have required flexibility in timelines and ongoing coordination to keep the project moving forward.

**What assistance or support would be helpful from the CLJIA or the Children's Bureau to help move the project forward?**

Support with designing robust evaluation tools to track e-course impact, usage, and learning outcomes, particularly as CIP transitions to an online learning system, would enhance our ability to monitor progress and demonstrate effectiveness.

Insights or resources related to the long-term sustainability of digital training content, including strategies for content maintenance, platform integration, and scaling role-specific adaptations.

## **Projects, Activities, and Training**

For questions 1-13, provide a *concise* description of work completed or underway to date in FY 2025 (October 2024+ ) in the topical subcategories below where applicable.

### **Training Overall**

**Did you have any significant training efforts not related to a particular project (those are now integrated under 2 to 14 below)? If yes, please describe.**

*Understanding the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227) Presentation:* CIP staff partnered with the Department of Children, Youth, & Families (DCYF) and the Office of Public Defense (OPD) to co-present on the impacts that the Keeping Families Together Act (HB 1227) has had on state child welfare practice to 34 staff members of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) across the state. This training explored HB 1227's elevated standards for child removal and the mandated judicial balancing of potential removal harms against in-home safety threats. The training also addressed some of the impacts of HB 1227 on court practices, highlighting the need for cross-system communication and collaboration.

**On average, how many training events do you hold per year?** On average, we typically host 25 to 30 training events per year.

**What is your best prediction for the number of attorneys, judges, or other legal system community members that will participate in training annually?** On average, we reach 1000 – 1500 court and community partners through our trainings.

The Family First Prevention Services Act amended the Social Security Act adding an eligibility criterion for the training of judges and attorneys on the congregate care provisions of the Act. See the highlighted portion below.

(1) IN GENERAL.— In order to be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a highest State court ... shall provide for the training of judges, attorneys, and other legal personnel in child welfare cases on Federal child welfare policies and payment limitations with respect to children in foster care who are placed in settings that are not a foster family home...—

**Have you been involved in planning with the agency on implementing Family First?**  Yes  No

If yes, please describe how the CIP has been involved.

**Have you developed/been developing your Family First judicial training plan?**  Yes  No

If yes, please describe what you have done.

**1. Data Projects.** Data projects include any work with administrative data sets (e.g, AFCARS, CCWIS), data dashboards, data reports, fostering court improvement data, case management systems, and data sharing efforts.

Do you have a data project/activity?  Yes  No

Project Title and Description	Project Sub-category	CQI Stage (if applicable)
<p><b>SB 6068: Relational Permanency and Child Well-Being</b>                      This legislatively mandated project engages consultants to assess the current landscape of data related to child relational permanence and well-being in dependency cases. The consultants are identifying existing data sources, evaluating their quality and accessibility, and determining what additional data is needed to fully understand and support children's long-term connections and well-being. Based on their findings, the consultants will develop a plan for improving data collection and integration, which will be submitted to the legislature to inform policy and resource decisions that strengthen child welfare and court practices.</p>	<p>Agency Data Sharing Efforts</p>	<p>Identifying/Assessing Needs</p>

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<p><b>WA Dependency Data Share Efforts</b> - Child data is extracted from the DCYF FAMLINK data system. This data is then used to match back to WA Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) case file data. The data-sharing agreement between AOC and DCYF will expire on June 30, 2025. AOC is actively working with DCYF to generate a new agreement to resume data sharing capabilities.</p>	Agency Data Sharing Efforts	Identifying/Assessing Needs
<p><b>WA Dependency Data Dashboards/Reports</b> - A public facing Washington State Dependency Timeliness Dashboard was created in November 2017 using Tableau software. On average, the Dashboard gets around 2,000 hits per month. Data will remain available through the Dashboard, however it will no longer be updated after April 1, 2025. Renegotiation of the data share agreement with DCYF will determine how we present public dependency data in the future.</p>	Data dashboards	Selecting Solution
<p><b>WA Interactive Dependency Timeliness Report (iDTR)</b> Interactive reports use Microsoft Excel pivot tables that allow the user to view state and individual county data for broad comparisons or person/case-specific information. After April 1, 2025, the iDTR was no longer available. CIP and AOC research staff are developing reports for court data to be used by local courts until the new integrated data reporting system is developed.</p>	Data dashboards	Selecting Solution
<p><b>CCWIS</b> Over the past reporting year, CIP staff engaged in planning and preparation activities to support statewide implementation of CCWIS.</p>	Use of AFCARS or CCWIS data	Selecting Solution

(a) Do you have data reports that you consistently view?  Yes     No

(b) How are these reports used to support your work? Reports are used to assist in determining which jurisdictions may need assistance in focusing their efforts on certain aspects of their dependency practice, including ensuring equitable access to specialty courts and other resources. Through the Dependency Dashboard, publicly available and regularly updated data is employed to describe trends and identify high performing jurisdictions and effective court practices. Data reports are shared with child welfare and court system partners. Reporting capabilities will be significantly impacted until a new data share agreement is reached with DCYF.

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers Court Staff	20 people over 10 different training sessions	On-going virtual training for FJCIP, family treatment and early childhood court coordinators to use iDTR and incorporate data into local CQI efforts.	Increased capacity of courts to use the iDTR to support improvement efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

**2. Legal Representation.** Legal representation projects include any efforts you have made to improve the quality of legal representation for parents, children and youth, the agency, or others. List projects here if you have any in addition to the required project.

Do you have (an additional) legal representation project/activity? Yes No

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<b>Legal Standards Comparison Chart</b> The <a href="#">Legal Standards Comparison Chart</a> was created in response to system confusion over the correct legal standard to apply in decision-making before and after disposition is entered. CIP has worked to continuously update this tool over the last reporting period to align with changes in the law.	Multi-Disciplinary Representation	Implementation
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**3. Hearing Quality.** Hearing quality projects include any efforts you have made to improve the quality of child welfare hearings, including court observation/assessment projects, process improvements, specialty/pilot court projects, projects related to court orders or title IV-E determinations, mediation, or appeals. List projects here if you have any in addition to the required project.

