



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF THE
PROBATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

PAUL J. KNIERIM
Probate Court Administrator

186 NEWINGTON ROAD
WEST HARTFORD, CT 06110

THOMAS E. GAFFEY
Chief Counsel

TEL (860) 231-2442
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HELEN B. BENNET
Attorney

DEBRA COHEN
Attorney

Probate Court Budget Committee
Meeting Agenda
Monday, May 20, 2013
5:00 PM

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

- I. Convene Meeting
- II. Public Comment and Correspondence
- III. Remarks by the Chair
- IV. Internal Pay Equity Study Implementation Date
- V. Budget and Formula for Merit Increases
- VI. Budget for Cost of Living Adjustments
- VII. Report of Ad Hoc Committee on Floating Clerks (re: Compensation for Floating Clerks)
- VIII. Policy No. 101 Staff Compensation Adjustments (re: Promotions)
- IX. Policy No. 306 Transfers (re: Pay Adjustments)
- X. Other Business
- XI. Schedule Next Meeting
- XII. Adjournment

State of Connecticut
Greater Windsor Probate Court
Serving East Windsor, South Windsor and Windsor

Marianne Lassman Fisher
Judge

Annette T. Tarascio
Chief Clerk

Catherine K. Jourdan
Clerk

Randall I. Graff
Assistant Clerk

1540 Sullivan Avenue
South Windsor, CT 06074
(860)644-2511 Ext. 371
Fax (860) 648-5047

March 26, 2013

VIA EMAIL (pknierim@ctprobate.gov) and REGULAR MAIL

Chairman, Probate Court Budget Committee
Office of the Probate Court Administrator
186 Newington Road
West Hartford, CT 06110

RE: Increase in Staff Hours

Dear Judge Knierim:

As you know, one of our Clerks, Paula Mancuso, recently retired. We have hired a new employee, who will work in the position of Assistant Clerk, and who will commence employment on April 1.

When the courts were merged, this court's transitional authorization was 3.8, which was 152.00 hours. The approved benchmark was 3.6, which included the following employees: Chief Clerk I, 37.5 hours, Clerk, 37.5 hours, Clerk, 37 hours and Clerk, 32 hours, which is 144 hours.

We are requesting, by this correspondence, that the new position of Assistant Clerk be a full time position, rather than the 32 hour position for which we are currently authorized. This would result in a benchmark which remains under the transitional authorization but slightly over the benchmark. This difference would be an increase over the benchmark from 3.6 to 3.735, which is a .13 increase. The total hours would increase from 144 to 149.

While the change is minimal, it would be significant to this court. The new Assistant Clerk would be available and working at all times while the court remains open, rather than working a schedule in which she comes in at a later time in the mornings or leaves early in the afternoon. We would also have available to us an additional five hours of working time from this employee, which is critical. As you know, this Court has struggled with the passing of Judge Griffin, and the subsequent transfer or retirement of two experienced Clerks. We currently have a temporary employee in place. The addition of the five hours to our work time would help us to move away from the need for temporary help.

P.Knierim
3/25/2013
Page 2

In addition to the above, the increase of five hours of work time will not significantly affect the wage structure of the court. The two employees who left their positions were Clerks, who were paid at a higher rate of pay. They were replaced with Assistant Clerks, who are at a lower pay scale.

Please call with any questions regarding this request. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

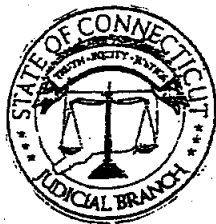
Marianne Lassman Fisher

Marianne Lassman Fisher
Probate Judge, Greater Windsor District

WEST HAVEN
PROBATE DISTRICT NO. 39

CCVR
AK
for 5-20-13
mt
Return to PK

West Haven City Hall
355 Main Street
West Haven, CT 06516
Tel: (203) 937-3552
Fax: (203) 937-3556



Mark J. DeGennaro
Judge

Maureen O' Connor
Chief Clerk

April 19, 2013

Office of Probate Administration
Budget Committee
186 Newington Road
West Hartford, CT

Re: Staffing

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Budget Committee:

I am requesting an increase in our staffing level from 200 hours per week to 214 hours per week. As you may recall, West Haven was one of the poorest courts in the State, requiring occasional borrowing from Probate Administration prior to consolidation in order to meet its financial obligations. As a result, salaries and staff were kept to a minimum. The consolidation assisted the court greatly by increasing the hourly pay for most of the staff. However, the staffing level did not change, despite this court being one of the busier courts in the state.

