



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF THE
PROBATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

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Probate Court Budget Committee

Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, December 3, 2014
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. Guidelines for FY 15-16 Office Budgets
- V. Compensation and Benefits Plan
- VI. Other Business
- VII. Set 2015 Meeting Schedule
- VIII. Adjournment

The time, effort and the resources of Probate Court Administration (PCA) in understanding the various positions within the Probate system is greatly appreciated in particular, the role of the Probate Court Officer. This understanding is an important part of the conversation as PCA requests funding from the legislature. The provision of the following information is an attempt to go beyond the formal job description that speaks to the job function i.e. "what PCO's do and toward "why and how" PCO's go about the work.

Probate Court Officers aid the family in the development of a family plan via the case conference process to help the family to communicate effectively in a neutral, supportive environment where the family's time is respected. Case planning includes but is not limited to the following:

- Gathering and assessing information in order to visualize the family system
- Matching strengths and needs with solutions and services
- Identifying behaviors and conditions that need to change
- Reviewing, tracking, and acknowledging progress regularly
- Determining readiness for key case transition points, such as reunification
- Marshaling supports as needed: informal or formal

Why is this necessary?

An increasing number of grandparents and other relatives are raising and parenting children that would otherwise enter the foster care system. They can be young grandparents in their 40's, retired grandparents living on Social Security or anywhere in-between. Whatever the differences, the one commonality is that they are raising children that they did not expect to raise. Their feelings and reactions to this situation varies depending on their health, finances and differing life plans. They may wonder if they could have done a better job as parents. Relatives such as aunts/uncles didn't contribute to the situation and are sometimes left to pick up the pieces. They don't deal with the guilt, warranted or not, of "what did we do wrong?" Other times guardianship may be sought due to the death of a parent, military obligation or the like. Regardless of the reason(s) with change comes stress. Finding proper ways to deal with this change in a planful way is vital for caregiver emotional and/or physical health, safety and security as well as the health of the child(ren) in their care.

- The parent(s) may be angry, mentally ill, incarcerated or having difficulty coping with life issues.
- The child (ren) may have a mental health history (ies) related to physical, emotional or sexual abuse.
- New skills need to be developed by caregivers to adequately care for emotionally battered and/or neglected children.
- Gender differences in children require attention: grandmothers historically report that boys present more difficulties than girls related to more externalizing behavior problems i.e. misconduct/acting out while girls displayed more internalizing problem behaviors i.e. anxiety and depression.
- Developmental concerns require attention: children reaching adolescence become

more aware of their identity recognizing that their parents are no longer available to them in the traditional sense. This may lead them to questioning their own value as a person resulting in mental health concerns and/or delinquent activity.

Because a grandparent and/or other relative caregiver does not plan to raise their grandchildren, niece or nephew, there is a significant need to assist the family in developing a plan in the child's best interest that encompasses 1) identification of sources of family support that can be utilized during service provision, 2) identification of information that will empower families and assist in obtaining needed services for the child and family, 3) decision-making regarding currently used and needed resources required of family for services and supports.

Conceptualizing and collaborating with the family in this way helps to identify the gaps in resources or relationships, as well as conflictual or stressful relationships. Again, why is type of case planning necessary? Because, it helps to avoid what is sometimes called the "got-a-need, get a service" phenomenon which can drain family time, energy and resources. It increases the motivation and the ability of families in our communities to be as autonomous as possible. Autonomy is ultimately cost-saving and in the best interest of the children we serve.

Supplemental Info:

This type of case planning can produce successful outcomes like families increasing and/or goal achievement in:

- Community Involvement
- Improved Family Relations
- Employment
- Image of Self
- Life Skills
- Parenting Skills
- Relational Skills
- Safety
- Support Network
- Spiritual Life
- Mental Health/Substance Abuse

References

Grandparent and Relatives Parenting Children. Retrieved November 24, 2014, from: <http://raisingyourgrandchildren.com>

More U.S. Children Raised by Grandparents. Retrieved November 24, 2014, from: prb.org

Ecomap Script. Retrieved November 29, 2014, from: Education.ne.gov

Office Expense Budget

FY 2016 Proposed Budget Assumptions

Budget Committee Meeting: December 3, 2014

Description	Proposal
Education / Seminars / Meetings	\$600 per district \$600 per RCPC, plus \$200 per PCO
Dues	Other = \$25 per person
Subscriptions	Court proposal, subject to \$1,500 maximum
Coffee / Special Occasions	\$80 per person
Other Expenses	\$500 per district

December, 2014

**COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF
THE COMPETITIVENESS OF
THE COMPENSATION SYSTEM
OF
THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT
PROBATE COURTS**

Project Report

Conducted By



**Owen-Pottier Inc.
Human Resource Consultants**

Comprehensive Study of the Competitiveness of the Compensation System of The State of Connecticut Probate Courts

Project Report December, 2014

This report documents the results of a study conducted for the State of Connecticut Office of the Probate Court Administrator (PCA) for the Connecticut Probate Courts by Owen-Pottier Inc., Human Resource Consultants. The purpose of the study is to determine the level of competitiveness of the compensation system for Probate Court staff and to develop a compensation policy that provides for the internal fairness and external competitiveness of its compensation system.

The project had three phases which will be described in the following three sections.

Phase One Position Analysis

Court Visits and Staff Interviews:

Eight Probate Courts, including two Regional Children's Probate Courts, were visited by the consultant. These courts were of varying size and in various parts of the state. During these visits, the consultant observed the work of court staff and interviewed incumbents in all levels of positions in the various courts about their work and how they qualified to do the work. The on-site interviews, which were conducted with court staff, allowed the consultant to gain a more thorough understanding of the positions than that provided by job descriptions alone.

These audits of staff work accomplished two principal objectives: (1) Assuring that the consultant acquired a first-hand understanding of the work of court staff; and (2) confirming that the job descriptions for the staff positions are accurate. Both of these objectives were accomplished. As a result, the PCO and Lead PCO position descriptions were modified to require a Master's degree.

The consultant evaluated the position descriptions using the Willis job evaluation system, a tool which has been used in the State of Connecticut for over 30 years. It is the same objective job evaluation instrument as that used by the Judicial Branch.

Since these position evaluations are used throughout this report, it is important to describe the evaluation process and its application to the study. The Willis job evaluation tool examines three primary areas of job function:

1. Job knowledge and qualifications required to perform the duties;
2. Job complexity and mental effort;
3. Job responsibility and accountability.

The evaluation system utilizes factors common to all types of work. They measure objectively and precisely what any person must know or be able to do in order to perform a job satisfactorily. They measure the latitude given to a position incumbent to make decisions and the requirements of a position incumbent to analyze information and resolve work issues. They measure the accountability imposed on a position incumbent to answer for results through taking action and influencing outcomes within the scope of the position's authority. All these measurements are translated into numeric values which permit comparisons of those numeric values with that of other positions. The result is an objective relativity among jobs.

The job evaluation system does NOT consider factors such as job title, gender, race, incumbent name, job or incumbent history, workload, or job performance. Each job is evaluated on the basis of an incumbent in the job performing at a fully satisfactory level.