Do you have (an additional) hearing quality project/activity?  Yes  No

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<b>iDecide</b> The <a href="#">iDecide</a> tool is a web-based application that is designed to support dependency court systems in understanding and applying the law in decisions regarding removal, placement, and family time visitation at the Shelter Care Hearing. CIP has worked to continuously update iDecide over this last reporting period to align with legislative and appellate decisions.	Process Improvements	Implementation

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<p><b>Jurist-in-Residence Program</b>  The <a href="#">Jurist-in-Residence (JIR)</a> program supports high quality judicial practice by making multiple experienced, retired dependency court judges available to advise on trainings and offer one-on-one mentorship to current dependency court judicial officers. JIRs have expertise in effective judicial practice, court management, dependency system leadership, and related areas. They lead the Judicial Community of Practice (JCoP) and contribute to the development of trainings, materials, policies, and multi-system collaborative efforts.</p>	Process Improvements	Implementation
<p><b>Dependency Judicial Rotation Support Guide</b>  The <a href="#">Dependency Rotation Judicial Support Guide</a> is designed to support judicial officers rotating onto the dependency bench. Recognizing the complexities and high stakes involved in dependency court, this resource provides essential tools, resources, and training to help judicial officers navigate this critical area of the law. Whether a judicial officer is new to dependency court or seeking to deepen their expertise, this resource will serve as an invaluable tool throughout their rotation.</p>	Process Improvements	Implementation

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<p>The FWCC's <a href="#">Meaningful Shelter Care Hearing Workgroup</a> previously identified core components of meaningful shelter care hearings and developed the <a href="#">Shelter Care Think Tank</a> resource. This resource brings together cross-system partners to support local dependency courts in identifying barriers and developing solutions to improve shelter care hearings. While the Think Tank resource is not currently being promoted or actively utilized, it remains available for use upon request. The project is on hold unless a request for support is received. There may be an opportunity to revitalize or further integrate this resource through current work on parent engagement at shelter care, though this has not yet been determined.</p>	<p>Process Improvements</p>	<p>Evaluation/Assessment</p>

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers	10 sessions; 7-15 attendees per session;	The <a href="#">Judicial Community of Practice (JCoP)</a> consists of monthly virtual peer-learning sessions that are topic-focused and facilitated by a Jurist-in-Residence. Topics covered in JCoP during this reporting year included: supporting transitions for infants and young children; improving time to fact-finding; barriers to permanency; high potency synthetic opioids; hope science; incarcerated parents; Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD); judicial ethics.	Increase judicial capacity by providing a safe environment to learn about the best-practices being used in dependency courts and talk with peers about shared issues.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, Court Administrators, FJCIP Coordinators	38 judicial officers; 3 court administrators; 12 FJCIP Coordinators; 1 Court of Appeals Law Clerk	At the multi-day, virtual <a href="#">2025 Dependency Judicial Training Academy</a> , participants received presentations on case law and legislative updates, judicial ethics, role of legal representation for children, concrete supports for families, engagement of fathers, and strategies for presiding over dependency cases involving children and youth who have experienced trafficking.	<p>Increase understanding of the current state of child welfare, and recent legislative and appellate decisions impacting dependency courts.</p> <p>Build the capacity of courts to make decisions that best support children and families.</p> <p>Enhance ability of judicial officers to successfully navigate the Code of Judicial Conduct in the context of dependency cases and seek out advice for ethical dilemmas.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**4. Improving Timeliness of Hearings or Permanency Outcomes.** Timeliness and permanency projects include any activities or projects meant to improve the timeliness of case processing or achievement of timely permanency. This could include general timeliness, focus on continuances or appeals, working on improvement in specific outcomes such as around reunification, guardianship, adoption or a focus on APPLA and older youth.

Do you have a timeliness or permanency project/activity? Yes No

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<b>FJCIP Data Mapping Tool</b> CIP continues to maintain and provide updates to the <a href="#">FJCIP Mapping Tool</a> which guides dependency court professionals through the dependency timeline and learn what data is available to them each area of the timeline. This effort will be impacted by the ending of the data share agreement between AOC and DCYF.	General/ASFA	Evaluation/Assessment
<b>FWCC Guardianship Workgroup</b> The <a href="#">FWCC's Guardianship Workgroup</a> has been working to develop tip sheets and training resources to enhance the ability of dependency courts to utilize Title 13 and Title 11 guardianships in ways that promote positive outcomes for families.	Guardianship	Implementation
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**5. Engagement & Participation of Parties.** Engagement and participation of parties includes any efforts centered around youth, parent, foster family or caregiver, or relative engagement, limited English proficiency, or other efforts to increase presence and engagement at the hearing.

Do you have an engagement or participation of parties project/activity?  Yes  No

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<p><b>Protein for All</b>  CIP continues to support the implementation of <a href="#">Protein for All</a> into dependency court practice. Protein for All provides education and resources to engage and support individuals and families who find themselves navigating the legal system while experiencing challenges such as food insecurity, homelessness or high levels of stress.</p>	Engagement Skills	Evaluation/Assessment

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<p>The Engaging Parents at Shelter Care Workgroup is focused on improving the early experience and outcomes for parents in dependency court cases. The workgroup is facilitated by CIP staff, with a parent and a former youth with lived experience. With input from over 20 parents and youth, the workgroup is developing printable and interactive journey maps supported by a graphic design consultant. These maps will serve as training tools for local court communities and may inform broader community mapping to better understand available resources. The group is also developing a high-level “purpose to practice” tool to shape future training content and identify key participants, though a formal training plan or rollout has not yet been finalized.</p> <p>The workgroup has expanded to include new partnerships with the state child welfare agency and community organizations, and it continues to recruit Lived Experts through a structured partnership framework. Parent and youth voices remain central, and efforts are underway to include tribal partners. Final project tools will integrate with related program initiatives, including plain language glossaries to address language barriers, as well as elements of trauma-informed practices, the science of hope, the ABA safety framework, and research on the harms of removal. The group is still evaluating needs and determining which components and resources will have the greatest impact.</p>	<p>Parent Engagement</p>	<p>Identifying/Assessing Needs</p>

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<p data-bbox="130 175 844 243"><b>Language Glossaries for the Washington Child Welfare System</b></p> <p data-bbox="130 248 844 646">The cross-system workgroup, which includes strong representation from lived experts, has finalized a draft acronym glossary that will be housed on the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) website. To promote access and awareness, the group is developing a flyer featuring a QR code that will link users directly to the glossary and allow them to submit requests for changes or additions. Once the flyer and QR code are complete, the first phase of the project will move into implementation.</p> <p data-bbox="130 688 844 1153">Concurrently, the workgroup will begin developing a second, more comprehensive glossary that replaces harmful language, defines complex child welfare terms, and explains legal and system language in plain terms. DCYF has committed to creating searchable online versions of both glossaries, with printable and interactive formats available to all users of the child welfare system. Community feedback will be collected through the QR code process, and the workgroup will meet twice annually to review input and update the glossaries, ensuring the resource remains current and useful.</p>	Other	Implementation

Project Title and Description	Project Sub-category	CQI Stage (if applicable)
<p><b>Promotional Materials for Attending Dependency Hearings Videos</b></p> <p>The <a href="#">Virtual Hearing Support Videos</a> have been available through the FYJP website since 2023 and are being used by courts as part of their work. We monitor usage using web analytics and ongoing feedback from court communities. CIP is working with translators and our original consultant to update the videos with instructions for joining hearings via the Teams platform.</p>	Parent Engagement	Evaluation/Assessment

