

EMERGENCY/TEMPORARY PROCEDURES FOR CIVIL COMMISSIONER COURTROOMS AT THE COUNTY CITY BUILDING effective MARCH 18, 2020; as amended effective April 6, 2020.

Superior Court hours and dockets are daily subject to change. Please check the Superior Court website for the latest updates. <https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/122/Superior-Court>

Until further notice the following temporary procedures will be in place for each of the civil commissioner courtrooms at the County-City Building:

GENERAL

- CourtCall has waived fees for self-represented parties, and has reduced fees for Qualified Legal Service Providers, and attorneys. Court Call 1 (888) 882-6878
- All parties and attorneys shall obtain a LINX account via the Superior Court Clerk's Office. LINX account fees are currently waived for self-represented parties. <https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/90890/Linx-Account-SelfRepresented-Fillable?bidId=>
- If you do have access to a fax or scanner, there are apps which allow you to scan from your cell phone.
<https://www.imore.com/how-use-document-scanner-iphone-and-ipad>
<https://www.androidauthority.com/best-document-scanner-apps-777240/>

Show Cause/Family Law Motions AM docket in all Commissioners' Courtrooms

- Pursuant to the Pierce County Local Court Rules all hearings must be confirmed by noon two (2) court days before a hearing. To confirm a hearing call 253-798-6697, press option 1 or strike your motion in LINX (unless the hearing is for adequate cause).
- Hearing Information Form T shall still be submitted as required by PCLSPR 94.04 (a) (4). <https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/82768/Local-Rules---effective-September-1-2019?bidId=>
- Except at the Commissioner's discretion, no oral argument on motions; all decisions shall be made on the written record.
- For any motion scheduled by a lawyer, proposed orders shall be delivered via email to Commissioner Services no later than 1 court day prior to the scheduled hearing. All orders shall be submitted as a Word document. SUPCSD@piercecountywa.gov.
- For self-represented parties, proposed orders may be submitted, as a Word Document to Commissioner Services via email or fax no later than 1 court day prior to the scheduled hearing. SUPCSD@piercecountywa.gov. FAX 253-798-6897
If no orders are delivered, the Commissioner will still make a ruling and prepare appropriate orders.
- If the Commissioner believes more information is necessary to make the ruling, the Commissioner may schedule oral argument (done by Court Clerk) on, or within 14 days

(except for good cause) of, the scheduled hearing date. Oral argument shall be conducted telephonically via CourtCall. Court Call 1 (888) 882-6878

- If there are deficiencies in the record, such as no proof of service, defective service, or a motion lacking a supporting declaration, the Commissioner will complete and file a deficiency order.
- All requests for continuances shall be in writing, accompanied by a proposed order and emailed or faxed to Commissioner Services. SUPCSD@piercecounywa.gov FAX 253-798-6897

Uncontested Self-Represented Dissolution AM docket

- No personal appearances. All hearings shall be conducted using Interrogatories prepared instead of testimony.
<https://www.co.pierce.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/90544/Interrogatories-with-Declaration>
- Proposed orders shall be submitted to Commissioner Services, via email or fax, prior to the day of hearing. SUPCSD@piercecounywa.gov FAX 253-798-6897
Link to court forms: <http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/>
- If, after review, the Commissioner finds that the court file or the proposed orders are deficient, a written deficiency order will be prepared and filed by the Commissioner.

Civil Division A – Courtroom 100

Probate/Guardianship/Unlawful Detainer/Vulnerable Adult/Minor Settlement PM Docket

Except as set forth below or for good cause, no oral argument on motions; all decisions will be made on the written record. If oral argument is required it shall be conducted via Courtcall (888) 882-6878.

- For any motion noted by an attorney, proposed orders shall be delivered via email to Commissioner Services or attached to the Hearing Information Form U no later than 1 court day prior to the scheduled hearing. All orders shall be submitted as a Word document.
- Hearing Information Form U shall still be submitted as required by local court rule.
- For self-represented parties, proposed orders may be submitted, as a Word document, to Commissioner Services via email or fax no later than 1 court day prior to the scheduled hearing. SUPCSD@piercecounywa.gov FAX 253-798-6897
- If no orders are delivered, the Commissioner will still make a ruling and prepare appropriate orders.
- If the Commissioner believes more information is necessary to make the ruling, the commissioner may schedule oral argument (done by Commissioner Services) on, or within 14 days (except for good cause) of, the scheduled hearing date. Oral argument shall be conducted telephonically via CourtCall. Court Call 1 (888) 882-6878

- If there are deficiencies in the record, such as no proof of service, defective service, untimely reports, inadequate evidentiary support for the motion, or a motion lacking a supporting declaration, the Commissioner will complete and file a deficiency order.
- All requests for continuances shall be in writing, accompanied by a proposed order and emailed or faxed to Commissioner Services. SUPCSD@piercecounitywa.gov FAX 253-798-6897
- Minor Settlements: Attendance of minor, parents, Settlement Guardian ad Litem and petitioning attorney are waived if agreed signed orders are emailed to Commissioner Services 1 court day prior to the scheduled hearing. SUPCSD@piercecounitywa.gov If matter is contested, all parties shall appear via Court Call 1 (888) 882-6878.
- Unlawful Detainers: All such cases have been suspended by order of the Governor.
- Vulnerable Adult Protection Orders: No personal appearances. All Petitioners, Respondents, the vulnerable adult, or their counsel, shall appear telephonically via CourtCall. Court Call 1 (888) 882-6878.
- Guardianships: No personal appearances. All Petitioners, Alleged Incapacitated Persons, Guardians ad Litem, other interested parties, or their counsel, shall appear telephonically via CourtCall arranged in advance with Court Call, unless the matter is agreed. Court Call 1 (888) 882-6878. Agreed signed orders shall be emailed to Commissioner Services 1 court day prior to the scheduled hearing. SUPCSD@piercecounitywa.gov

Civil Division B – Courtroom 117

Domestic Violence AM/PM dockets

- No personal appearances. All hearings shall be conducted by telephone or videoconference, including CourtCall. CourtCall 1 (888) 882-6878.