Unfortunately, consolidation also hurt our court by luring away three experienced staff members. Because of the ability to transfer within the probate system afforded by consolidation, our court lost to other courts a clerk with more than six years' experience, another clerk that had been a practicing attorney, and a third clerk with almost 20 years of experience as a legal secretary. Each of these individuals was able to advance their careers and/or reduce their commute by transferring. However, this void has been filled by inexperienced, assistant clerks who earn at the lowest pay scale.

Our court is extremely lucky in that I consider my chief clerk and two experienced clerks to be some of the best in the state. We also are extremely fortunate to have two retired clerks with over 60 years of experience between them help in the training of the new assistant clerks and reducing the backlog of cases. However, because of pension rules, the retired clerks are limited to 630 hours per year, an average of 12 hours per week each. One of these clerks spends almost half of each year in Florida, and puts in her annual hours during the other six months. This arrangement is actually very beneficial to the court as this clerk provides coverage during vacations and holidays. This system has worked well in my two plus years here, but because of the inexperience of our three new clerks, all of whom are part-time, we are not as efficient as we should be.

In addition to the inexperience of our new clerks, it is my belief that our staffing level should increase due to the nature of our clientele. Although our weighted-workload numbers are significant for our staffing level, they do not truly reflect the nature of our clientele. A large number of our matters are pro se, requiring considerable assistance by the staff. Also, a large number of matters are handled under C-O 17's. While there may be an attorney involved in

those matters, the staff has to more closely monitor those files as they are more likely to fall behind. Most significantly, our court handles a considerable population with psychological issues. This requires the more experienced staff to devote hours out of each day to address the problems that are brought to our court each and every day. The more routine work is left to the lesser experienced assistant clerks, who over time, will become more efficient at processing the work. However, the more experienced staff are often here well before our opening at 8:30 and beyond our closing at 5:00 simply in order to finish the work from which they were taken away in order to provide assistance to the public.

In order to maintain a high level of service for our files, we hold hearings on two or three days per week, not including the special hearings held at the VA or nursing homes. This requires at least two clerks to put away their normal responsibilities and assist in the hearings. Although I believe that we are fairly current with our administrative responsibilities such as closing files, laser fiche and shredding, there is one area of concern. Because of the high volume of cases, and because of the everyday demands of the court, files are not put away each day, but are left out on desks or in process. I believe that we would not be able to handle our normal caseload if each clerk had to take the time each day to put away files, only to take them back out the following day. Not only is there a risk in this practice, it sometimes makes it difficult to locate files, even though the computer tickler system is used. I am sure that over time, the court will be able to accomplish this task.

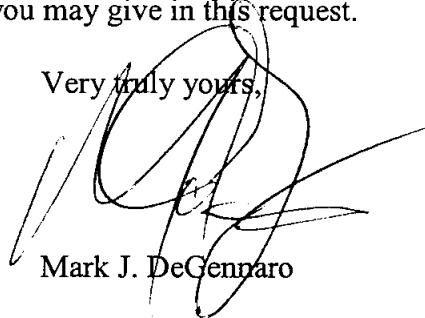
Finally, we are in the process of reconfiguring our space. Although we were not one of the courts that was involved directly in consolidation, the City has recently begun the process of moving the Board of Education into the office adjoining our court offices, which used to house a G.A. courthouse and offices. This affords us an opportunity to remove old office apparatus, administrative files and similar items that have made our offices overcrowded. Unfortunately, this too takes man-hours that cannot be taken from other matters under our present constraints.

Because we did not immediately replace the clerks as they transferred to other positions, we had 'banked' hours in our annual allotment such that for the past several months, we have been operating on a higher staffing level. As we did in 2011, the number of staff hours in 2012 was less than 10,400 allotted (200 hours/week x 52 weeks). However, I believe that our court needs the additional hours in order to maintain the progress that we have noticed over the last few months and to address the outstanding concerns raised herein.

I am requesting that my staffing level be increased to 214 hours per week until such time as one of my retired clerks no longer works in our court. The extra hours will continue to be in the assistant clerk position. After the separation from employment by one of the retired clerks, the level could be adjusted so that not all of those hours are absorbed. This will allow my three new clerks the opportunity to gain important experience without our court falling behind in its administrative responsibilities. Over time, these assistants will be able to provide better service to the public, thereby freeing up the more experienced clerks to process the files.

