



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF THE
PROBATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

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Probate Court Budget Committee

Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, October 8, 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. Results of the July 1, 2014 Merit Pay Adjustments
- V. Office Budget Adjustments
- VI. Court Staffing Levels
- VII. Discussion of Compensation Study Preliminary Findings
- VIII. Other Business
- IX. Schedule Next Meeting
- X. Adjournment

Office Expense Budget

Stamford Probate District

Budget Committee: October 8, 2014

FY 2015 Budget

53

July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015

No. of Employees (Judge and Court Staff):

11

Description	FY 15 Original Budget	Proposed Budget Adjustment	FY 15 Revised Budget	Comments
Educ/Seminars/Mtgs	600	280	880	Check issued in prior year did not clear bank and had to be reissued
Dues	1,875		1,875	
Subscriptions	1,500		1,500	
Coffee/Tea/Holiday/Special Occasion	880		880	
Other Expenses	500	(280)	220	
TOTAL EXPENSES	5,355	-	5,355	

Office Expense Budget

New Haven

Budget Committee Meeting: October 8, 2014

FY 2014 Budget

55

July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014

No. of Employees (Judge and Court Staff):

13

No. of PCO's included in total count above:

4

Description	FY 14 Original	Proposed Budget Adjustment	FY 14 Revised	Comments
Rent and Taxes	59,000		59,000	
Repairs, Maint and Utilities	34,000		34,000	
Office Supplies	10,000		10,000	
Office Furniture and Equip	10,000	(1,771)	8,229	
Postage Equip and Fees	10,000		10,000	
Legal Notices and Ads	4,200		4,200	
Liability Insurance	5,900		5,900	
Educ/Seminars/Mtgs	1,400		1,400	
Dues	325		325	
Subscriptions	-		-	
Coffee/Tea/Holiday/Special Occasion	1,040	1,771	2,811	10 year Anniversary Event
Other Expenses	500		500	
TOTAL EXPENSES	136,365	-	136,365	

STAFFING PLAN

Budget Committee Meeting: October 8, 2014

Probate District:

Farmington - Burlington

District No.:

10

Positions	Benchmark	Proposal
Chief Clerk III		
Chief Clerk II		
Chief Clerk I	0.9	0.9
Deputy Clerk		
Clerk	0.9	0.9
Assistant Clerk	0.7	1.1
Court Assistant		
Court Staff Attorney		
Temporary Staff		
Probate Court Officer		
Security Officer		
TOTAL	2.5	2.9

Notes Subsequent to 1/5/2011

Notes:

- Effective 12/15/10, benchmark allocation revised, no change in total. Transitional revised from 3.0 to 3.2
- 2/16/12 court request to increase benchmark to 3.5. Decision made to authorize extension of temporary employees through 12/31/12 and revisit workload and other factors at that time.
- 10/8/14 proposal to increase Assistant Clerk level from .7 to 1.1

Full Time Equivalents (FTE) = 40 Hour Work Week (2,080 Annual Hours)

STAFFING PLAN

Budget Committee Meeting: October 8, 2014

Probate District:

Cheshire-Southington

District No.:

18

Positions	Benchmark	Proposal
Chief Clerk III		
Chief Clerk II	0.9	0.9
Chief Clerk I		
Deputy Clerk		
Clerk	1.3	1.8
Assistant Clerk	1.8	1.8
Court Assistant	0.5	
Court Staff Attorney		
Temporary Staff		
Probate Court Officer		
Security Officer		
TOTAL	4.5	4.5

Notes Subsequent to 1/5/2011

Notes:

- 6/27/2014 court proposal to eliminate a part-time Court Assistant vacancy and move toward full time positions.

Full Time Equivalents (FTE) = 40 Hour Work Week (2,080 Annual Hours)

Budget Committee Meeting – October 8, 2014
Handout

Following are the tabular and graphic data showing comparisons between the Probate Courts, the neighboring states' salary data, the Connecticut private law firms data and a comparison of the Probate Courts data with Connecticut Judicial and Executive Branch compensation ranges where the comparisons are considered to be appropriate.

The States survey results are shown below (Probate Court Actual Average rates were not shown at September 17th presentation).

CT Probate Court Positions' Compared with 6 Eastern States' Court Systems
August, 2014

	Hourly Rates		
	Probate Court Mid	Probate Court Actual Avg	Survey Actual Avg
Chief Clerk II **	\$ 30.82	\$ 33.99	\$ 36.96
Staff Attorney	\$ 30.82	\$ 31.77	\$ 34.17
Deputy Chief Clerk	\$ 25.47	\$ 25.02	\$ 27.07
Clerk	\$ 23.15	\$ 23.84	\$ 24.21
Assistant Clerk	\$ 19.14	\$ 19.07	\$ 16.73
Court Assistant	\$ 17.40	\$ 16.51	\$ 12.61
Security Officer *	\$ 17.40		ID

* Insufficient data for meaningful statistical match

** Respondents do not use Chief Clerk I, II, III. (II is best match)

The results generally indicate that the Court Assistant and Assistant Clerk rates are above the survey rates, the Clerk position is closely matched in salary rate, and the Deputy Chief Clerk, Staff Attorney, and Chief Clerk II are below the survey average rate.

The Law Firm survey results are shown below (Probate Court Actual Average rates were not shown at September 17th presentation). Not all responding law firms had every survey job in their practice.