Phase Two Salary Survey

I. Objective:

Every sound compensation plan must be fair and it must be competitive for the human resources marketplace in which the employer recruits and retains qualified staff. The purpose of the salary survey is to establish a reliable basis for determining the competitiveness of the compensation practices. The fairness and utility of the compensation system will be addressed in the Phase Three section of this report.

II. Methodology

The value of external market compensation data depends on the similarity of types of organizations to be surveyed and their geographic proximity to the areas in which the Probate Courts compete for appropriately qualified human resources. Employers in distant geographic areas and of different types of services would be expected to have different compensation practices than those of more nearby employers providing similar services.

Accordingly, the consultants, with input from court staff and PCA staff, designed and developed a data collection form, which included descriptions of court staff positions for accuracy of job matching by survey participants. This was then tailored to specific categories of organizations which were deemed comparable, as follows:

1. States Survey

The consultants identified eight adjoining or nearby states to Connecticut having courts that administer and adjudicate probate matters. These states were invited to participate

in the salary survey. Of the eight invitees, six accepted and provided salary data. Those states are:

- Delaware
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- Vermont

Not every state had matching data for all positions included in the survey collection form.

2. Private Law Firms

The part of the data collection form that best applied to private law firms in Connecticut was submitted to twelve private law firms identified by the PCA staff as representing a range of size of firms and wide geographic distribution of cities and towns in Connecticut. Seven of those invited firms provided salary data on administrative support positions. The data from those law firms has proven to be a useful measure of compensation practices in Connecticut for positions comparable to those employed by the Probate Court system.

The names of those private firms are not disclosed in this document because of the consultants' strict adherence to protection of confidential information. Job titles in private law firms also do not resemble Probate Court titles, and make reference to such terms as 'paralegal' and 'clerical support' rather than actual job titles.

3. Social Services Organizations

A third survey was developed in order to measure competitiveness of external human and social services agencies as a comparison with compensation for Probate Court Officers and Lead Probate Court Officers. Staff members recommended eight such agencies practicing in diverse parts of Connecticut.

The consultants designed and developed a survey instrument appropriate to this group of employers and their professional practitioners. Unfortunately, only one organization responded. The consultants made numerous requests for participation, but invitees found that disclosure of their data was inconsistent with the nature of their professional practice, and suggested their jobs were not appropriate matches with those described in the survey.

4. State of Connecticut Judicial and Executive Branches

In general, it was found that comparison by title and scope of duties did not offer accurate job matches between Probate Court and Judicial and Executive Branch positions. Particularly with the Judicial Branch, there are position and classification titles that seem very similar. Both the Judicial Branch and the Probate Courts have several positions with

'clerk' and 'attorney' in their titles. Frequently, however, the scope and complexities of the jobs are different.

For instance, the Probate Court Chief Clerk position might be expected to compare well with the Judicial Branch Chief Clerk position. However, while both supervise staff in processing and administering legal matters, the Judicial Branch positions practice in a larger area of jurisdiction, including civil, criminal, and support cases. Their work also includes other tasks such as jury management. They have significant financial record-keeping responsibilities, including accounting for seized property and other assets. They manage unionized staff and must be familiar with labor contracts of two unions. The job values depend less on size of supervised staff and more on the nature and complexity of the cases, and whether these are in geographical areas or in judicial districts (e.g. size of area served). Although still imperfect, the Judicial Branch Deputy Clerk GA position was the closest match.

Notwithstanding the above discussion, further comparisons were attempted with Judicial and Executive Branch classes, identified in **Table A**, in Exhibit section, pages i-ii. The results should be viewed with caution as they are not considered solid matches in all cases, but are an effort to find similarities among positions.

As noted, there was only one external survey response for comparison with PCO and Lead PCO positions. Thus, the Judicial and Executive Branch classes are the comparators used in this report for those positions. They are not included in the analysis and charts with other survey results for two primary reasons: 1) The sample population is too small for meaningful statistical analysis, and adding them to the rest of the sample population would introduce distortions; and 2) the nature of the work in this group of positions varies significantly with other Probate Court jobs. The comparison rests on three positions only, from the Judicial Branch: (Family Relations Counsellor I compared to PCO, Family Relations Counselor II and Court Services Officer compared to Lead PCO). The Department of Children and Families (DCF) Social Worker and Social Worker Supervisor positions from the Executive Branch were examined and found to be more focused in the area of community protective services, involving more hazardous working conditions than those in Probate Courts. The DCF positions largely function within the community in custody issues.

Salary Rates:

Probate Court 'market' salary range rates were used in the comparison study. The rationale is that the market rate is somewhat similar to 'midpoint' and is the salary rate that represents an organization's salary policy; that which represents the employer's intention to pay for fully satisfactory performance for each position over time. Furthermore, the average actual rate for Probate Court staff is consistent with market rate.

In the case of survey respondents, however, it was necessary to use average actual salary rates, since many of the respondents do not have salary ranges. The rates were

considered to be an accurate comparison with the 'market' rates, considered as 'full competency rates'. It is acceptable industry practice to compare average actual rates with the sponsoring organization's midpoint rates, since the average actual rates represent the tendency to pay as part of an outside organization's compensation policy.

Survey Data Deficiencies:

Although the survey collection form included the Security Officer job description as part of the survey, there were too few matches for valid consideration in this study. The survey participants also did not identify positions of Chief Clerk I, II and III specifically, but indicated if the position description provided is heavier, lighter or exact match. The survey positions were more closely matched with Chief Clerk II, and the match to this position is used in the report.

III. Data Display

The complete data set of the survey results and the Judicial Branch information used, is displayed in **Table B1 and Table B2**, in Exhibit section, pages iii-iv. The Law Firms and States data show average actual salary rates, while the Judicial Branch rates represent midpoint salary rates, determined by step 5 in the 9 step plans or step 4 in 8 step plans. The existing 'market' rate is used for the Probate Court positions. **Table B2** further shows the minimum, market or midpoint, and maximum salary rates for Probate Court and Judicial Branch.

Graphic Display: Tabular displays are useful when comparing position to position. Compensation practices, however, must be considered in respect to a system-wide policy, in order to assure not only external competitiveness, but also internal equity.

To achieve this, an overall view is required. A systematic approach was used which consists of plotting the job values, (from consultant evaluations), against the salary rates in an X (horizontal) / Y (vertical) chart format. The initial result of this kind of graphic plot is shown in **Chart A**, in Exhibit section, page v.

This chart is intended to show how it is possible to make sense of a scatter of 'data points' obtained from multiple salary survey sources. The survey results from the Law Firms and States are displayed as data points in **Chart A**, with each source represented by a different symbol. This allows us to obtain an instant visual sense of the competitiveness of Probate Court salary rates compared to the rates of the Law Firms and States surveyed.

For reasons explained in section II.4, the Judicial Branch (JB) jobs were inexact comparators. However, by selecting jobs with similar duties and responsibilities, it was possible to construct a representative sampling of jobs to display in **Chart A**, and thus establish a depiction of the effective pay policy practiced by JB.

For instance, in an attempt to identify comparators in the clerical positions, the Judicial Branch Administrative Assistant was examined as a possible comparator to the Probate Court Clerk position. Incumbents in the Administrative Assistant class have elements of both Assistant Clerk and Clerk positions and thus provide some reference point, even though a solid match was not achieved. They all perform complex administrative support duties, in varying degrees. The Judicial Branch Administrative Assistant position falls between the Assistant Clerk and Clerk positions, and was thus included in the data used to construct a 'pay line' for Judicial Branch.

