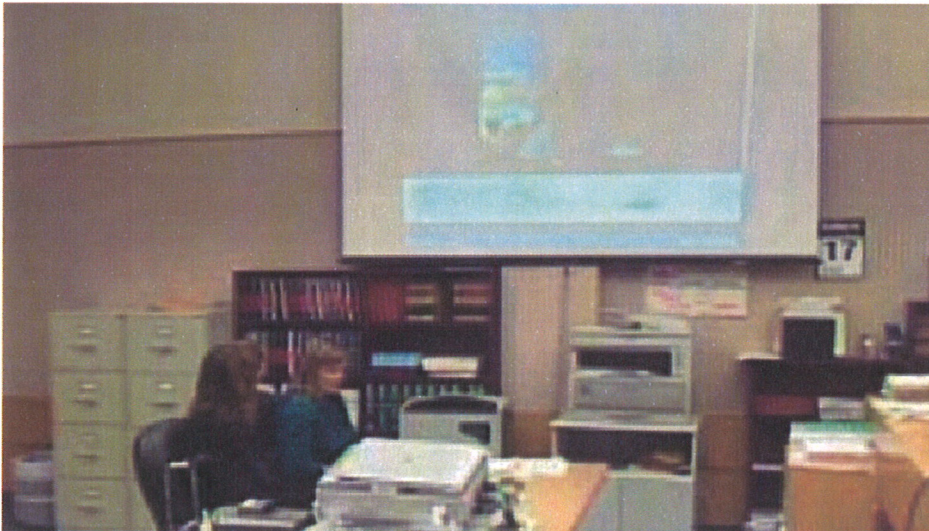


## Judge gets money saving idea from grandkids



by DREW MIKKELSEN / KING 5 News

**Bio** | **Email** | Follow: [@Drewmikk](#)

KING5.com

Posted on November 17, 2011 at 6:28 PM

Updated Thursday, Nov 17 at 6:47 PM

TACOMA, Wash. -- A Pierce County judge credits his grandkids with helping him find a way to save taxpayer dollars.

Judge Thomas Larkin is now using Skype in his courtroom after talking to his grandchildren on the internet video program.

"I just learned about it," said Larking, "What a great idea."

Larkin is the county's drug court judge and last month started having some drug offenders appear in his court via Skype from in-patient clinics around the state.

Drug court gives offenders a chance to clear their criminal records, by staying clean. And Skyping eliminates the travel expenses for the county, and does not cost the county a cent.

Larkin's courtroom appears to be the only drug court in the country using Skype. He said he has had inquiries from other judges.

"We should be responsible for the money we receive from the public that we serve," said Larkin.

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