Civil Division C – Courtroom 407

Prosecutor’s Family Support/Contempt PM Docket

All Family Support/Contempt hearings are currently suspended.

Civil Division D – Courtroom 101

Screening of Domestic Violence/Unlawful Harassment/Vulnerable Adult Protection Order and Sexual Assault Protection Order Petitions

- No personal appearances are permitted. Open remote kiosk locations may still be used to complete petitions. The Family Justice Center may be available to assist by telephone or email.
- All persons seeking a protection order/modification/termination/renewal or civil standby shall call the designated number to the Court/Clerk’s office (253-798-8827). A

staff person will answer the telephone, answer relevant questions without providing legal advice, and take all the information necessary to complete the petition and confidential information form, including the person's statement in support of the petition.

- Petitioner must provide valid mailing address and/or email address prior to petition being submitted.
- No signature shall be required if the petition is completed telephonically. The completed petition will be delivered to the Commissioner or Judge (for extreme risk and sexual assault petitions) for screening. Current screening procedures will remain in place, however, instead of in-person preliminary hearings, all such hearings shall be conducted by telephone or video conferencing. At the beginning of the hearing, the petitioner shall be sworn in and state under penalty of perjury that the statements in his/her petition are true and correct. Following that question, the commissioner will conduct the rest of the hearing. On the petition's signature line, it shall be attested that petitioner affirmed the provisions of the petition telephonically.
- Copies of the petition, notice of hearing, additional statements, and any temporary order for protection ("initial pleadings") shall be electronically transmitted to the petitioner for service. If that is not possible, court or clerk staff shall mail initial pleadings two copies to the petitioner.
- Service of the initial pleadings on the respondent may be done by personal service or mail. Service by mail is authorized for all civil protection orders without requiring 2 attempts at personal service or other evidence of due diligence. Permission to serve by publication shall still require a court order before proceeding. A completed proof of service form shall be timely electronically filed by the petitioner.
- All self-represented parties shall be enrolled in the Clerk's full LINX access subscription (information to be provided by Clerk when Petition is completed).
- All self-represented parties and any attorney representing a party shall arrange in advance to participate in the full hearing via Court Call. Court Call 1 (888) 882-6878

Ex Parte Mail

- All agreed or unopposed presentations or motions presented by attorneys shall be submitted via e-filing pursuant to the current ex parte mail policy, including those matters previously requiring a personal appearance (such as probates, orders to show cause, finalization of family law cases, temporary family law orders). Should JIS background checks be required, the lawyer must provide the date of birth of all adults named as litigants. Provide verifications of the parties per local court rule if a dissolution, legal separation or invalidity is being finalized.
- If a hearing is requested schedule the hearing in LINX before submitting orders.
- No contested ex parte restraining orders or contested matters shall be submitted by mail.
- Electronically sign all orders before submitting.
- Submit original wills to the Superior Court Clerk's Office if probate of a will is being sought.

- The mandatory ex parte mail fee, imposed by the clerk pursuant to county ordinance, is waived for all submissions. All other provisions of the current policy remain in effect.
- There may be a delay in processing mail due to the increased volume of mail, JIS being run and the review required.

Ex Parte Division – Courtroom 105

- No personal appearance. All participation via telephone.
- Ex Parte hears contested, emergency matters only.
- In order to request a contested emergency hearing, please contact Commissioner Services Department (CSD), file all pleadings in LINX, email or fax proposed orders to CSD. SUPCSD@piercecounitywa.gov FAX 253-798-6897
Provide contact information for both parties including telephone numbers and email addresses.
- The Court Commissioner will determine whether notice to the other party is required.
- If notice is required, it should be no less than 24 hours in advance.
- CSD will schedule the ex parte hearing.
- Any signed restraining orders will be emailed to all parties.
- Personal service is still required, email or text message notice of the ex parte hearing is not considered personal service.
- All agreed or unopposed presentations or motions presented by attorneys shall be submitted via e-filing pursuant to the current ex parte mail policy, including those matters currently requiring a personal appearance. Should JIS background checks be required, the lawyer must provide the date of birth of all adults named as litigants.
- Ex Parte courtroom hours remain unchanged.

Western State Hospital

- Changes to current procedures have been developed by the Hospital administrators, the Attorney General's office, Department of Assigned Counsel, Prosecuting Attorney's office, and Court/Clerk representatives. Please call the Court Clerk at Western State Hospital (253-756-2878) for current updates on changes to procedures.
- All persons entering the courtroom at Western State Hospital shall be screened in accordance with Hospital policy.
- All medical and nursing student observations in the courtroom are suspended.