

Dear Members of the Spokane County Community,

The judicial officers of Spokane County Superior Court each swear an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and of the State of Washington. We are charged to faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of office to the best of our ability. Our Code of Conduct recognizes that the judiciary plays a central role in preserving the principles of justice and the rule of law that is the basis of our United States legal system. This code also requires that we avoid comment in-order to maintain the neutrality demanded of us and to avoid the appearance of endorsing a position on an issue that might come before us. In the face of recent reminders of the persistent devaluation and degradation of Black lives in America, we believe in the importance of not maintaining our silence in this instance.

There can be no debate that the constitutions we are sworn to uphold are intended to make all of us equal in the eyes of the law. It is with painful awareness that we acknowledge shortcomings that have resulted in systemic racial injustice against Black Americans and Black citizens of our state and county. It is with candid honesty that we recognize the role that the courts have played in these injustices. We must be better about recognizing shortcomings in ourselves, in our systems and in our leaders. It is only then that we can roll up our collective sleeves and begin the hard work of instituting and institutionalizing real change.

We do not claim to possess immediate answers to longstanding questions. We do, however, pledge to listen better, do better, and be better, when and where we can, to eradicate racism and establish systemic reforms in our justice system.

Sincerely,  
Spokane County Superior Court