The JB 'pay line' is shown by the blue line in **Chart A**. Once this plotted line was established, it was possible to extract JB hourly salary values that would be appropriate to use in our comparison study. These extracted salary rates are depicted in **Chart A** by the 'star' symbols at the intersection of the survey and Probate Court job values, and the corresponding JB 'pay policy' blue line. For example, by reading upward vertically from point value 145 to the intersection of the JB blue line, the hourly rate would be \$24.40. Similarly, hourly salary rates were extracted from **Chart A** to construct the JB column in **Table B1**.

This is an appropriate strategy since the jobs have all been evaluated with the same Willis evaluation system. While the consultants participated in setting the JB job values through committee consensus, they were not involved in setting the pay rates. This extraction method is a valid approach to determine point value equivalency and hourly salary comparability between JB and the Probate Courts.

Combined Survey Results:

Since neither the neighbor States nor the Connecticut private Law Firms, by themselves, constitute the 'market' within which the Probate Courts compete for human resources, and because their salary practices are relatively similar in total value, the consultants elected to combine the two salary practices of the States and the Law Firms for each of the surveyed positions for comparison purposes. This is referred to in the report as the 'Combined' survey result, calculated as the average of the Law Firms and States salaries.

The full array of salary values, including the Judicial Branch values extracted from **Chart A**, and the 'Combined' values for the Law Firms and States, are displayed in **Table C**, in the Exhibit section, page vi. **Table C** shows the percentage of the Probate Court salary rates above or below all other rates. It provides an alternate expression of what we observe in **Chart A**. We observe that the Probate Court system appears more competitive at the lower end of the pay scale.

Chart B, in Exhibit section, page vii, displays graphically the comparisons of external market competition with Probate Court salaries, and also displays entire compensation systems in comparison with one another. This is critical to developing a comprehensive salary policy in which the overall system is as competitive as it is economically feasible, but also treats all positions relative to one another with internal fairness. The dotted lines, statistically expressed as 'trend lines' or lines of central tendency, effectively represent

an organization's tendency to pay, and can be appropriately considered as 'pay lines' for each organization, or for the market survey sample, as in this case, the 'Combined' market.

In contrast with **Chart A**, we now examine system-wide pay practices instead of making one-to-one comparisons. The overall salary practices of the Probate Court system, 'Combined' survey market, and Judicial Branch, are portrayed by the dotted dark blue, red, and light blue lines, respectively. These lines represent the central tendency of each organization, or outside market, to pay those positions relative to job worth. Observations about these pay lines allow some judgments about each compensation policy and the competitiveness of the Probate Court system in this selected market.

As one would expect, the lower the job value, the lower the salary rate, and similarly, higher job values accompany higher salary rates. The steepness of the pay lines and their relative positioning on the chart can reveal information about organizations' salary structure and how they compare. A sound and equitable pay system would expect to be fairly straight and not too steep. This is exhibited by both the JB and the Probate Court pay lines, which are nearly parallel (similar slopes). The 'Combined' outside market dotted red pay line is steeper, reflecting a more typical private sector pay practice of lower pay at entry level jobs, and sometimes higher pay at higher levels.

Phase Three Analysis and Recommendations

All of the preparations performed in Phases One and Two lead to the development of a compensation system intended to accomplish these objectives:

1. A system that is internally fair to all the staff members who are subject to the system;
2. One that is sufficiently competitive with the human resources marketplace within which the employer recruits and retains appropriately qualified staff members over a long-term period;
3. One that lends to understandable and uncomplicated administration.

Phase Three will present the consultants' recommendations for updating and modifying the compensation system together with rationale and assumptions used in making those recommendations. The recommendations will also provide salary administration guidelines to assist the Probate Courts in using the system as consistently and fairly as possible and for maintaining the system over time.

A. Salary Structure Development and Recommendations

In developing the recommended compensation system, the consultants relied heavily on the salary survey data and also on analysis of the Probate Courts existing salary system. The objective is to utilize the valuable elements of the present system.

The recommendations will address these issues:

- System competitiveness;
- Options for changes in salary rates;
- Salary administration guidelines.

A.1: System Competitiveness

The data displayed graphically in **Chart B** illustrate the fairly strong competitiveness of the Probate Courts pay structure at both entry-level and administrative support positions compared with 'Combined' Law Firms and neighbor States surveys. Our recommendations intend to maintain that competitiveness. The chart also shows the highly competitive compensation practice of the Judicial Branch. The consultants advise moving toward those levels of salary over time.

At the upper right portion of the pay lines, the Probate Courts pay system falls below that of the survey participants. Since Connecticut law firms constitute a fairly strong component of those comparisons, the consultants advise increasing competitiveness for these key positions within this more local market.

A.2: Options for Changes in Salary Rates:

The consultants acknowledge the budgetary consequences of such actions and thus provide three options for proceeding with adjusting the Probate Courts pay system to a more competitive stance. Whichever option is selected, implementation should occur in July, 2015 in order to allow time for PCA to determine the funds available through the state budget process. These options are as follows:

Option 1:

In order to respond to the highly competitive posture within Judicial Branch positions as well as moving toward the higher rates of pay exhibited by much of the survey salary component, the consultants recommend a 2 percent addition to the salary ranges at all levels, as the first step toward enhancing Probate Courts' competitiveness. This option would be in addition to the application of the 3 percent COLA to all positions in January, 2015.

This option would be intended to treat every position in exactly the same way regarding salary increases. For a large number of court staff, this option would appear to be completely fair. However, this option fails to consider the external market adjustments needed to modify salary ranges according to varying competitive conditions identified in the salary survey. A graphic display of this option in comparison with the present pay line is presented as the dashed green line in **Chart C**, in Exhibit section, page viii. The market rates for this option are shown in **Table D**, in Exhibit section, page ix.

This option might lend to a perception of fairness, but would not contribute to a constructive approach to PCA efforts to further develop its compensation system. Therefore, it is not the most favored option in the consultants' view.

Option 2:

Chart B, from the survey, reveals that the Probate Courts' salary range market rates are competitive with the survey participants at the lower levels of positions. Therefore, a modest adjustment in market rates will be sufficient to maintain competitiveness at that level. This is due in part to the fact that the survey participants tend to have positions at that level who perform entry level clerical work.

Conversely, at the upper levels of positions, the survey participants tend to have positions of broad and complex requirements, and private law firms tend to have incumbents in these positions performing multiple and complex legal duties, thus driving up the competitive salary rates at those higher levels. Funding for these positions is largely derived from client billings. In order for the Probate Courts to maintain pace with these levels, a more positive competitive approach is necessary.

The recommendation is to increase the market rate at the bottom of the pay line by 2 percent to maintain present competitiveness and to move toward greater competitiveness with Judicial Branch midpoint rates. At the upper portion of the pay line, specifically at the level of Chief Clerk II, a position which was used as a comparator in the survey, we recommend increasing market rate by 3 percent (2 percent for increasing competitiveness with the Judicial Branch and 1 percent for moving toward the Connecticut Law Firms' and States' rates at that level of position).