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**6. Well-Being.** Well-being projects include any efforts related to improving the well-being of children and youth. Projects could focus on education, early childhood development, health, trauma, social network support, cultural connections, or other well-being related topics.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on well-being?  Yes  No

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<p><b>Science of Hope Community of Practice and Listserv</b></p> <p>CIP hosts a monthly <a href="#">Science of Hope Community of Practice</a> that brings together child welfare court partners, private organizations implementing hope-based practices, and community partners. This community of practice supports participants in deepening their understanding of the science of hope and explores practical strategies to increase client success and reduce staff burnout.</p> <p>To further support this work, the program also maintains an email listserv that provides subscribers with Science of Hope updates and resources.</p> <p>Currently, we are tracking participation by monitoring the number of people who register for the community of practice and the listserv.</p>	Other	Implementation

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<p><b>Hope Rising WA</b>  The original vision for Hope Rising WA was to create a central, statewide intermediary—through partnerships with Mentor WA and Kitsap Strong—to coordinate Science of Hope efforts across child and family serving organizations in Washington. This intermediary hosted Hope Rising WA and statewide Hope Navigation activities, helping to connect organizations and foster interest in the Science of Hope.</p> <p>However, due to limited interest and lack of funding, this effort did not move forward as planned. As a result, the focus of our hope-centered systems work has shifted to supporting and strengthening the Science of Hope Community of Practice, where we continue to build momentum and coordinate hope-based activities statewide.</p>	Other	Implementation
<p><b>Hope Navigator Community of Practice</b>  The <a href="#">Hope Navigator Community of Practice</a> alternates monthly sessions between <a href="#">Kitsap Strong</a> and Family and Youth Justice Programs. Kitsap Strong provides a deeper dive into the science of hope, while Family and Youth Justice Programs focuses on helping system partners—including lived experts—identify and develop their own projects using implementation science. To date, 60 system partners have been trained to serve as Hope Navigators, with Lived Experts making up half of this group. This structure has provided participants with both advanced knowledge of hope-centered approaches and valuable project management skills.</p>	Other	Implementation

Project Title and Description	Project Sub-category	CQI Stage (if applicable)
<p><b>Improving Child Welfare Court Culture with Hope-Centered Leadership</b>            Family and Youth Justice Programs successfully hosted an event designed for court and child welfare system leaders focused on improving the culture and civility of dependency court communities. In collaboration with Dr. Chan Hellman, participants explored strategies for building a hope-centered culture that fosters common purpose and collaboration. The event encouraged professionals to shift from a focus on conflict and recrimination to prioritizing respect and positive outcomes for families and children.</p> <p>Event participants, including parent and youth attorneys, child welfare department staff, attorney generals, and guardian ad litem representatives, worked together to identify actionable next steps for promoting hope-centered court communities and implementing positive changes at the local level. The work and momentum from this event will continue through related efforts, including Hope Navigator projects and the Engaging Parents at Shelter Care initiative.</p>	Other	Implementation

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child Welfare System and Community Partners	137	Hope Awareness Training- In-person	Understand the basics of the science of hope and it's applications.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child Welfare System Partner Leaders, including leaders from Department of Children Youth and Families, Office of Civil Legal Aid, the Office of Public Defense, Parents 4 Parents, and others	99	Improving Child Welfare Culture- In-person	Basics of the Science of Hope  How to incorporate Hope into Leadership  How the science of hope can improve child welfare culture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

7. **ICWA/Tribal collaboration.** These projects could include any efforts to enhance state and tribal collaboration, state and tribal court agreements, data collection and analysis including of Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on ICWA or tribal collaboration?  Yes  No

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<p><b>Development of Yakima County <a href="#">ICWA Court</a></b>            Court Improvement Program staff supported Yakima County Superior Court in partnering with the Yakama Nation, Central Council of the Tlingit &amp; Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, and other court partners to develop an Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) court. The ICWA court is now fully implemented and operating, providing a dedicated space to address ICWA cases and support culturally responsive practices for Native children and families.</p>	Tribal Collaboration	Implementation
<p><b>ICW Subcommittee</b>            CIP staff regularly attends monthly meetings between DCYF's Office of Tribal Relations, DCFY leaders, Tribal leaders and their staff to learn more about changes at DCYF related to ICWA and tribal families, and to share information about court activities related to ICWA and tribal families.</p>	Tribal Collaboration	Implementation
<p><b>Tribal State Court Consortium (TSCC) and Minority Justice Symposium</b>            Court Improvement Program staff supported the development of a session on Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) state and tribal court collaboration at the annual <a href="#">Minority Justice Commission Symposium</a>. This session brought together an ICWA Court judicial officer from Spokane, the Tribal-State Court Consortium co-chair, and a Tribal judge to address the Supreme Court and symposium attendees. The panel highlighted the importance of collaboration between state and tribal courts in improving outcomes for Native children and families involved in the child welfare system.</p>	State/Tribal Court Agreements	Implementation

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**8. Preventing Sex Trafficking.** These projects could include work around domestic child sex trafficking, a focus on runaway youth, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement these sections of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act into practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on preventing sex trafficking/runaways?  Yes  No

Project Title and Description	Project Sub-category	CQI Stage (if applicable)
<p><b>SB 6006 Supporting Victims of Human Trafficking and Sexual Abuse</b></p> <p>In 2024, the Washington State Legislature passed <a href="#">Senate Bill 6006</a> “Supporting Victims of Human Trafficking and Sexual Abuse,” which goes into effect on July 1, 2025. The law changes the legal definition of a “dependent child” to include any child who is a victim of either sex trafficking or severe forms of trafficking when the parent is involved in the trafficking, facilitating the trafficking, or should have known that the child is being trafficked. The <a href="#">Child &amp; Youth Trafficking Workgroup</a> was created to identify the anticipated impacts of SB 6006 on dependency courts and develop court resources to support successful implementation of the law. This workgroup is made up of 38 individuals representing a diverse array of experiences, including judicial officers, attorneys, child advocates, law enforcement, non-profit staff, and many more. The workgroup focused on identifying and collecting existing information and resources on the trafficking of children and youth in Washington to create <a href="#">a series of four bench cards</a> that inform judicial decisions regarding the removal and placement of children, family time visitation, and case plan services for families.</p>	Sex Trafficking	Implementation
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges, court commissioner, court administrators, FJCIP coordinators	52	The <a href="#">2025 Dependency Judicial Training Academy</a> featured a 2.5-hour virtual training on identifying and responding to the trafficking of youth in dependency courts by Judge Barbara Mack (retired) and the King County CSEC Policy and Program Manager. A <a href="#">recording of the presentation</a> is available.	<p>Increase judicial understanding of the forms, indicators, and dynamics of child and youth trafficking, including both sex and labor trafficking, to better recognize signs in courtrooms and case filings.</p> <p>Equip courts with practical tools and strategies or identifying and responding to trafficking of youth.</p> <p>Prepare judicial officers to apply the new statutory requirements under SB 6006.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**9. Normalcy/Reasonable and Prudent Parent.** These projects could include any work around normalcy or the reasonable and prudent parent standard or practices, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement these sections of the Preventing Sex and Strengthening Families Act into practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on normalcy/reasonable prudent parenting?  Yes  No