Thank you for any consideration you may give in this request.

Very truly yours,

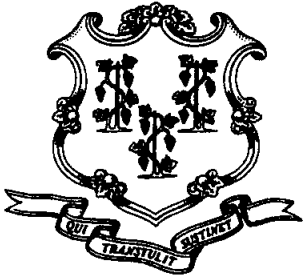
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark J. DeGennaro', written over the typed name below.

Mark J. DeGennaro

COPY April 9, 2013

Hon. Paul J. Knierim, Chairman
Probate Court Budget Committee
Office of Probate Court Administrator
186 Newington Road
West Hartford, CT 06110

RECEIVED
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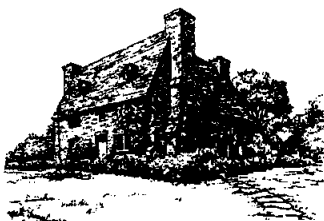


State of Connecticut

PROBATE COURT
DISTRICT OF
MADISON-GUILFORD

8 MEETINGHOUSE LANE
MADISON
CONNECTICUT
06443

JOEL E. HELANDER, JUDGE
MARY J. DiMEOLA, CHIEF CLERK
ROSEMARY L. NOLIN, CLERK
JANET V. STURK, CLERK
PRISCILLA H. GEER, ASST. CLERK
TEL. 203-245-5661
FAX 203-245-5653



1639 Henry Whitfield House

*Serving the towns of
Guilford & Madison*

Dear Judge Knierim (Paul),

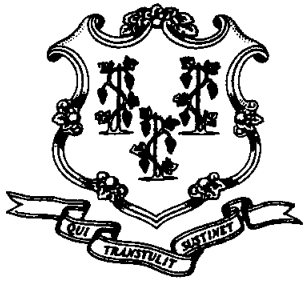
On behalf of the Madison-Guilford Probate Court, I am requesting a staffing level adjustment i.e. a nominal increase from 2.45 FTE (full-time equivalent) to 2.60 FTE.

A similar request was submitted to the Committee on February 4, 2013, but after a lengthy telephone conversation with you a few days afterwards, I withdrew the formal request for possible deferral to April '13, which would allow us time to re-evaluate the proposal. The chief clerk, Mary DiMeola, and myself have worked closely over a two month period to monitor court efficiencies and deficiencies, bringing in a conclusion that supports the proposal.

Two factors prompt our proposal: #1) The thin spread of our allocation of 98 hours/week (2.45 FTE) over a 40-hour work week and #2) serious compromises in workplace security .

In addressing the thin spread of clerks against the full work week, it is first noted that our district is the fourth smallest (by population served) in the Connecticut Probate Court System; that nearly 50% of all court users in our district are pro se parties. The effects of these verified statistics is such that this district has both a diminutive FTE assignment and diminutive weighted work load assignment.

To elaborate on population: In a large population center where a large court may employ 6 or 8 or more clerks, it is far easier to arrange or balance vacation schedules for continuing court efficiency than it is in a small court. This court employs four clerks working a patchwork schedule of hours i.e. 20, 24, 24, and 30 hours, respectively. In the aggregate, these clerks have

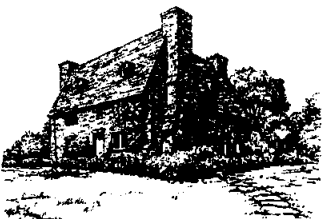


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Budget Committee

4/29/2013

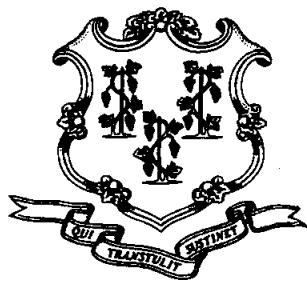
page 2 of 5

approximately 17 weeks of vacation. More often than not, it is not possible for the remaining employees to cover the open hours; and we would hardly ever dare to have two employees on vacation simultaneously because, most assuredly, court operation would be inefficient. Absences due to sickness in a small court often create similar challenges for work week coverage.