The pay line that results from applying Option 2 is shown in **Chart C** in gold color. The chart clearly shows an enhanced level of competitiveness with the market as measured by the survey. It has the added benefit of adjusting internal alignment so that steps to the next promotion or level of pay are more evenly allocated than in the present pay structure, and job salary is brought more in line with evaluated job value. The resulting salary rates for each position are displayed in tabular form in **Table D**.

The consultants found that the Assistant Clerk appeared to be out of alignment with the Clerk position. The market rate for Assistant Clerk presently is 20 percent lower than that of the Clerk position, while other position levels are approximately 10 percentage points apart. However, if adopted, Option 2 eliminates that concern.

Option 3:

Option 3 takes the most aggressive stance on competitiveness. In addition to the measures taken in Option 2, it further adds 3 percent to those results. This is displayed as the black 'Option 3' line in **Chart C**, which raises the entire adjusted pay line (from Option 2) to match the pay levels at the high end of the 'Combined' survey pay line. This makes Probate Courts most competitive with the survey market, though does not rise to the levels of the Judicial Branch pay line.

While this is a good option to strive for, it is the most costly. It would be acceptable to move toward this structure in small increments, over time. A strategy might include implementation of a 2 percent increase in July of 2015, followed by incremental increases as budgetary factors permit. Otherwise stated, PCA should anticipate continuing this kind of salary structure add-on in future years in order to increase gradually its competitiveness within the State.

Probate Court Officer and Lead Probate Court Officer Positions:

The positions of Probate Court Officer (PCO) and Lead Probate Court Officer (Lead PCO) have thus far not been discussed in the analysis and recommendations. This is because these positions are substantially different in their duties and characteristics from other Probate Court positions, and are treated separately, as explained in Phase Two, Section II.4 of the report. Following are three recommended pay policy changes for these two positions. While all options increase competitiveness, Option 1 is the most conservative.

Rationale for recommendation:

The Probate Court system has experienced high turnover rates and difficulty in recruiting qualified candidates for these positions because of competition from social and human services organizations. Compensation rates for similar work in the Judicial and Executive Branches are exceptionally competitive.

Since compensation survey data were not available from the human services organizations, the consultants relied on data from Judicial Branch salary rates for Family Relations Counselor (FRC) I and II, and Court Services Officer, as the closest comparators to the PCO and Lead PCO positions. The rates for these positions are exhibited in **Table B2**.

The salary change options for this group are meant to address the recruitment issue and are thus more elevated than would occur otherwise. This recognizes that the positions are more specialized with fewer candidates available. The recommended market rates, however, mostly remain below the minimum salary rates for those comparator Judicial Branch classes.

The three options are displayed in **Table D** and based on the existing minimum, market, and maximum rates shown in **Table B2**:

Option 1:

This option moves the position market rates partially to the minimum of FRC I and II. The new market rate for the PCO represents 93% of the FRC I minimum of \$31.69, resulting in a new market rate of \$29.47. The Lead PCO is moved to 90% of the FRC II minimum of \$36.61, resulting in a new market rate of \$32.95.

Different rate factors are used in order to maintain the present relationship between the two positions within the Probate Courts salary structure. We note that the FRC I and II positions are nearly 13 percent apart, while the PCO and Lead PCO are 10 percent apart. The different factor increases maintain this distance.

Option 2:

The move is closer to the minimum of the FRC I and II rates, to enhance competitiveness. The PCO is moved to 98 percent of the FRC I minimum, with a new market rate of \$31.06. The Lead PCO is moved to 95 percent of the FRC II minimum rate, with a new market value of \$34.78. Again, the different applied rate increase factors are meant to maintain the 10 percent spread between the Probate Court PCO and Lead PCO positions.

Option 3:

This option sets the rates at the actual minimum of the FRC I and FRC II positions, and is very aggressive. The new PCO market rate is set to \$31.69 and the new market rate for the Lead PCO is \$36.61. This option is more costly, though the budgetary requirements are mitigated by having very few incumbents at this level.

Changes in Salary Ranges:

The consultants recommend expanding the salary ranges, to 20 percent below and above 'market', for all options. This will provide greater opportunity to reward staff members for their excellent and long-time service, while achieving a greater degree of competitiveness with the local markets.

A.3 Salary Administration Guidelines

In general, the consultants find the PCA salary administration policies and practices to be proper.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Progression through salary range: Salary range 'market' generally represents the midpoint between range minimum and maximum. Organizations that use surveys to set their salary policy typically use some point in the survey data plus an add-on for anticipated wage inflation over an ensuing year. Generally, they call that 'midpoint', which really is the market plus a projection. Therefore, the use of 'market' seems appropriate.

In general, new staff members should be paid at or near range minimum. An incumbent who meets position requirements, or new staff members who are progressing toward full performance, should advance to 'market' in four to five years. 'Market', then, is the standard for progression. Those who fully and consistently meet all the requirements of a position, not falling short of meeting the requirements nor significantly exceeding them, should be paid at or near 'market'. The portion of the salary range above 'market' is reserved for incumbents who consistently exceed position requirements; those who noticeably and regularly surpass standard in performance. Progression toward range maximum is not a function of time, but of excellence.

Some organizations prefer to automatically move incumbents through the pay scale levels. Over time, all staff members reach range maximum, whether or not their performance warrants the top pay scale level. This lowers the incentive for high achievers to perform at optimum. The rewards are the same for average or mediocre performance as for excellence. The Probate Courts' salary administration provides much greater opportunity for staff members to be recognized and rewarded through the merit pay program.

- Should bilingualism be a compensable skill of staff members? The Judicial Branch employs interpreters whose sole job is to interpret questions and orders from the bench and to explain in common words what the judge has said and then to verify that the witness or defendant understands the meaning of those legal terms in lay language. These requirements clearly are compensable. In contrast, if a staff member happens to be bilingual and may assist a patron or client in making application for probate services from time to time, those services are not sufficient to increase the total worth of the position to the level of a higher compensation level. If a court is located in a community where there is a large population of non-English speaking people, particularly if the demographics of the community create a higher than normal potential need for probate services, then a special additional requirement might be added as a part of the position description. It would require that a staff member devote a substantial portion of every work day to assisting patrons with interpreting needs. Staffing such a position would require strict adherence to the bilingual qualification.
- Should there be a differential in pay for certain geographic areas? This issue was explored and the evidence for Connecticut was inconclusive. The consultants

obtained federal government data on wage rate differentials in different areas of Connecticut. The data included hourly rates for industrial establishments and did not single out office and administrative compensation. The consultants also conferred with both the Judicial Branch and the Executive Branch on their policies. Neither of the branches provides for variations in compensation based on geographic location.

Strategy for Implementing the New Compensation System:

The consultants encourage at least a 2 percent increase as a starting point, at an early date, and incremental increases thereafter, in accordance with budgetary constraints. Implementation strategies ultimately rely on budgetary and fiscal concerns. Periodic incremental compensation increases in salary ranges will help to move toward greater competitiveness with Judicial Branch compensation policy.

Clearly, Option 3 would take longer to implement, due to its higher cost. Therefore, periodic incremental pay range increases may be necessary to achieve the desired benefits of this option. The actual percentage increase could be factored in 'automatically', if budget restrictions do not preclude such an approach. Alternatively, increments could be met with a more flexible approach, and determined as a response to outside market or economic forces. With such an approach, forward budgeting for possible increases would be appropriate. Ultimately, the system should be aimed at remaining competitive and achieving a high level of acceptability among staff. The options presented in this report provide the Probate Court Budget Committee with latitude to determine their own degree of competitiveness.