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**10. Prevention.** Prevention projects include work around preventing child maltreatment including primary prevention (preventing maltreatment from occurring in the first place), secondary, and tertiary prevention.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on prevention?  Yes  No

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**11. Safety.** Safety projects are those that focus on decision-making around safety including decision-making practices in substantiation, removal, family time/visitation, and decisions about safety in out of home placements.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on safety?  Yes     No

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<p><b>Safety Summit Project</b>            The <a href="#">Safety Summit Project</a> (Safety Summit 1.0) is a training package that provides training and action-oriented planning for sustainable, long-term safety practice improvement efforts at the local court level. A state-level partnership between AOC and DCYF guides court communities through a process to organize, plan and host cross-system Safety Summits for local court communities.</p>	Decision-making	Evaluation/Assessment
<p><b>Harm of Removal Workgroup</b>            The <a href="#">Harm of Removal Workgroup</a> was created to develop resources and training that supports court communities in assessing and responding to the harm of removal in the context of forcible family separation by child welfare. This workgroup has produced the <a href="#">Harm of Removal Map</a> and <a href="#">Guidance for Courts: Harms of Removal Across Stages of Child Development</a></p>	Removal/Return	Implementation

<b>Project Title and Description</b>	<b>Project Sub-category</b>	<b>CQI Stage (if applicable)</b>
<p><b>Collaboration with Public Health</b>            We are collaborating closely with public health partners to develop tools and trainings that address the impact of high-potency synthetic opioids use within the child welfare court system. This partnership brings together public health expertise and the needs of dependency courts to create resources that support judicial officers, attorneys, and child welfare professionals in making informed decisions, such as the legislatively mandated <a href="#">Public Health Guidance on High Potency Synthetic Opioids</a>. The goal is to improve understanding of fentanyl use, promote effective responses such as harm reduction and treatment strategies, and ensure families receive appropriate support. These efforts aim to enhance court decision-making by providing timely, evidence-informed guidance that prioritizes child safety while supporting family recovery and stability.</p>	Decision-making	Implementation

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, non-legal system partners, and community providers who serve child welfare-involved families.	123	The <a href="#">Clark County Safety Summit</a> was a live, 4-hour webinar event.	<p>Build understanding of the fundamentals of child welfare safety and the importance of using frameworks in decision-making.</p> <p>Increase understanding of the components and terminology used in American Bar Association Child Safety: A Guide for Judges and Attorneys</p> <p>Increase capacity of court systems to apply the “Safety Framework” at every step in a case.</p> <p>Enhance ability of caseworkers to effectively articulate safety-related information to the court</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, non-legal system partners, and community providers who serve child welfare-involved families.	72	The <a href="#">Thurston County Safety Summit</a> was a live, 4-hour webinar event.	<p>Build understanding of the fundamentals of child welfare safety and the importance of using frameworks in decision-making.</p> <p>Increase understanding of the components and terminology used in American Bar Association Child Safety: A Guide for Judges and Attorneys</p> <p>Increase capacity of court systems to apply the “Safety Framework” at every step in a case.</p> <p>Enhance ability of caseworkers to effectively articulate safety-related information to the court</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, non-legal system partners, and community providers who serve child welfare-involved families	71	The <a href="#">Yakima County Safety Summit</a> was a live, 4-hour in-person event.	<p>Build understanding of the fundamentals of child welfare safety and the importance of using frameworks in decision-making.</p> <p>Increase understanding of the components and terminology used in American Bar Association Child Safety: A Guide for Judges and Attorneys</p> <p>Increase capacity of court systems to apply the “Safety Framework” at every step in a case.</p> <p>Enhance ability of caseworkers to effectively articulate safety-related information to the court</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	DCYF Foster Care Licensing Program	238	<i>There's No Place Like Home: Understanding the Harms of Removal and Family Separation in Child Welfare</i> was presented as a virtual webinar	<p>Increase insight into how forced removal of a child from their primary caregiver, even in cases of abuse and neglect, disrupts child development</p> <p>Equip participants to use the Harm of Removal Map to identify and assess the domains of a child's life that are likely to be impacted by removal</p> <p>Provide utilize strategies in cases where removal is ordered to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of forced family separation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, court staff, legal professionals, system partners in Pierce County	170	<p><i><b>There's No Place Like Home: Understanding the Harms of Removal and Family Separation in Child Welfare</b></i> was presented at an in-person conference</p>	<p>Increase insight into how forced removal of a child from their primary caregiver, even in cases of abuse and neglect, disrupts child development</p> <p>Equip participants to use the Harm of Removal Map to identify and assess the domains of a child's life that are likely to be impacted by removal</p> <p>Provide utilize strategies in cases where removal is ordered to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of forced family separation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, court staff, legal professionals, system partners in Utah	121	<p><i>There's No Place Like Home: Understanding the Harms of Removal and Family Separation in Child Welfare</i> was presented as a virtual webinar to the state of Utah.</p>	<p>Increase insight into how forced removal of a child from their primary caregiver, even in cases of abuse and neglect, disrupts child development</p> <p>Equip participants to use the Harm of Removal Map to identify and assess the domains of a child's life that are likely to be impacted by removal</p> <p>Provide utilize strategies in cases where removal is ordered to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of forced family separation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, court staff, legal professionals, system partners in Iowa	100	<i>There's No Place Like Home: Understanding the Harms of Removal and Family Separation in Child Welfare</i> was presented as a virtual webinar	<p>Increase insight into how forced removal of a child from their primary caregiver, even in cases of abuse and neglect, disrupts child development</p> <p>Equip participants to use the Harm of Removal Map to identify and assess the domains of a child's life that are likely to be impacted by removal</p> <p>Provide utilize strategies in cases where removal is ordered to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of forced family separation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers and legal professionals at the National Association of Counsel for Children conference	286	<p><i><b>There's No Place Like Home: Understanding the Harms of Removal and Family Separation in Child Welfare</b></i> was presented as a plenary session of the virtual 2024 National Association of Counsel for Children conference.</p>	<p>Increase insight into how forced removal of a child from their primary caregiver, even in cases of abuse and neglect, disrupts child development</p> <p>Equip participants to use the Harm of Removal Map to identify and assess the domains of a child's life that are likely to be impacted by removal</p> <p>Provide utilize strategies in cases where removal is ordered to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of forced family separation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, court staff, legal professionals, system partners at the Washington State Association of Drug Court Professionals Conference	20	<i><b>There's No Place Like Home: Understanding the Harms of Removal and Family Separation in Child Welfare</b></i> was presented at an in-person conference	<p>Increase insight into how forced removal of a child from their primary caregiver, even in cases of abuse and neglect, disrupts child development</p> <p>Equip participants to use the Harm of Removal Map to identify and assess the domains of a child's life that are likely to be impacted by removal</p> <p>Provide utilize strategies in cases where removal is ordered to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of forced family separation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, court staff, legal professionals, system partners	245	<p><i><b>There's No Place Like Home: Understanding the Harms of Removal and Family Separation in Child Welfare</b></i> was presented as a virtual webinar</p>	<p>Increase insight into how forced removal of a child from their primary caregiver, even in cases of abuse and neglect, disrupts child development</p> <p>Equip participants to use the Harm of Removal Map to identify and assess the domains of a child's life that are likely to be impacted by removal</p> <p>Provide utilize strategies in cases where removal is ordered to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of forced family separation.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, court staff, legal professionals, system partners at the Families Stronger Together Conference	30	<i>There's No Place Like Home: Understanding the Harms of Removal and Family Separation in Child Welfare</i> was presented at an in-person conference	<p>Increase insight into how forced removal of a child from their primary caregiver, even in cases of abuse and neglect, disrupts child development</p> <p>Equip participants to use the Harm of Removal Map to identify and assess the domains of a child's life that are likely to be impacted by removal</p> <p>Provide utilize strategies in cases where removal is ordered to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of forced family separation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, court staff, legal professionals, system partners in Thurston County	45	<i>There's No Place Like Home: Understanding the Harms of Removal and Family Separation in Child Welfare</i> was presented at an in-person conference	<p>Increase insight into how forced removal of a child from their primary caregiver, even in cases of abuse and neglect, disrupts child development</p> <p>Equip participants to use the Harm of Removal Map to identify and assess the domains of a child's life that are likely to be impacted by removal</p> <p>Provide utilize strategies in cases where removal is ordered to reduce the short-term and long-term harms associated with the trauma of forced family separation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judicial officers, court staff, legal professionals, system partners	331	<p><i>Understanding State Public Health Guidance on High Potency Synthetic Opioids in Child Welfare Cases</i> was presented as a virtual webinar</p>	<p>Increase cross-system understanding of the intersection of high-potency synthetic opioids and child welfare involved populations, including threats to child safety by developmental stage, treatment modalities (e.g., Medications for Opioid Use Disorder), and use of Naloxone to prevent overdose death.</p> <p>Enhance understanding and utilization of the guidance on high-potency synthetic opioids created by the Washington State Department of Health.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**12. Continuity Planning.** Continuity planning includes prevention and recovery planning for threats such as public health crises, natural disasters, or cyber-attacks. Please describe efforts around technology support for remote hearings or legal representation, developing guidance or protocols, coordinating with other agencies, or otherwise ensuring approaches are in place to ensure needed services are able to continue through any major disruptions.

