

The State of Washington



Proclamation

WHEREAS, the rule of law is a fundamental principle that affirms every person is subject to the law, and that laws are made and applied in an impartial, transparent and consistent manner; and

WHEREAS, a strong legal infrastructure and a robust network of legal practitioners help ensure that rights are protected, duties are enforced and the public's trust in our judicial and legal systems is maintained; and

WHEREAS, a 2023 Yakima Valley needs assessment found far fewer attorneys per resident in the Yakima Valley than the statewide average, underscoring the legal service gap in rural Washington; and

WHEREAS, many residents of small towns and rural communities must travel great distances to appear in court or meet with an attorney; and

WHEREAS, while some Washingtonians can access legal services online, many still lack adequate broadband access or would be better served by in-person legal assistance; and

WHEREAS, people in rural areas and small towns have important legal needs, including wills, family law matters, business issues, discrimination claims, domestic violence protection, and criminal and civil representation; and

WHEREAS, increasing opportunities for rural attorneys and supporting them and the communities they serve will increase access to justice and ensure equal justice under the law, thereby sustaining the rule of law across Washington state;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Ferguson, governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim June 2026 as

Rural and Small-Town Legal Practice Month

in Washington, and I urge all people in our state to join me in this special observance.

Signed this 29th day of May, 2026

Governor Bob Ferguson