The implementation of the new structure would be a smooth transition because the new system is based on a methodical and systematic approach to aligning positions. The existing Probate Courts' position rank order would not change with the outcomes suggested in this study. The relativity of salary ranges would change in some cases because the relationships among positions are determined by the consultants' evaluation instrument, but this would not be disruptive to effective compensation management.

Because the ranking remains the same, there is very little potential for upsetting the underlying known and familiar compensation plan. There will be new salary range values that will require some degree of effort to help staff members understand the fairness of the modified system. Thoughtful, open, and informed communication with staff will be critical.

The fact that no position will incur a decrease in pay or position rank will ease acceptance and transition to the new system. It will not be vastly different, but will be more precise and dependable, and there should be reasonable trust and confidence in the system.

The proven and trusted methods of developing the system and the long-term use of the methods for many State of Connecticut agencies should enhance the success of PCA and the judges to persuade the Legislature to fund the salaries that attract and retain

qualified people to staff the Probate Court system's operations for the benefit of its patrons and clients.

Conclusion

The project was carried out with very close cooperation between court staff, PCA staff and the consultant. We believe this has contributed to the success of the project.

The difficulties encountered due to the lack of participation in some areas of the survey were not insurmountable, even though more data would have been preferable.

The objectives addressed here are meant to enhance the opportunities for sound and effective compensation management. It has been well thought through with respect for its impact on the Probate Courts' staff members and for those staff members to obtain greater satisfaction from their membership in the organization. Sound and thoughtful management of the system will enhance those opportunities. The consultants stand ready to assist in achieving that outcome.

EXHIBITS

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TABLE A: Comparison of Judicial and Executive Branch Positions with Probate Court Positions

* Mid Hourly Salary is Probate Court 'Market' rate

* Judicial Step 5 of 9 or Step 4 of 8 used as Mid salary. (New incumbents reach Step 5 in a 9 Step range typically in 4 to 6 years.)

* Willis point values shown in brackets after title

* Dept. of Children and Families - Executive Branch (DCF)

		HOURLY RATES					
		Qualifications/Duties	Min	Mid	Max	Average Actual	
1	Probate Court Title	Court Assistant (145)	1 year of clerical experience.	\$ 14.49	\$ 17.40	\$ 20.29	\$ 16.51
	Judicial Title	1. Court Services Clerk (collapsed into Admin. Clerk I)	2 years of clerical experience.	\$ 19.64	\$ 22.11	\$ 25.01	
		2. Office Clerk (103)	Training class, 1 year clerical experience.	\$ 18.29	\$ 20.57	\$ 23.26	
	Comment	The Court Assistant assists in the review, evaluation and processing of probate court files and performs a range of administrative support duties. The Court Services Clerk , which was initially examined, has been folded into the Administration Clerk I position. The duties include opening files, scheduling hearings, maintaining calendars, and handling counter reception. The Office Clerk is a training position to increase basic clerical skills such as data entry equipment, word and document processing, and general office support. Generally, the Probate Court Assistant 'reads' stronger in the job description, though all three positions are 'clerical support' in nature.					
2	Probate Court Title	Chief Clerk II (283)	8 years in Probate Court work.	\$ 25.68	\$ 30.82	\$ 35.96	\$ 33.99
	Judicial Title	1. Deputy Clerk GA (274)	Master's or JD; Bachelor's + 3 years in a Clerk's office; 6 years administrative support experience in a Clerk's office at the level of Administrative Clerk I.	\$ 31.12	\$ 35.75	\$ 40.77	
	Comment	The Chief Clerk II position has complex work but the Deputy Clerk GA oversees the processing of a broad range and variety of court cases. Overall, it is only a fair comparison, but not a solid match. The issue of why Probate Chief Clerk positions do not compare well with Judicial Branch job titles is further explained in the report on page 4.					
3	Probate Court Title	Lead PCO (301)	Master's or JD + 4 years; Bachelor's + 6 years.	\$ 23.35	\$ 28.02	\$ 32.68	\$ 29.20
	Judicial & DCF Titles	1. Court Services Officer - Juvenile Matters (379)	Bachelor's + 3 years; Master's preferred.	\$ 36.61	\$ 40.68	\$ 46.12	
		2. Family Relations Counsellor II (379)	Master's + 1 year; Bachelor's + 3 years.	\$ 36.61	\$ 40.68	\$ 46.12	
		3. Social Worker Supervisor (Exec. Branch - Dept. of Children & Families) - (DCF) (379) (different pay plan)	Master's + 2 years; Bachelor's + 3 years.	\$ 34.18	\$ 39.02	\$ 43.33	
	Comment	These positions/classes have some similar accountabilities for services. Lead PCO has direct influence on advising and counseling the Court Judge on disposition of sensitive cases. The Social Worker Supervisor has a substantial staff of Social Workers under their direction and greater overall accountability. The Supervisor is also exposed to hazardous and adverse working conditions. The job is not an adequate comparison.					

HOURLY RATES

		Qualifications/Duties	Min	Mid	Max	Average Actual
4 Probate Court Title Judicial & DCF Titles	Probate Court Officer - PCO (274)	Master's or JD +2 years; Bachelor's + 4 years.	\$ 21.23	\$ 25.47	\$ 29.72	\$ 25.92
	1. Family Relations Counsellor I (300)	Bachelor's + 1 year.	\$ 31.69	\$ 35.23	\$ 39.95	
	2. Social Worker (Exec. Branch - DCF) (312)	Master's; Bachelor's +2 years.	\$ 31.06	\$ 35.56	\$ 39.53	

Comment **PCO** has a direct influence on court decisions regarding disposition of sensitive cases. The Judicial positions are advisory in nature, due to the size of the court system. There may be multiple sources advising the court in Judicial Branch while the **PCO** has more direct contact with the client and the judge. DCF views the **Social Worker** at a higher level because of hazardous and adverse working conditions involved in the work. The DCF positions largely function outside the Superior Court system except for custodial or criminal issues. The positions exist primarily to protect children and families.

5 Probate Court Title Judicial Title	Assistant Clerk (182)	2 years in Probate Court work.	\$ 15.94	\$ 19.14	\$ 22.32	\$ 19.07
	1. Administrative Clerk I (118)	2 years of clerical experience at or above Office Clerk.	\$ 19.64	\$ 22.11	\$ 25.01	

Comment The **Assistant Clerk** assists in the review, evaluation and processing of a variety of Probate Court files. The **Administrative Clerk I** prepares logs of cases and opens case files, schedules hearings, operates various data equipment in recording court related information and prepares court files of varying nature. The **Assistant Clerk** processes more complex files in the area of probate matters. The two positions are not a good match.

6 Probate Court Title Judicial Title	Clerk (210)	4 years in Probate Court work.	\$ 19.29	\$ 23.15	\$ 27.02	\$ 23.84
	1. Administrative Clerk II (167)	3 years at level of Admin. Clerk I.	\$ 22.65	\$ 25.97	\$ 29.58	

Comment The **Administrative Clerk II** is a reference point but not a good comparator. The **Clerk** performs complex tasks in review and processing of court documents. The **Clerk** also monitors compliance with pertinent law and rules of practice. The **Administrative Clerk II** is accountable for independently carrying out a broad range of administrative support tasks at a highly skilled level. The duties include data entry on multiple types of equipment, word processing, court data management, and secretarial support.