Project Title and Description	Project Sub-category	CQI Stage (if applicable)

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**13. Other.** Please list any projects you have that do not fit in any of the categories above.

Do you have any other projects/activities?  Yes  No

Project Title and Description	Project Sub-category	CQI Stage (if applicable)
		Choose an item.
		Choose an item.
		Choose an item.

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**14. Other Notable Activities.** Are there any other activities the CIP has been engaged in not included above that you believe would be important to share with partners including those in the state, partner tribes, the Children’s Bureau, or the Center for Legal and Judicial Innovation and Advancement?

*Commission on Children in Foster Care:* For the past year, the Washington State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care (CCFC) has engaged in a strategic review and re-design of its role and structure. The Commission’s multi-disciplinary system improvement workgroup, the Family Well-Being Community Collaborative (FWCC), serves as the advisory body for Washington’s CIP. Working with CCFC co-chairs, Justice Barbara Madsen and DCYF Secretary Tana Senn, the CIP Co-Director, Kelly Warner-King, has supported this effort and helped direct the work of two contracted facilitators.

The Commission was founded by the Washington Supreme Court in 2004, in response to recommendations in the Pew Commission report, “FOSTERING THE FUTURE: Safety, Permanence and Well-Being for Children in Foster Care.” The Commission’s mission is to “provide all children in foster care with safe, permanent families in which their physical, emotional, intellectual, and social needs are met.” CCFC members and system partners identified a need to update the purpose, structure, principles, governance and staffing of the Commission to meet the current needs of the child welfare court system in Washington State. A small dedicated workgroup developed a new mission, bylaws, and decision-making structure that expands the Commission’s scope to address the administration of justice in dependency and related non-offender juvenile cases. The Commission will conduct a beta testing of the new structure over the next year. The AOC is developing a legislative budget request to staff the Commission and associated workgroups.

*Region 10 CIP Meeting:* On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, CIP staff participated in the virtual Region 10 CIP Director Meeting. This meeting was facilitated by the CLJIA and co-designed with Region 10 CIP program staff. The meeting provided a valuable opportunity for learning and development among CIP and CLJIA staff. The focus of the meeting was on improving outcomes for Native children and families, supporting ICWA Courts, and working with tribes.

**15. Materials.** From any of the work described above, do you have any documents or other materials that feel would be helpful to share with the national CIP community? For example, research, innovative approaches, compelling outcome data, etc. Please link here or note and include in your submission. If these relate to your three required projects, please indicate that here.

- [iDecide](#)
- [Harm of Removal Map](#)
- [Guidance for Courts: Harms of Removal Across Stages of Child Development](#)
- [Legal Standards Comparison Chart](#)
- [Dependency Practice Tips](#)

- [Dependency 101 for Judicial Officers](#)
- [Dependency Judicial Rotation Support Guide](#)
- [“Getting Ready for Your Dependency Hearing” video series](#)
- [Hope Science](#)
- [Judicial Community of Practice](#)
- [Jurist-in-Residence Program](#)
- [Juvenile Non-Offender Benchbook](#)
- [Removal Decisions Benchcard: Addressing Child and Youth Trafficking in Dependency Cases](#)
- [Placement Decisions Benchcard: Addressing Child and Youth Trafficking in Dependency Cases](#)
- [Family Time Decisions Benchcard: Addressing Child and Youth Trafficking in Dependency Cases](#)
- [Case Plan Services Decisions Benchcard: Addressing Child and Youth Trafficking in Dependency Cases](#)

## **CIP Collaboration in Child Welfare Planning and Improvement Efforts**

1. **Please describe how the CIP was involved with the state’s Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP)/Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) due June 30, 2025.**

CIP staff were invited to participate in DCYF’s CFSP meetings to prepare the report due on June 30, 2024. The CIP staff representative was able to attend seven of the eight total meetings.