To elaborate on pro se parties: In a smaller court such as ours, there is a particular affinity to spend time with pro se parties, especially parties who may be grieving, traumatized, and facing life's trials. Indeed, the mantra heard at the time of court consolidation was *preserving user-friendliness and accessibility*. And indeed, the number of pro se parties in this category in this type of court are great and many. It is no surprise that the level of user-friendliness to pro se parties varies widely from court to court. Our court has distinguished itself for spending the time that is necessary with pro se parties. For this reason alone, an error factor appears to exist in determining weighted workloads, system wide, which has the furthering effect of skewing the assignment of FTE by strict calculation system-wide standard of $1050 \text{ WWL} = 1 \text{ FTE}$.

Our district's 2012 WWL of $2308/1050 = 2.20 \text{ FTE}$ or 88 hours/week, which means that our proposal for a 104 hour work week exceeds the assigned FTE by 15%. In considering that WWLs are only best estimates and subject to myriad unconsidered variables, the proposed 15% increase (or margin of error factor) does not appear inappropriate.

In addressing serious compromises in workplace security, it is quickly noted that our historic Memorial Town Hall at 8 Meetinghouse Lane, where our newly consolidated court is located, was vacated as a town hall in 1994. The only town



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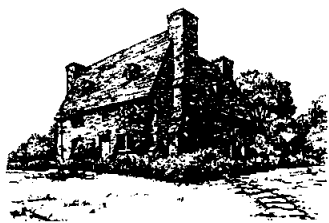
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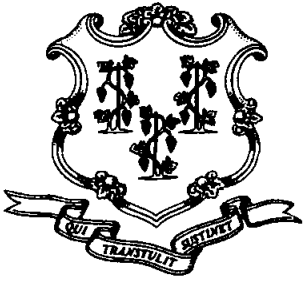
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office remaining on our main floor is a small office for the associate director of the Madison Youth & Family Services who, by his own report, performs out-of-office work during the greater part of the work week. The downstairs of Memorial Town Hall is occupied by The Charlotte L. Evarts Memorial Archives, a non-profit group that is open only five (5) hours per week, two of which are in the evening. The top floor of the Memorial Town Hall is a large meeting room formerly much used by senior citizens, but now used minimally since the new senior center on Bradley

Road was opened last year. On the adjacent street corner from our building is an abandoned elementary school building. Meetinghouse Lane itself is an odd side street that is not a through road. Taken altogether, the offices of this probate court are relatively isolated, if not insulated.

We continue to believe that the degree of isolation and accordingly, workplace security--- for our court facility is one of the most compromised in the entire Connecticut Probate Court system. To help support this belief, we canvassed each of the other 53 probate court districts either by email or direct telephone contact. (38 responded via email and 15 responded via our telephone inquiry). Here is what we found: that only nine (9) other courts are *not* located in town/city halls with other municipal offices, such as ours; that six (6) of the nine (9) other courts share their building with other full-time offices, which leaves only three (3) other courts that appear to share a similar isolation with our court. They are: Shelton, Niantic Regional, and Greater Manchester. It is further observed that the populations served by Niantic Regional (50,000+) and Greater Manchester (72,000+) warrant a larger staff than ours, which by itself offers a level of increased security because it is easier to maintain at least two working clerks at all times.

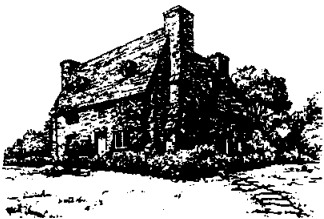


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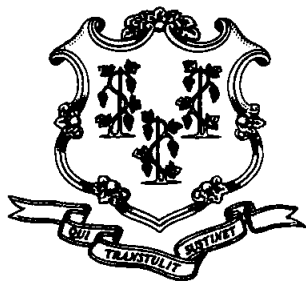
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It almost goes without saying that when other offices are within earshot or close proximity of a probate court, there is an increased security level. The six probate courts referenced above i.e. those *not* within town/city halls (Region 14, Middletown, Berlin, Hartford, Newington, and Waterbury) share facilities with myriad other offices, including offices for: a manufacturing company, marketing company, worker's compensation branch, law firms, state marshal, rehab center, computer company, building management, state banking commission, physicians, bank, insurance company, certified public accountant, realty companies, various other private offices). This court does not enjoy the security of other full-time offices in its building.