2. Courtroom Clerk I (145) and II (150). These classes were reviewed for possible comparability. The nature of work described about these jobs in their class specifications is primarily performing the recording of disposition of cases and record keeping of court files. A substantial amount of the work of these positions is in courtrooms involving such work as recording proceedings, swearing of witnesses, and safekeeping of court documents. In contrast, the work of such Probate Court positions as Probate Court Clerk involves the administration of complex legal processing. The Judicial Branch Courtroom Clerk classes are not appropriate comparisons of Probate Court work.

Assistant Clerk JD/GA. N/A This classification requires a JD but is not the same as Staff Attorney. Not a good comparison with court staff positions. This is a managerial job.

7 Probate Court Title Judicial Title	Staff Attorney (301)	Membership CT bar	\$ 25.68	\$ 30.82	\$ 35.96	\$ 31.77
	Court Officer (346)	Law graduate	\$ 34.87	\$ 38.76	\$ 43.95	

Other Judicial Positions examined but not found to be comparable

Court Operations Assistant (145)
First Assistant Clerk (472)
Counsel, Legal Services N/A
Court Officer, Judicial District (346)
Administrative Assistant (197) Used to establish Judicial Branch pay line. Between Probate Courts Assistant Clerk and Clerk.

**TABLE B1: Composite of All Survey Data Results
Arranged in ascending job value. (Probate Courts data in bold)**

PROBATE COURTS (PC), SURVEY AND JUDICIAL BRANCH (JB) DATA	Job Value Points	Probate Courts (Market)	Law Firms (Actual Average)	States (Actual Average)	Judicial Branch*
	X axis (horizontal) Job Values on charts	Y axis (vertical) Hourly Salary rates on charts			
Office Clerk (JB)	103				\$ 20.57
Administrative Clerk I (JB)	118				\$ 22.11
Court Assistant (PC)	145	\$ 17.40	\$ 15.67	\$ 12.61	
Administrative Clerk II (JB)	167				\$ 25.97
Assistant Clerk (PC)	182	\$ 19.14	\$ 24.68	\$ 16.73	
Administrative Assistant (JB)	197				\$ 28.45
Clerk (PC)	210	\$ 23.15	\$ 24.02	\$ 24.21	
Deputy Chief Clerk (PC)	247	\$ 25.47	\$ 29.21	\$ 27.07	
Deputy Clerk GA (JB)	274				\$ 35.75
Chief Clerk II (PC)	283	\$ 30.82	\$ 31.85	\$ 36.96	
Staff Attorney (PC)	301	\$ 30.82	\$ 32.29	\$ 34.17	
Court Officer (JB)	346				\$ 38.76

* (Step 5 of 9 and Step 4 of 8 step plans used as midpoint salary range for Judicial Branch).
No exact matches to job values in Judicial Branch.

Social Services (Children's Court) Positions – Insufficient data from invited Social Services Organizations			
	Job Value	Probate Courts (Market)	Judicial Branch
Probate Court Officer (PC)	274	\$ 25.47	
Family Relations Counselor I (JB)	300		\$ 35.23
Lead Probate Court Officer (PC)	301	\$ 28.02	
Family Relations Counselor II (JB)	379		\$ 40.68
Court Services Officer (JB)	379		\$ 40.68

TABLE B2: Probate Courts (PC) Min., Market and Max. and Judicial Branch (JB) Midpoint* of Range (Arranged in ascending job value, PC in bold)

PROBATE COURTS AND JUDICIAL BRANCH DATA	Job Value Points	Min	Market (PC) or Midpoint of Range (JB)	Max
Office Clerk (JB)	103	\$ 18.29	\$ 20.57	\$ 23.26
Administrative Clerk I (JB)	118	\$ 19.64	\$ 22.11	\$ 25.01
Court Assistant (PC)	145	\$ 14.49	\$ 17.40	\$ 20.29
Administrative Clerk II (JB)	167	\$ 22.65	\$ 25.97	\$ 29.58
Assistant Clerk (PC)	182	\$ 15.94	\$ 19.14	\$ 22.32
Administrative Assistant (JB)	197	\$ 24.92	\$ 28.45	\$ 32.36
Clerk (PC)	210	\$ 19.29	\$ 23.15	\$ 27.02
Deputy Chief Clerk (PC)	247	\$ 21.23	\$ 25.47	\$ 29.72
Deputy Clerk GA (JB)	274	\$ 31.12	\$ 35.75	\$ 40.77
Chief Clerk II (PC)	283	\$ 25.68	\$ 30.82	\$ 35.96
Staff Attorney (PC)	301	\$ 25.68	\$ 30.82	\$ 35.96
Court Officer (JB)	346	\$ 34.87	\$ 38.76	\$ 43.95
Probate Court Officer (PC)	274	\$ 21.23	\$ 25.47	\$ 29.72
Family Relations Counselor I (JB)	300	\$ 31.69	\$ 35.23	\$ 39.95
Lead PCO (PC)	301	\$ 23.35	\$ 28.02	\$ 32.68
Family Relations Counselor II (JB)	379	\$ 36.61	\$ 40.68	\$ 46.12
Court Services Officer (JB)	379	\$ 36.61	\$ 40.68	\$ 46.12

* (Step 5 of 9 and Step 4 of 8 step plans used as midpoint salary range for Judicial Branch)