**Does the CFSP include any of the following:**

- the CIP/Agency Joint Project
- the Hearing Quality Project
- the Legal Representation Project
- other judicial strategies
- other attorney strategies

If yes, please describe.

**2. Please describe how the CIP was or will be involved in the most recent/upcoming title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review in your state.**

CIP has not been asked to participate in Washington's Title IV-E Eligibility Review.

A) Only states that will be participating in round 4 of the CFSR and PIP in your state this reporting year are required to complete the questions in this section. However, working to organize meaningful engagement of a broad array of the legal and judicial community and to support collaboration with other system partners is useful for other major CIP projects as well, so others may wish to consider these with your teams. See the PI section II(a)(iii) for further explanation.

**1. Regarding engaging the legal and judicial community with a broad array of perspectives in CFSR/PIP processes:**

**i) What barriers do you foresee in engaging the community at an appropriate breadth and depth?**

A primary barrier in engaging the community at the appropriate breadth and depth will be the limited capacity of CIP staff to absorb this work into their existing duties. The capacity of the legal and system partners in the community is also limited and it has historically been difficult to find people willing to volunteer their time and energy to assist in time-intensive efforts.

In addition, CIP's experience collaborating with the agency on the required Joint Project in the last PIP has greatly impacted our willingness to commit significant time and resources to DCYF efforts unless there are more defined expectations and measures for accountability to follow through with those expectations.

**ii) What do you believe will facilitate engaging the community at an appropriate breadth and depth?**

Involvement of CIP staff in the CFSR planning process from the beginning, where appropriate, to determine the most effective use of court partner time and energy.

**2. Are there other leadership structures for the legal and judicial community and how can those facilitate the processes around the CFSR/PIP?**

The Family Well-Being Community Collaborative (FWCC) is a multi-disciplinary workgroup of the Washington State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care (CCFC) with the goal of facilitating cross-system collaboration to keep families safely together and to reduce inequities within the child welfare court system. The FWCC has over 120 members and is co-chaired by CIP and DCYF which would make it an appropriate structure for facilitating the process around CFSR/PIP.

**3. How will legal and judicial community involvement in the CFSR/PIP be managed? e.g. CIP is the lead, via the Multi-Disciplinary Task force, a sub-committee established by the child welfare agency, etc.**

The anticipated plan is for CIP to coordinate legal and judicial community involvement in the CFSR/PIP via the FWCC.

**4. What court, judicial, or attorney data could be integrated into the CFSR/PIP process?**

AOC has historically had a data sharing agreement with DCYF that allowed for the linkage of court case-level data with DCYF case records. CIP matched and prepared the data for use by authorized court and system partners via the interactive Dependency Timeliness Report (iDTR). This data was made publicly available in aggregate form through the Dependency Data Dashboard. Due to the expiration of the data sharing agreement on June 30, 2025, CIP will only have access to this system data for the purpose of analysis and historical context. Over the next year, CIP will be redeveloping the data sharing agreement and upgrading its data integration and reporting system. In the meantime, alternative forms of data remain available, including the Shelter Care Hearing Observation Study findings, such as average length of hearings, parties present, topics discussed, judicial decisions, and the breadth and depth of courtroom discussions.

**5. How might participation vary in stages of the process?**

CIP staff are able to participate in CFSR/PIP workgroups and can help convene groups of legal and system partners (i.e., FWCC) to monitor and review progress. CIP has been invited to regularly attend the CFSR planning meetings held by DCYF, and it is clear that DCYF is making efforts to include CIP in the process early on.

Unlike previous years, our ability to supply data will be limited, but CIP is able to assist DCYF in identifying other sources of needed data. CIP is able to help connect DCYF to different system partners for the purpose of requesting participation in the CFSR process. CIP's ability to meaningfully engage in case file reviews will be very limited due to staff capacity restraints and the significant time associated with doing these reviews.

**6. What feedback loops will be needed to keep the participants informed?**

Regular reporting at FWCC meetings on the progress made towards CFSR goals and mechanism for continuously collecting feedback from legal and judicial partners. This endeavor would greatly benefit from DCYF leadership and Title IV-E administrative staff being actively involved and invested in this feedback loop.

**7. What supports do you need from the Children's Bureau or the Centers for Innovation and Advancement for participating in the CFSR/PIP?**

Support in signing a new data sharing agreement with DCYF would be tremendously helpful in enhancing the ability of CIP to assist DCYF with data sharing for the CFSR.

Support in addressing the outstanding issues in collaboration from Round 3 with agency leadership (i.e., Joint Project). As previously noted, this accountability and rebuilding of trust is needed before CIP can be truly invested in collaborating with the agency in Round 4 beyond the minimum expectations for state court participation.

Ensuring judicial and legal partner participation in the CFSR would be far more realistic if CB provided additional funding to compensate participants. Absent additional funding specifically dedicated to this purpose, the level of external partner participation will be questionable.

## **B) Collaboration with the Child Welfare Agency in General**

### **1. What strategies or processes are in place in your state that you feel are particularly effective in supporting joint child welfare program planning and improvement?**

The [Commission on Children in Foster Care \(CCFC\)](#) is co-chaired by a Supreme Court Justice and the Secretary of DCYF and staffed by CIP. The purpose of the CCFC is to promote communication, collaboration, and cooperation among court, child welfare, legislative, tribal, and community stakeholders. The CCFC oversees and supports several workgroups focused on improving the child welfare and dependency court systems to ensure justice and better outcomes for the children and families they serve. The group has worked collaboratively to develop processes and share information on topics such as: family time, delaying unnecessary termination of parental rights trials and the mental health needs of children and youth. The CCFC also convenes the Family Well-Being Community Collaborative workgroup (see below).

The [Family Well-Being Community Collaborative \(FWCC\)](#) serves as the required CIP cross-system collaboration with the state child welfare agency, the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). Co-chaired by the CIP Co-Director and the DCYF Assistant Secretary for Partnership, Prevention and Services. The collaborative meets eight times a year, where they engage in cross-system learning and receive reports from action-oriented workgroups. The Workgroups are facilitated by CIP staff and include system members with current (often front-line) experience related to the issues they are designed to address. Workgroups focus on a discrete topic, guided by a clear workplan and agreed upon indicators of progress. When a workgroup successfully completes its charge, it is disbanded. Each workgroup has a publicly accessible HUB that include houses all of the notes, resources and tools created by the workgroup.

The [Family and Juvenile Court Improvement Program \(FJCIP\)](#) was created in 2008 to help local dependency courts assess and improve how they operate and serve families by providing a dedicated coordinator to work with judicial officers, DCYF and court partners. The FJCIP Statewide team is instrumental in connecting local court staff (e.g., FJCIP Coordinators; Court Administrators) with relevant local and regional DCYF staff (e.g., Area Administrators; CQI/QA Specialists) to move court improvement work forward.