Issues of security in this court are matters of grave concern and have been addressed for two years, beginning with plans for basic countertops, which were finally installed in 2012. In February 2012, we took three action steps in research on the subject:

- 1) Telephone call with Judge Knierim in re: purchase of chemical MACE or similar spray, which he discouraged (2/16)
- 2) Meeting with John Bowers, health director/emergency management coordinator for the Town of Madison, who discussed panic buttons and video cameras (2/23)
- 3) Meeting with Lieutenant Robert Stimpson of the Madison Police Department, who compiled a 7-page document on the subject of "preventative security" for our reference (3/1)

One of the over-riding findings in our research in basic court room security is the basic premise of maintaining two or more clerks in the workplace at all times during the 40-hour work week. While this court does not have an official policy to that



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effect, it strives mightily to achieve it, but is unable to do so. There are simply not enough benchmark hours to make it consistently possible. We have calculated that the addition of six (6) benchmark hours to the work week, as proposed, can make a difference in reaching our basic security goal and also maintain the fullest operating efficiency under our workload.

For the foregoing reasons, we respectfully request a staffing level adjustment i.e. a nominal increase from 2.45 FTE (full-time equivalent) to 2.60 FTE as soon as possible or, in any event, not later than June 3, 2013. The proposal equates to six (6) extra hours per week for a total of 104 hours.

The chief clerk and myself would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this proposal at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Budget Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel E. Helander

jeh/JEH



NEW LONDON REGIONAL
CHILDREN'S PROBATE COURT

Hon. Mathew H. Greene
Administrative Judge

Hon. Nicholas F. Kepple
Hon. Jeffrey A. McNamara

May 17, 2013

Budget Committee
Probate Assembly
184 Newington Rd.
West Hartford, CT 06110

Dear Committee Members:

At the most recent Executive Committee meeting, Judge Knierim presented a concept that the Budget Committee may be considering with regard to merit increases for those employees who are at the maximum rate for their positions. I am writing in support for this merit increase not only for those employees at the max rate, but those who currently exceed the max rate.

As presented, it was suggested that a one-time merit increase of no greater than 2% be afforded those employees at max rate. This would allow the max rate employees to receive their 3% cola with the employees below max rate, but would limit their merit increase to only 2%, instead of 3%. Further, unlike the merit increases for those below max rate, this 2% increase would be considered on an annual basis, and would not be added to their annual compensation. I believe the concept behind this proposed merit increase is laudable and worthy of approval by this committee.

I was dismayed to learn however, that this merit increase would NOT be afforded to those employees who are currently above max rate. I believe this exclusion to be grossly unfair and insulting to those employees who work very hard and, through no fault of their own, are above max rate. As they are not eligible for the cola increase, they should at least be afforded the same 2% one-time merit increase.

I was very disappointed in some opposition to this as presented at the Executive Committee meeting. As one Judge advocated that her staff would be against any such increase, as they believed those who are paid at a higher rate should not get any increase. Another Judge was also against suggesting that those employees who are overpaid should not get more. I would suggest that it is inappropriate for one staff member to be concerned with what another is getting paid and their concern should lie with their own pay scale. I find it further inappropriate that a Judge would base her decision on this with how her staff feels. We as members of the Executive Committee have a duty to all employees of our system.

At the New London Regional Children's Probate Court, we have 2 PCOs who are at above max rate for this position. As their salary was determined based on other PCO's who were employed at the time of their hiring, I would suggest that there are a few other PCOs in the same position. Their salary was based on their required education and licenses for this position. However due to a revision in the requirements for this position, the salary range has decreased and now they are being penalized. When they were hired (all PCOs within the last 7 years), they were with the belief that they would be treated equally with other Probate Employees with regard to pay increases. They suffered through no pay increases just as the other employees and it is just plain wrong to not provide them with any type of increase when all other employees are being rewarded.

I would challenge anyone to suggest that the PCOs are overpaid. While the position may be new to our system and their actual duties not known to all, the time and skill required to address the issues they face day in and day out has to be one of the most challenging in our system. I am not suggesting that other positions in our system are not important, I am just stating that the position of PCO is just as worthy of consideration of a merit pay increase.

Please know that my position of an annual merit pay increase of 2% is not just for the PCOs who are above max rate, but for any employee of our system who is above rate. There should be some annual incentive for such employees and to discriminate against them is not appropriate. They were all hired at a competitive pay rate with the thought of the ability to have an increase in salary, and the fact that the pay scale has changed through no fault of their own, should not be a reason to penalize these employees. They are just as vital to our system as any other employee and by failing to include them in any proposal for merit increases says otherwise.