CHART A: Survey Results - Probate Courts, Law Firms and States, Judicial Branch

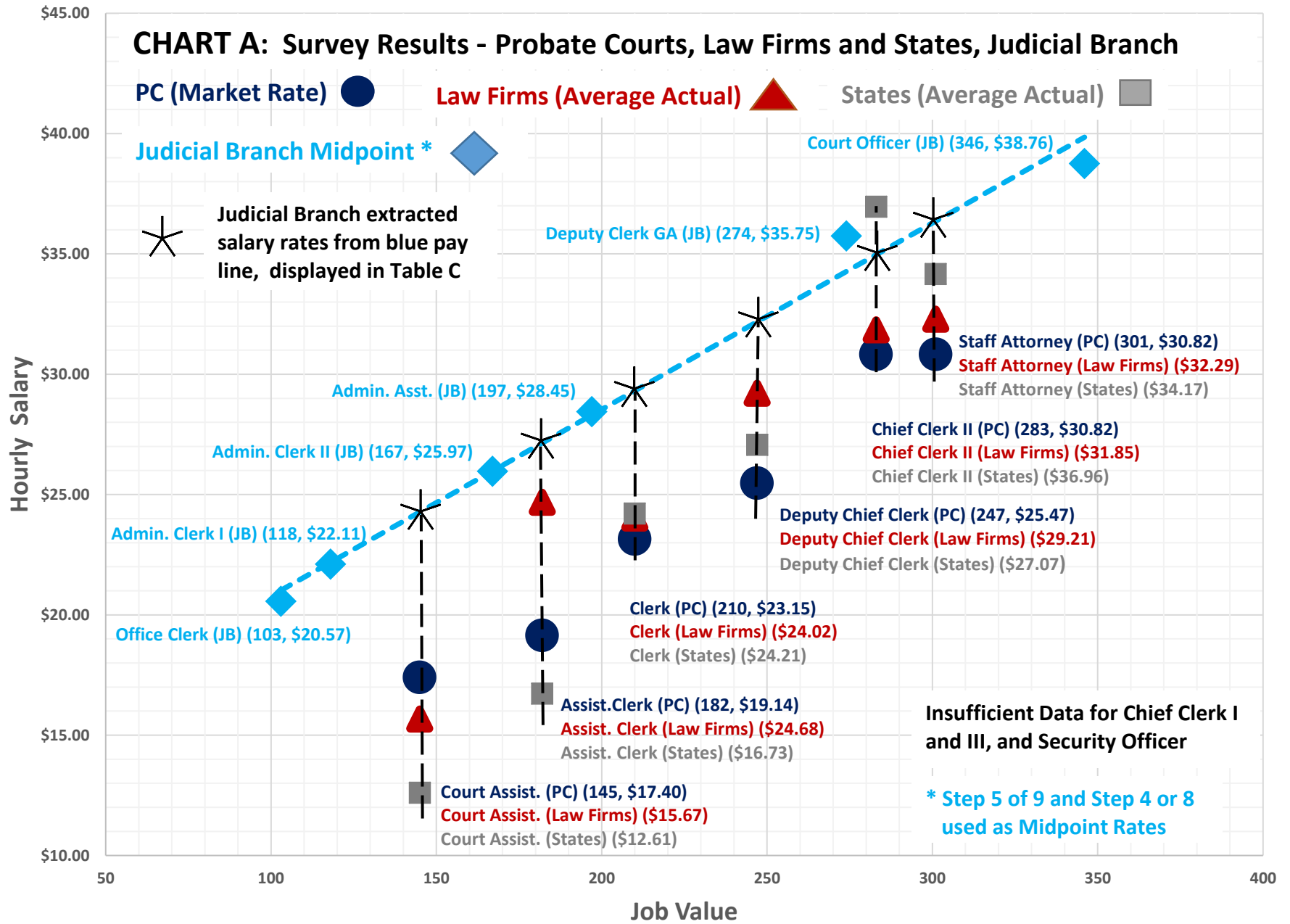


TABLE C: Percentage Comparison of Probate Court Salary Rates with Law Firms and States Survey and Judicial Branch Salary Rates

Rates are at evaluated job value points, excluding PCO positions.

Judicial Branch salaries extracted from Chart A.

Title	Job Value Points	Probate Courts (Market)	Law Firms (Average Actual)	% Probate Courts above or below Law Firms	States	% Probate Courts above or below States	Combined (Average of Average Actual rates for Law Firms and States)	% Probate Courts above or below Combined	Judicial Branch midpoint salary rates at Probate Court Job Values	% Probate Courts above or below Judicial Branch
Court Assistant	145	\$ 17.40	\$ 15.67	+11%	\$ 12.61	+38%	\$ 14.14	+23%	\$ 24.40	-29%
Assistant Clerk	182	\$ 19.14	\$ 24.68	-22%	\$ 16.73	+14%	\$ 20.71	-8%	\$ 27.30	-30%
Clerk	210	\$ 23.15	\$ 24.02	-4%	\$ 24.21	-4%	\$ 24.12	-4%	\$29.60	-22%
Deputy Chief Clerk	247	\$ 25.47	\$ 29.21	-13%	\$ 27.07	-6%	\$ 28.14	-9%	\$32.40	-21%
Chief Clerk II	283	\$ 30.82	\$ 31.85	-3%	\$ 36.96	-17%	\$ 34.41	-10%	\$35.20	-12%
Staff Attorney	301	\$ 30.82	\$ 32.29	-5%	\$ 34.17	-10%	\$ 33.23	-7%	\$36.50	-16%

CHART B: Probate Courts, Combined Law Firms and States, Judicial Branch Pay Lines

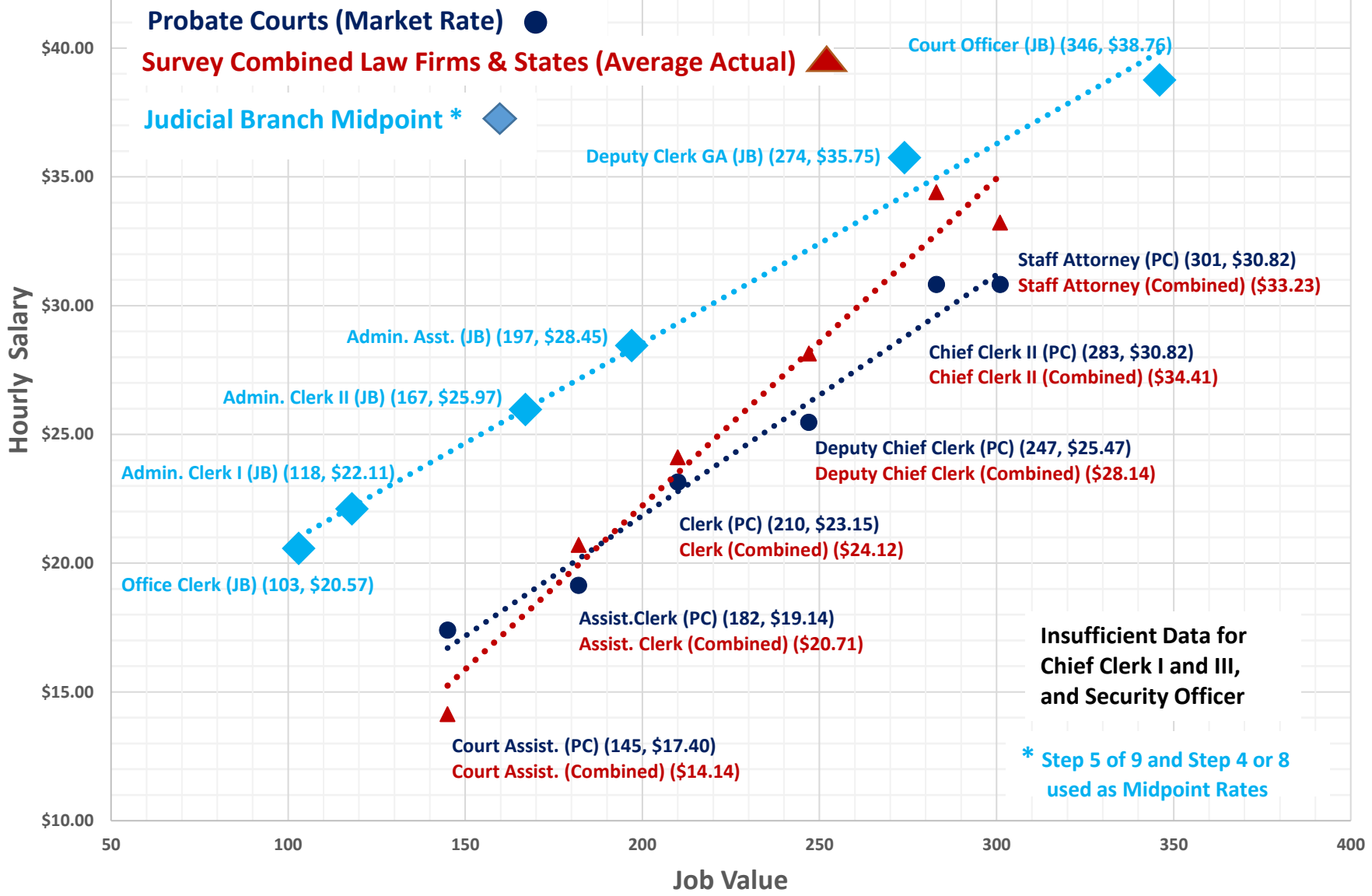


CHART C: Probate Courts, Combined Law Firms and States, Judicial Branch Pay Lines and Pay Policy Change Options