A key development to highlight is the growing partnership between FJCIP, WSCCR researchers, and DCYF QA/CQI staff. This collaboration has led to regular meetings focused on information sharing and joint problem-solving to strengthen system alignment. In addition, FJCIP holds quarterly meetings with DCYF's regional Legal Liaisons to support ongoing communication and coordination between the judicial and child welfare systems.

## **2. What barriers exist in your state that make effective joint child welfare program planning and improvement challenging?**

Lack of Data: AOC has historically had a data sharing agreement with DCYF that allowed for the linkage of court case-level data with DCYF case records. CIP prepared this data in formats tailored to different audiences: 1) Public, aggregate-level insights were shared through the Dependency Data Dashboard, offering a high-level view of trends and performance metrics across the state; 2) Case-level, court-specific data was provided to dependency court and authorized system partners via the interactive Dependency Timeliness Report (iDTR). iDTR was designed to help courts understand their own timeliness and outcomes pattern and guide data-informed improvements at the local level. This data was made publicly available in aggregate form through the Dependency Data Dashboard. Due to the expiration of the data sharing agreement on June 30, 2025, CIP will only have access to this system data for the purpose of analysis and historical context. After that date, CIP will only retain access to previously received data for historical analysis purposes and will no longer receive regular data updates from DCYF. CIP relies on data from DCYF to monitor child welfare trends, case outcomes, and systemic bottlenecks. Without regular data sharing, CIP cannot promptly identify areas in need of reform, evaluate the impact of current practices, or target resources effectively. Since joint planning between CIP and DCYF depends on shared understanding of system performance, the inability to access or analyze the same data prevents alignment on priorities, hinders coordination across agencies, and makes it difficult to hold partners mutually accountable for progress. Strategic planning efforts, like the Program Improvement Plan (PIP), require integrated data to guide goals and track implementation milestones. Without access to DCYF data, CIP's contributions to these statewide initiatives will be significantly impacted.

Availability of Prevention Services: Creating immediate safety for a child through prevention services requires those services to be available at that time. This has raised significant concerns from around the state regarding the lack of availability and accessibility of prevention services to families, especially in rural areas. DCYF was successful in securing multiple funding packages in the 2023 state legislative session to which included funding to increase the accessibility of prevention services. In addition, DCYF received additional funding with the passage of SB 6109 in 2024 which allocated funds for multiple pilot programs aimed at preventing entry into care. Unfortunately, in 2025 Washington experienced a significant state budget crisis and because DCYF had not fully established many of these programs, funding for them was largely eliminated.

CIP Capacity: Another barrier is the limited amount of CIP staff resources available to reach out and work with all local jurisdictions on improving their dependency system. CIP staff frequently get stretched too thin and have difficulty with follow up. Also, staffing costs needed to support the breadth of work performed by the CIP Team leaves few resources to support local projects and travel.

3. Regarding collaboration on training with the child welfare agency...

**a. Regarding training needs across the child welfare system, what is your process to work with the agency to consider how to maximize the impact of complementary resources and ensure there is no undue duplication of efforts?**

The FWCC provides a space where CIP and DCYF can collectively collaborate together on training and cross-system improvement efforts. DCYF participates heavily in the creation of the tools, resources, and trainings designed to support courts. DCYF Program Managers have been invaluable partners in developing and delivering training on child safety, harm of removal, safety planning, prevention services, and out-of-home placement. CIP staff and DCYF Program Managers periodically meet to discuss cross-agency projects, initiatives, policy changes, and opportunities for information and resource sharing. The positive working relationship between CIP and DCYF has been instrumental in advancing the work of CIP, especially in regards to enhancing safety practice.

**b. Does the state child welfare agency currently offer professional partner training to judges, attorneys, and court personnel as part of its Title IV-E Training Plan?**

If yes, please provide a brief description of what is provided and how. If no, have you met with child welfare agency leadership to discuss and explore utilizing professional partner training for judges, attorneys and court personnel?

Yes and No. The Office of Public Defense (OPD) and Child Advocates (voluntary guardian ad litem) have training included in the Title IV-E Training Plan and DCYF contracts with OPD and Washington Association of Child Advocate Programs to reimburse training expenses. Several judicial officers attend the annual child advocate training conference.

The Washington CIP is not currently included in DCYF's Title IV-E Training Plan and does not receive IV-E funding for training activities. CIP explored this option with DCYF over the past year. CIP estimated the cost for 47 training opportunities anticipated for the next year at a total of \$178,200. However, given how Title IV-E reimbursement is calculated and Washington's 30% penetration rate, the maximum amount that would be reimbursed for these trainings was about \$40,000 (22%). Given this low rate and the needed staff capacity to track reimbursement, CIP determined it would be fiscally irresponsible to pursue Title IV-E reimbursement for training projects.

**4. Please provide updates around Title IV-E supported legal representation (e.g. agency, parents, children, kin, other civil legal representation, Indian Child Welfare Act), if applicable.**

No updates to provide

**C) Other Collaborative Activities**

**Please briefly describe (or cross reference if noted elsewhere) any significant collaborative activities with other child serving partners (e.g. employment, education, housing, mental health substance misuse providers).**

CIP worked with consultants to assess the current landscape of data related to child relational permanence and well-being in dependency cases (see Data Projects above). To conduct this research, the consultants met with a wide range of system partners directly and indirectly involved in child dependency, including judicial officers, child welfare staff, court personnel, education professionals, service providers, advocates, and youth with lived experience. These stakeholder discussions provided critical insight into current data practices, gaps in measurement, and opportunities for improving how relational permanence and well-being are tracked and supported across the system.

Recent statutory changes have necessitated increased collaboration with public health entities (e.g., Department of Health; Health Care Authority; Swedish Addiction Recovery Services) to create tools, resources, and training to enhance the capacity of court systems to effectively address parental fentanyl use in the context of child welfare cases (see Safety Projects above). These efforts are funded through state opioid settlement dollars, however CIP has assisted in planning and development.

CIP partners to support state-level workgroups designed to tackle some of the most intractable challenges that families encounter when working with DCYF and the courts. These workgroups bring child welfare and courts together with non-traditional partners - such as public housing authorities, local transportation agencies, and early childhood service providers - and encourage innovation. Three workgroups are currently focused on increasing access to housing to reduce family separation and support young people aging out of foster care; improving access to transportation services for families in rural areas by bringing partners together to apply for local and regional mobility grants; and connecting early childhood services and child-parent relationship providers with local court communities.

