

the commissioner for an assessment of applicable child support. We disagree with this restricted view of the superior court judge's power of revision.

■ ¶7 Court commissioners play an important role in our state's court system. They help alleviate the large caseloads facing superior court judges and facilitate the efficient administration of justice. *State v. Smith*, 117 Wn.2d 263, 280, 814 P.2d 652 (1991). Superior court commissioners derive their powers from our state's constitution and statute. WASH. CONST. art. IV, § 23; ch. 2.24 RCW. They are conferred with most of the powers of a superior court judge but may not preside over jury trials. WASH. CONST. art. IV, § 23.<sup>1</sup> While superior court commissioners operate largely like their judicial counterparts, they are not subject to affidavits of prejudice under RCW 4.12.050. *State v. Espinoza*, 112 Wn.2d 819, 829, 774 P.2d 1177 (1989). Instead, a party dissatisfied with a commissioner's ruling can seek relief through a motion for revision. *Smith*, 117 Wn.2d at 280. The right to seek revision permits a litigant appearing before a commissioner to be treated similarly to one appearing before a superior court judge. *Id.* at 276.

■ ¶8 When a superior court judge receives a case through a motion for revision, the judge takes "jurisdiction of the entire case as heard before the commissioner." *State ex rel. Biddinger v. Griffiths*, 137 Wash. 448, 451, 242 P. 969 (1926). Although the superior court judge cannot accept new evidence, RCW 2.24.050, a motion on revision is in all other respects equal to any other matter on the court's docket. The judge reviews the law and evidence de novo. *State v. Ramer*, 151 Wn.2d 106, 113, 116-17, 86 P.3d 132 (2004) (de novo standard applied even when commissioner heard live testimony). Should the judge disagree with the commissioner's disposition, the judge may issue his or her

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<sup>1</sup> The constitution states commissioners are empowered to "perform like duties as a judge of the superior court at chambers." WASH. CONST. art. IV, § 23. The powers of a judge "at chambers" extend to all matters not requiring a jury trial. See *State ex rel. Lockhart v. Claypool*, 132 Wash. 374, 375, 232 P. 351 (1925); *In re Habeas Corpus of Olson*, 12 Wn. App. 682, 685-87, 531 P.2d 508 (1975).