I am pleased that the proposed budget is providing increases for employees who have had their salaries frozen for a period of time and I applaud the efforts behind this. As you know, there has been an employee movement to consider forming a union, and I believe the efforts to seek additional funding for the employees of our system will help diminish that movement. However, if our leaders choose to discriminate against some of our employees, I will fully understand that desire and understand the support of any such movement. Accordingly, we need to treat all our employees the same.

In closing, I strongly advocate that the Budget Committee, in considering a merit increase for employees, consider ALL employees and not exclude any of our hard working employees.

Very truly yours,

Mathew H. Greene



Mary M. MacGregor
2268 New London Turnpike
South Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033

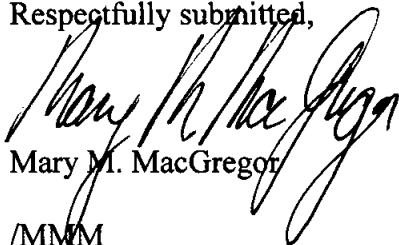
May 20, 2013

Dear Budget Committee Members;

I can appreciate the enormity of an equitable salary for all clerks. I have made it very clear that I feel we should be compared to judicial employees in the State of Connecticut and get **ALL** the benefits afforded them. I have never felt MAG's comparison was fair; MAG'S comparing us to other states, when Connecticut is the most expensive state to live in, is simply not just.

I was one of the 139 individuals whose salary fell below MAG's target pay rate. I am writing the Committee to ask that my increase be retroactive.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary M. MacGregor

/MMM

Dear Budget Committee:

My name is Isabella Karash and I have been an assistant clerk for over 8 years.

On page 11 of the handout, under Budget and Formula for Merit Increases, you are considering giving a merit pay for Court staff that is at max. Although they are not guaranteed it in the future, you have kept it open for discussion for future merit increases.

I, on the other hand, am at the very low end of the assistant clerk's scale. The pay equity adjustment is giving me 40% of the pay raises that I should be receiving. On January 5, 2011, I had already been in the system over six years. At 40%, this would negate three of those years. In addition, I have worked over two years since then and these are not being considered.

My current chief clerk is about ten years my junior and plans to remain there. Because of the current tally system tied in with staffing, there is no opportunity to even create a clerk's position for promotion although I am qualified for the position.

I would like you to reopen the discussion to enable people who are grossly below the pay scale to be compensated for their years of service and experience. The Probate Courts spent a tremendous amount of effort researching the pay equity and I would like to see it implemented.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Isabella Karash, Asst. Clerk
Milford-Orange Probate Court
IKarash@ctprobate.gov

Budget Committee
May 20, 2013

Internal Pay Equity Study Implementation Date

- Implementation planned for last payroll in June
 - Pay date June 27
 - Pay period June 8 –June 21 (increases effective June 8)
 - Possibly implement earlier if state budget and probate system budget are approved before earlier payroll periods

Budget and Formula for Merit Increases

- Implementation planned for first payroll in July
 - Pay date July 11
 - Pay period June 22 – July 5 (increases effective June 22)
- FY14 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 internal pay equity 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
 - Consider Executive Branch policy:
 - Based upon performance evaluation
 - Amount capped at 2%
 - Merit pay is not added to base pay for purposes of calculating COLAs and future merit increases

Budget for Cost of Living Adjustments

- FY14 budget assumption is 3.0%

Date: March 13, 2013, Submitted at Meeting

To: Executive Committee, Connecticut Probate Assembly

Re: Proposal by Ad Hoc Committee nka Floating Clerks List Committee for a Floating Clerks List Program

Dear Members of the Executive Committee:

The Committee presents this proposal for a Floating Clerks List Program for your review and approval.

Goal:

Provide support to courts which have difficulty finding trained clerks to provide staffing coverage—especially on short notice or for short-term events.

Recruitment of Floating Clerks:

An Application (copy attached) will be made available to current clerks, retired clerks and retired judges.

A recruitment posting would be made in every issue of the Sign Post.

A statement about the program would be added to the Separation Checklist that the courts use when an employee is separating from employment with the court.

Database for Floating Clerks List:

A database will be developed of individuals willing to serve as Floating Clerks. The list will be disseminated only to Judges and Chief Clerks.