**D) To facilitate collaborations, partnerships and technical assistance, please indicate where your Self-Assessment will be published or a provide a point of contact to request a copy.**

The Self-Assessment will be published on the Court Improvement Program (CIP) webpage located on Family & Youth Justice Program's website: [Court Improvement Program \(CIP\)](#). The primary point of contact for the Self-Assessment is Laura Vogel, CIP Co-Director, at [laura.vogel@courts.wa.gov](mailto:laura.vogel@courts.wa.gov)

## **IV. CQI Current Capacity Assessment**

**1. Has your ability to integrate CQI into practice changed this year? If yes, what do you attribute the change to?**

We have been working with consultants, Stellar Associates, over the past year to enhance our team’s internal capacity for strategic planning. Having a consultant support our team with strategic planning enhances our ability to integrate Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) into practice by bringing an external, objective perspective that helps align our vision, goals, and processes. Consultants facilitate structured planning sessions, guide data-driven decision-making, and help identify system strengths and gaps. Their expertise ensures that CQI principles—such as using data to drive improvement, engaging system partners, and fostering a culture of learning—are embedded throughout the plan. This leads to more intentional, measurable, and sustainable improvements in our work.

Washington Courts transitioned to Microsoft 365 (MS 365) during this past reporting year. MS365 enhances our ability to integrate Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) into practice by providing a suite of collaborative, data-driven tools that streamline communication, documentation, and analysis. With applications like SharePoint, Teams and Planner, cross-system partners can easily share updates, track progress on action plans, and maintain transparency across CQI initiatives. The integration and cloud-based nature of Microsoft 365 also ensure secure access to documents and data from anywhere, fostering a more agile and responsive CQI process.

**2. Which of the following CLJIA (or former CBCC) Events/Services have you/your staff engaged in this past year?**

- Attorney Academy
- Judicial Academy
- CIPShare 2.0
- CQI Consult (*Topic:* \_\_\_\_\_)
- CQI Workshop
- Liberating Structures Immersion Workshops
- Evidence Building CIP Projects
- Constituency Group - Data/Evaluation
- Constituency Group - Family First Prevention Services Act
- Constituency Group - ICWA
- Constituency Group - Legal Representation
- Constituency Group - New Directors
- Constituency Group - Regional CIP Calls
- Constituency Group – State Tribal Partnerships
- Constituency Group - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- CIP All Call – *What % of All Calls does your CIP participate in?* 100%

**3. Do you have any of the following resources to help you integrate CQI into practice?**

- CIP staff with data expertise
- CIP staff with evaluation expertise
- CIP staff with CQI expertise
- CIP staff with lived expertise
- a University partnership
- a statewide court case management system
- Contracts with external individuals or organizations to assist with CQI efforts
- Other resources: CIP staff with Liberating Structures expertise; partnership with Washington State Center for Court Research; ongoing coaching with National Center for State Courts

**a. Do you record your child welfare court hearings?**  Yes  No

If yes, are they  audio  video

**b. Can you remotely access your court case management system?** *For example, Odyssey systems often allow remote access to case files.*

Yes  No

**c. What court case management software does your state use?** If multiple, please indicate the most common:  
Odyssey, statewide with the exception of King and Pierce Counties.

**d. Have you employed any new technology or applications to strengthen your work?**

Washington Courts transitioned to Microsoft 365 during this last reporting year. Microsoft 365 offers a powerful, integrated suite of tools that enhances collaboration, data management, and workflow efficiency. Its cloud-based platform allows teams to access files and applications from anywhere, supporting real-time communication and coordination through tools like Teams and SharePoint.

CIP started using Infogram during this reporting period. Infogram is a web-based data visualization tool that allows users to easily create interactive maps, charts, infographics, and dashboards. Infogram offers a drag-and-drop interface, customizable templates, and real-time data integration to help communicate complex information clearly and visually. CIP has primarily been using Infogram to create the Parent Journey Mapping (see Engagement Projects above).

CIP continues to hold a license for access to the Articulate360 suite of applications designed for e-learning course creation and instructional design. This technology has enabled us to greatly [expand](#) our virtual learning capacity through creation of e-courses, training HUBS, information libraries, interactive graphics, and the iDecide tool.

**e. Do any of these systems include an electronic filing system?**

No, none of these systems include an electronic filing system.

**4. Considering the phases of change management and how you integrate these into practice, are there phases of the process (e.g., Phase I-need assessment, Phase II-theory of change) that you struggle with integrating more than others?**

Phase V – Evaluation. CIP recognized the value and benefits of utilizing hearing quality evaluations in conjunction with file reviews and outcome data to capture a holistic research perspective. We continue to work towards developing internal capacity to collect, code and analyze hearing quality data.

**5. Is there a topic or practice area that you would find useful from the Center for Legal and Judicial Innovation and Advancement? Be as specific as possible (e.g., data analysis, how to evaluate trainings, more information on research about quality legal representation, how to facilitate group meetings, etc.)**

- Tribal collaboration
- Responding to child and parent fatalities
- Grief-informed systems

## DEFINITIONS

### Definitions of Evidence

**Evidence-based practice** – evidence-based practices are practice that have been empirically tested in a rigorous way (involving random assignment to groups), have demonstrated effectiveness related to specific outcomes, have been replicated in practice at least one, and have findings published in peer reviewed journal articles.

**Empirically-supported-** less rigorous than evidence-based practices are empirically-supported practices. To be empirically supported, a program must have been evaluated in some way and have demonstrated some relationship to a positive outcome. This may not meet the rigor of evidence-base, but still has some support for effectiveness.

**Best-practices** – best practices are often those widely accepted as good practice. They may or may not have empirical support as to effectiveness, but are often derived from teams of experts.

### Definitions for CQI Phases

**Identifying and Assessing Needs** – This phase is the earliest phase in the process, where you are identifying a need to be addressed. The assessing needs phase includes identifying the need, determining if there is available data demonstrating that this a problem, forming teams to address the issue.

**Develop theory of change**—This phase focuses on the theorizing the causes of a problem. In this phase you would identify what you think might be causing the problem and develop a “theory of change”. The theory of change is essentially how you think your activities (or intervention) will improve outcomes.

**Develop/select solution**—This phase includes developing or selecting a solution. In this phase, you might be exploring potential best-practices or evidence-based practices that you may want to implement as a solution to the identified need. You might also be developing a specific training, program, or practice that you want to implement.

**Implementation** – the implementation phase of work is when an intervention is being piloted or tested. This includes adapting programs or practices to meet your needs, and developing implementation supports.

**Evaluation/assessment** – the evaluation and assessment phase includes any efforts to collect data about the fidelity (process measures: was it implemented as planned?) or effectiveness (outcome measures: is the intervention making a difference?) of the project. The evaluation assessment phase also includes post-evaluation efforts to apply findings, such as making changes to the program/practice and using the data to inform next steps.

## **Paperwork Reduction Act**

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control Number. The OMB control number for this collection is 0970-0307 and it expires 02/28/2026. The estimated time to complete the Self-Assessment is 40 hours