

Probate Court Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 12, 2019
4:00 p.m.

Library at the Office of the Probate Court Administrator
186 Newington Road, West Hartford, CT

The meeting convened at 4:04 p.m.

In attendance: Judge Paul Knierim, Probate Court Administrator and Chair, Judge Joseph Marino and Judge Fred Anthony

Public Comment and Correspondence

The public comment period was deferred until after the presentation on proposed staff compensation adjustments so that attendees could ask questions and offer comments before committee deliberations. The following individuals addressed the committee:

Nancy Howard, co-President of the Connecticut Association of Probate Clerks and Chief Clerk, Housatonic Probate Court

Delvis Delgado, Clerk, Berlin Probate Court

Hon. Clifford P. Hoyle, Judge, Derby Probate Court

Remarks by the Chair

Judge Knierim commented on the successful outcome of the 2019 state budget process and thanked judges and staff for their efforts in advocating for funding. He noted that this was the first time in four years that the Probate Courts are fully funded.

Compensation Plan Adjustments

Finance Director Andrea King presented PCA's recommendations to implement Phase II of the compensation study and the 2019 merit pay increases. The policies are detailed in the following attachments:

Compensation Study Phase II – Proposed Implementation Policies June 12, 2019

Merit Pay Policy June 12, 2019

PCA recommends one change to the Merit Pay Policy to increase the proposed funding from 3% to 3.5%.

The compensation study will be effective with the pay period beginning June 3, 2019. The merit pay adjustments will be effective with the pay period beginning July 1, 2019

Judge Marino made a motion to approve Phase II of the compensation study and merit pay as presented. Judge Anthony seconded the motion. Judge Knierim called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Staffing Level Adjustment

Judge Knierim recommended proposed adjustments to staffing as follows:

- Increase Meriden Probate Court by 0.8 FTE based on workload.
- Reduce Hartford Regional Children's Probate Court by 1.0 FTE and increase East Hartford Probate Court by 0.4 FTE to reflect decentralization of the clerical functions in children's matters.
- Reduce Region 19 Probate Court by 0.8 FTE and increase Farmington Regional Probate Court by 0.7 to reflect the transition of services for residents of Plainville from the former to the latter.
- Reallocate a full-time court assistant position at the Hartford Probate Court to assistant clerk, with no net change in benchmark.

Judge Anthony made a motion to approve the adjustments as presented. Judge Marino seconded the motion. Judge Knierim called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Other Business / New Business

None

Schedule Next Meeting

The committee will meet on December 4, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 P.M.

Compensation Study
Phase II - Proposed Implementation Policies
June 12, 2019

Background

In 2014, the budget committee embarked on a compensation study to evaluate the competitiveness of the compensation plan. The compensation consultant recommended revised pay ranges for each of the 11 staff positions. The percentage increases to the pay ranges varied by position. The following chart summarizes the recommended pay adjustments:

	Percent Increase	MIN	MKT	MAX
Chief Clerk III	9.0%	30.50	38.12	45.75
Chief Clerk II	6.0%	26.94	33.68	40.41
Chief Clerk I	9.0%	25.21	31.51	37.81
Staff Attorney	12.0%	28.51	35.64	42.77
Deputy Clerk	13.0%	23.78	29.72	35.67
Clerk	8.0%	20.63	25.79	30.95
Assistant Clerk	15.0%	18.19	22.74	27.29
Court Assistant	5.0%	15.06	18.83	22.59
Security Officer	5.0%	15.06	18.83	22.59
Lead Family Specialist	27.0%	30.17	37.71	45.25
Family Specialist	25.0%	26.11	32.64	39.17

Due to budgetary constraints, the budget committee approved implementation of the compensation study in two equal phases. Phase I increased the compensation rates for each position by 50% of the consultant's recommended adjustment. Phase II will complete the project by adjusting pay ranges to the consultant's recommended amounts.

Before implementing Phase I, the Budget Committee adopted policies to determine how changes to the pay ranges would affect the rates of pay of individual employees. In developing the policies, careful consideration of the findings of the internal pay equity study (which was completed in 2013) was necessary. The internal pay equity study increased the rates of pay of employees who were underpaid in relation to length of

service in the Probate Courts. A key decision was to grandfather employees whose pay rates were higher than the rate as calculated in the equity study. In light of this key decision, the compensation study implementation policies addressed the treatment of grandfathered employees to avoid perpetuating legacy pay disparities among employees.

Phase II Implementation

For most employees, the Phase II compensation study amount is an additional raise equal to the Phase I compensation study amount. The Phase II amounts for employees who were hired since November 2015 and employees who have changed positions within the system will be calculated as follows:

- Employees hired since January 5, 2011 will be adjusted to the new minimum for their position.
- The Phase II adjustment for employees who were promoted since November 2015 will be increased by the same percentage that the employee received at the time of the promotion (in most cases 3.5%).

Employees who did not receive a Phase I compensation adjustment because their pay is already above the compensation study amount will continue to be grandfathered.

A confidential mailing will be sent to each court containing Phase II calculation worksheets for each employee.

Merit Pay Policy

June 12, 2019

Budget and Formula for Merit Increases

- Implementation planned for first payroll in July
 - Pay date July 18, 2019
 - Pay period Monday, July 1 – Friday, July 12

- FY20 budget assumption is 3.0%
 - Each court allocated a merit pool based on compensation of eligible employees (excludes temps, retirees, over max)
 - Calculation of merit pool will be made after Phase II Compensation Study adjustments

- Formula considerations
 - 2.5% allocated based on overall rating from performance evaluation
 - 0.5% allocated at discretion of the judge
 - No increase for scores of 1 or 2 (unacceptable or needs improvement)
 - Minimum 2% for a score of 3 (meets expectations)
 - Maximum 6%

- Consideration of merit pay for court staff at max
 - Based upon performance evaluation
 - Amount capped at 2%
 - Merit pay is not added to base pay for purposes of calculating COLA's and future merit increases