The list will be maintained by Debra Cohen at Probate Administration.

Procedure for Courts to Utilize Floating Clerks:

Judges/Chief Clerks must contact Probate Administration (Paul Knierim or alternatively, Debra Cohen) to request prior authorization in order to employ a Floating Clerk. Calls can be made at 8:00 am on the day needed or the day before, if a need is anticipated.

The standard used would be whether the court is unable to meet its minimal operational requirements on a given day.

Compensation:

Current or active court staff would receive their current rate of pay.

Retired clerks would receive the lesser of the rate they were paid when they retired or the market rate for the Assistant Clerk position.

Retired judges would receive the market rate for the Assistant Clerk position.

Regards,

Hon. Jennifer L. Berkenstock, Chair
Ad Hoc Floating Clerks List Committee

Floating Clerks List Application

Name _____

Home address _____

Contact phone # _____ Personal email _____

I have worked in the Probate Court System for _____ years as _____ (position).

I have experience working with the following:

- CMS LaserFiche Passports (currently certified)
- Decedents' Estates Trusts Conservators Commitments
- GID Children's Matters Guardian/Estate of Minor

I am available to participate in the Floating Clerk's List program on the following days:

- Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

I am available to work from:

- 8:00 – 4:00 9:00 – 5:00 9:00 – 2:00 11:00 – 3:00
- Other: _____

Please list any restrictions on your schedule (e.g., vacation): _____

I am available to work in the following Probate Courts: _____

I am willing to travel up to _____ miles from home for work.

PCA Policy Manual

101 STAFF COMPENSATION ADJUSTMENTS

POLICY

The Probate Court Budget Committee may periodically authorize cost of living adjustments (COLAs) and merit increases for court staff. Each judge is responsible for the implementation of COLA and merit increases for the staff of the judge's court in accordance with the budget committee's guidelines.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Generally, all court staff, except temporary employees, rehired retirees, and those whose rates of pay exceed the maximums for their positions, are eligible to receive compensation adjustments in the form of COLAs and merit increases. The total pool of funds for compensation adjustments will be determined by the budget committee, provided that approved COLAs and merit increases will be implemented only if the Chief Court Administrator approves a budget for the Probate Court system that includes funding for the increases. Planned compensation adjustments may be withheld or postponed by action of the budget committee.

PROCEDURES

COLAs

A COLA is a periodic compensation increase intended to maintain employees in an equivalent position as inflation increases the cost of purchasing goods and services. When a COLA is authorized, all court staff, except temporary employees, rehired retirees and those whose existing rates of pay exceed the maximums for their positions, receive the same percentage increase. In addition, the minimum, market, and maximum rates of pay for each position are increased by the amount of the COLA.

Merit Increases

In addition to COLAs, the budget committee may periodically authorize merit increases for court staff. When the budget committee authorizes a merit increase, all court staff who were employed by a court as of the end of the applicable performance evaluation period, except temporary employees, rehired retirees and those whose rates of pay equals or exceeds the maximums for their positions, are eligible for an increase. The performance evaluation system calculates the amount of each employee's increase, if any, based on his or her performance evaluation for the applicable evaluation period. If the sum of the employee's current pay and merit increase would exceed the maximum for his or her position, the sum is capped at maximum plus 3%. Any amount of merit pay that exceeds maximum is paid in a

lump sum and such amount is not added to the employee's base pay. The budget committee may establish additional guidelines for the implementation of merit increases.

Promotions

An employee who is promoted will be paid minimum for the new position or 3.5% more than the employee's rate of pay before the promotion, whichever is higher. If, however, the employee's rate of pay before the promotion exceeds the maximum for the pre-promotion position, the promoted employee will be paid the greater of the minimum for the new position or 3.5% more than the maximum for the pre-promotion position. A promoted employee is eligible for any merit increase or COLA that the budget committee authorizes for implementation after the date of promotion.

Transfers

See Policy No. 202 for general information on applicable policies when a judge hires a court staff member from another court to fill a vacant position that is authorized under the court's benchmark staffing level. A transfer employee who is hired to continue in the same position (e.g., an assistant clerk at another court is hired as an assistant clerk) will be paid at the same rate that he or she was receiving prior to the transfer. A transfer employee who is promoted to another position (e.g., an assistant clerk at another court is hired as a clerk) will be paid in accordance with the promotions policy set forth above. A transfer employee who accepts a position with a lower pay range (e.g., a clerk at another court is hired as an assistant clerk) will be paid the maximum for the new position or the rate that he or she was receiving prior to the transfer, whichever is lower.