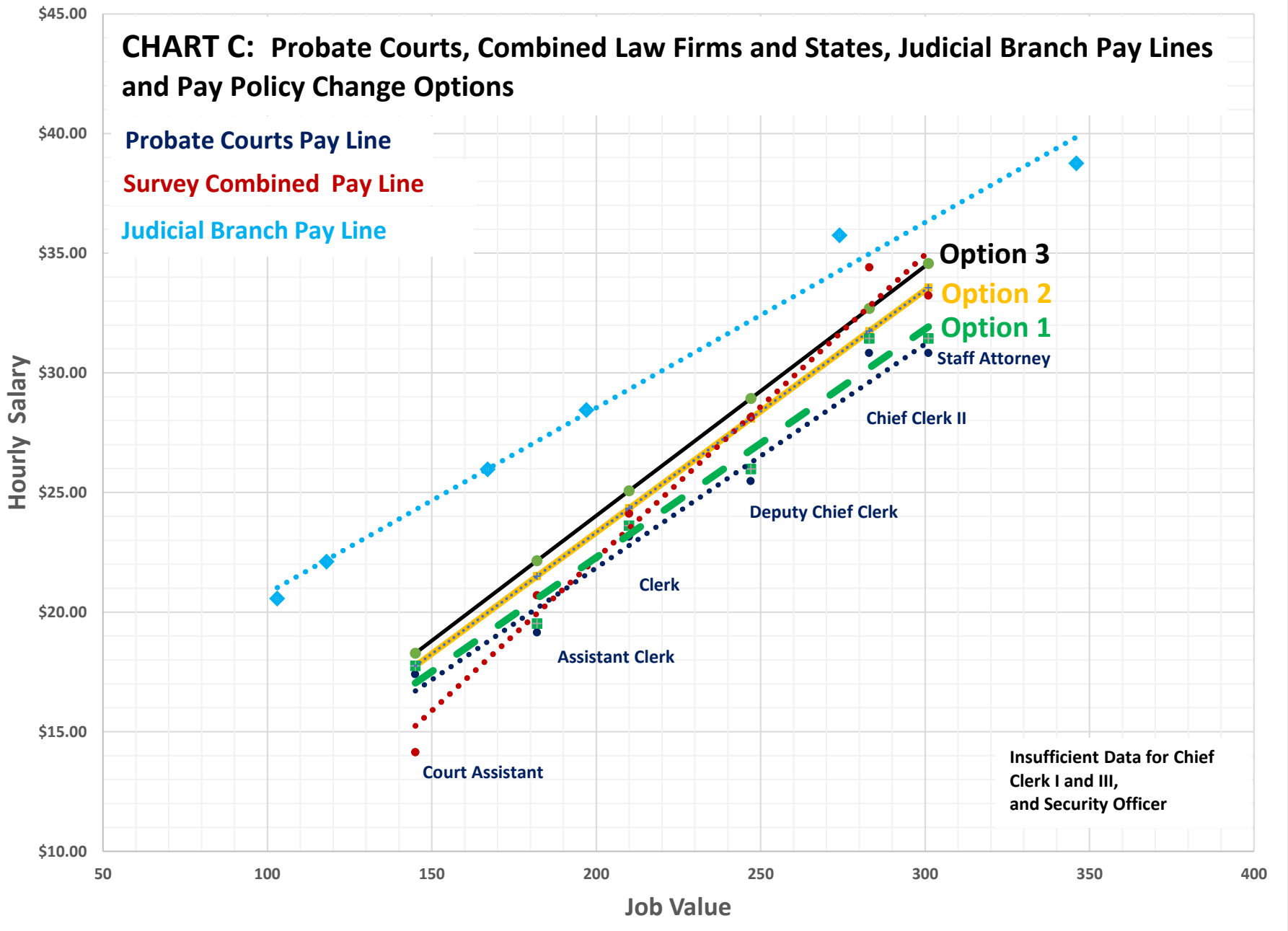


Table D: Pay Policy Change Options

OPTION 1						OPTION 2			OPTION 3		
Title	Job Value	Current Market	Min	Market	Max	Min	Market	Max	Min	Market	Max
Security Officer	145	\$ 17.40	\$ 14.20	\$ 17.75	\$ 21.30	\$ 14.20	\$ 17.75	\$ 21.30	\$ 14.62	\$ 18.28	\$ 21.94
Court Assistant	145	\$ 17.40	\$ 14.20	\$ 17.75	\$ 21.30	\$ 14.20	\$ 17.75	\$ 21.30	\$ 14.62	\$ 18.28	\$ 21.94
Assistant Clerk	182	\$ 19.14	\$ 15.62	\$ 19.52	\$ 23.42	\$ 17.15	\$ 21.44	\$ 25.73	\$ 17.66	\$ 22.08	\$ 26.50
Clerk	210	\$ 23.15	\$ 18.89	\$ 23.61	\$ 28.33	\$ 19.45	\$ 24.31	\$ 29.17	\$ 20.03	\$ 25.04	\$ 30.05
Deputy Chief Clerk	247	\$ 25.47	\$ 20.78	\$ 25.98	\$ 31.18	\$ 22.42	\$ 28.02	\$ 33.62	\$ 23.09	\$ 28.86	\$ 34.63
Chief Clerk I	264	\$ 28.02	\$ 22.86	\$ 28.58	\$ 34.30	\$ 23.76	\$ 29.70	\$ 35.64	\$ 24.47	\$ 30.59	\$ 36.71
Chief Clerk II	283	\$ 30.82	\$ 25.15	\$ 31.44	\$ 37.73	\$ 25.39	\$ 31.74	\$ 38.09	\$ 26.15	\$ 32.69	\$ 39.23
Staff Attorney	301	\$ 30.82	\$ 25.15	\$ 31.44	\$ 37.73	\$ 26.87	\$ 33.59	\$ 40.31	\$ 27.68	\$ 34.60	\$ 41.52
Chief Clerk III	325	\$ 33.90	\$ 27.66	\$ 34.58	\$ 41.50	\$ 28.74	\$ 35.93	\$ 43.12	\$ 29.61	\$ 37.01	\$ 44.41

OPTION 1						OPTION 2			OPTION 3		
Title	Job Value	Current Market	Min	Market	Max	Min	Market	Max	Min	Market	Max
PCO	274	\$ 25.47	\$ 23.58	\$ 29.47	\$ 35.37	\$ 24.84	\$ 31.06	\$ 37.27	\$ 25.35	\$ 31.69	\$ 38.03
Lead PCO	301	\$ 28.02	\$ 26.36	\$ 32.95	\$ 39.54	\$ 27.82	\$ 34.78	\$ 41.74	\$ 29.29	\$ 36.61	\$ 43.93