Questions on this policy: Contact PCA Financial Services Department at (860) 231-2442

Forms for this policy: Compensation Ranges

Compensation Ranges

Calendar Year 2013

Hourly Rates

Class Title	Exempt /NE	Min.	Market	Max.
Chief Clerk III	Exempt	27.43	32.91	38.40
Chief Clerk II	Exempt	24.93	29.92	34.91
Chief Clerk I	Exempt	22.67	27.20	31.73
Staff Attorney	Exempt	24.93	29.92	34.91
Deputy Chief Clerk	Exempt	20.61	24.73	28.85
Clerk	Non-Exempt	18.73	22.48	26.23
Assistant Clerk	Non-Exempt	15.48	18.58	21.67
Court Assistant	Non-Exempt	14.07	16.89	19.70
Lead Probate Court Officer *	Exempt	22.67	27.20	31.73
Probate Court Officer *	Exempt	20.61	24.73	28.85
Security Officer *	Non-Exempt	14.07	16.89	19.70

* Regional Children's Probate Courts

PCA Policy Manual 306 TRANSFERS

POLICY

A judge may hire a court staff member from another court to fill a vacant position that is authorized under the court's benchmark staffing level. A transfer employee must meet the minimum qualifications set forth in the job description for the position.

GENERAL INFORMATION

See Policy No. 301 New Hires for general information regarding authority to hire employees to fill vacant authorized positions.

The budget committee establishes job descriptions, which include specific minimum qualifications, for each position within the Probate Court system. The judge must verify that a transfer candidate meets the minimum qualifications before extending an offer.

The judge must determine the rate of pay for a transfer employee in accordance with the provisions of Policy No. 101 Staff Compensation Adjustments.

For the purposes of this policy, a transfer employee is defined as an individual who is currently employed at another court or who was employed at another court at any time during the six months preceding his or her hire date.

PROCEDURES

A judge hiring a transfer employee should provide an offer of employment letter that outlines the terms of employment. The effective date of a court staff transfer must occur on the first business day of a pay period.

A copy of the signed offer letter, an Employee Data Sheet, and the Computer Access Authorization Form should be submitted to the PCA Financial Services Department prior to the transfer to ensure that appropriate changes are made for payroll and time and attendance purposes and to ensure access to CMS.

Questions on this policy: Contact PCA Financial Services Department at (860) 231-2442

Forms for this policy: See Policy No. 301 for Sample Offer of Employment Letter
See Policy No. 307 for Employee Data Sheet and Form CO-931p, Designation of Retirement System-Tier-Plan-Beneficiary
See Policy No. 701 for Computer Access Authorization Form

PCA Policy Manual

116 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM

POLICY

The job performance of court staff will be assessed on an annual basis using a uniform performance evaluation system. The performance evaluation system provides the basis for merit-based compensation adjustments and promotes professional development by regularly providing court staff with constructive feedback on job performance.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Judges shall conduct an annual performance review for each court staff member, except temporary employees, using the computer-based performance evaluation system adopted by the Probate Court Budget Committee. Performance evaluations for rehired retirees are optional in the judges' discretion. Judges should seek input from their chief clerks when completing performance evaluations.

The performance evaluation system uses job-specific criteria and general criteria applicable to all court staff. The job-specific criteria are based on the job description for each position. Judges may also add up to five additional criteria to assess performance on specific tasks or objectives not covered under the standard factors. Employees are rated on each criterion using a 1 to 5 numeric scale. Judges may add written comments to the evaluations.

PROCEDURES

The annual evaluation period runs from April 1 to the following March 31. Judges shall complete evaluations by May 31.

The judge shall meet with each employee to discuss his or her performance evaluation and may include the chief clerk in the discussion. The original report must be kept in the employee's personnel file at the court. A copy should be given to the employee.

When the budget committee approves funding for merit increases, the performance evaluation system calculates the amount of increase, if any, for each employee based on his or her performance evaluation for the immediately preceding evaluation period.

Questions on this policy: Contact PCA Financial Services Department at (860) 231-2442

Forms for this policy: Performance and Development Plan Forms