**CT Probate Court Positions' Compared with 7 Connecticut Private Law Firms
August, 2014**

	Hourly Rates		
	Probate Court Mid	Probate Court Actual Avg	Survey Actual Avg
Chief Clerk III	\$ 33.90	\$ 36.27	\$ 31.85
Chief Clerk II	\$ 30.82	\$ 33.99	\$ 31.85
Chief Clerk I*	\$ 28.02	\$ 30.35	ID
Staff Attorney	\$ 30.82	\$ 31.77	\$ 32.29
Deputy Chief Clerk	\$ 25.47	\$ 25.02	\$ 29.21
Clerk*	\$ 23.15	\$ 23.84	ID
Assistant Clerk	\$ 19.14	\$ 19.07	\$ 24.68
Court Assistant	\$ 17.40	\$ 16.51	\$ 15.67

* Insufficient data for meaningful statistical match

The results generally indicate that the Court Assistant and Chief Clerk III are above the survey rate, while all other jobs are below. The Chief Clerk II falls below the survey rate when the 'midpoint' rate is used, but above the survey rate when 'actual average' Probate Court rate is used.

Comparison of Judicial and Executive Branch positions with Probate Court positions:

In general, it was found that comparison by title did not offer accurate job matches between Probate Court and Judicial Branch positions. This is especially true in the Chief Clerk positions. The Judicial Chief Clerk GA/JD 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 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 case load, the nature of the cases, and whether these are in geographical areas or in the judicial district (e.g. size of area served).

Notwithstanding the above, comparisons were attempted with Judicial and Executive Branch classes. The results should be viewed with caution as they are not considered solid matches, but are an effort to find similarities rather than to highlight the differences. Where available, evaluation points are shown. Further information may be coming from Judicial and further analysis will be conducted by the consultants after October 8th.

Comparison of Judicial and Executive Branch Positions with Probate Court Positions

* Mid Hourly Salary is Probate Court 'Market' rate

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

* Willis point values, where available, are shown in brackets after title

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

HOURLY RATES

		Qualifications/Duties	Min	Mid	Max	Actual Avg
1 Probate Court Title	Court Assistant (145)	1 year of clerical experience.	\$ 14.49	\$ 17.40	\$ 20.29	\$ 16.51
	Judicial Titles					
	1. Court Services Clerk	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	\$ 23.27	
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 opens files, schedules hearings, maintains calendars, handles counter reception. The Office Clerk is in 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 under "Comparison of Judicial and Executive Branch positions with Probate Court positions", above.					
3 Probate Court Title	Lead PCO (301)	Master's or JD + 4 years; Bachelor's + 6 years.	\$ 23.35	\$ 28.02	\$ 32.68	
	Judicial & DCF Titles					
	1. Court Services Officer - Juvenile Matters	Bachelor's + 3 years; Master's preferred.	\$ 36.75	\$ 40.84	\$ 46.29	
	2. Family Relations Counsellor II	Master's + 1 year; Bachelor's + 3 years.	\$ 36.75	\$ 41.52	\$ 46.29	
	3. Social Worker Supervisor (Exec. Branch - Dept. of Children & Families) - (DCF) (379)	Master's + 2 years; Bachelor's + 3 years.	\$ 34.31	\$ 39.17	\$ 43.49	
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.					

HOURLY RATES

		Qualifications/Duties	Min	Mid	Max	Actual Avg
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	Bachelor's + 1 year.	\$ 31.81	\$ 35.96	\$ 40.11	
	2. Social Worker (Exec. Branch - DCF) (312)	Master's; Bachelor's +2 years.	\$ 32.18	\$ 35.69	\$ 39.68	

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.

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 Titles	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	\$ 29.59	

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. We think the Judicial Branch Courtroom Court classes are not appropriate comparisons of Probate Court work.

Assistant Clerk JD/GA. 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.

2014 Compensation Analysis
Average Hourly Rates vs. Market Rates
Court Staff

<u>Title</u>	<u># of EE's in position</u>	<u>Average Hrly Rate</u>	<u>Min.</u>	<u>Market</u>	<u>Max.</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Range represented graphically</u>
Chief Clerk III	6	\$ 36.27	\$ 28.25	\$ 33.90	\$ 39.55	Above Market	
Chief Clerk II	24	\$ 33.99	\$ 25.68	\$ 30.82	\$ 35.96	Above Market	
Chief Clerk I	31	\$ 30.35	\$ 23.35	\$ 28.02	\$ 32.68	Above Market	
Staff Attorney	8	\$ 31.77	\$ 25.68	\$ 30.82	\$ 35.96	Above Market	
Deputy Chief Clerk	7	\$ 25.02	\$ 21.23	\$ 25.47	\$ 29.72	At Market	
Clerk	94	\$ 23.84	\$ 19.29	\$ 23.15	\$ 27.02	At Market	
Assistant Clerk	108	\$ 19.07	\$ 15.94	\$ 19.14	\$ 22.32	At Market	
Court Assistant	28	\$ 16.51	\$ 14.49	\$ 17.40	\$ 20.29	Below Market	
Probate Court Officer	10	\$ 25.92	\$ 21.23	\$ 25.47	\$ 29.72	At Market	

* This analysis excludes temporary employees.

* The range option "At Market" is defined as the dollar matching exactly, with the cents either below or above the actual market rate.

* The Chief Clerk I analysis includes the information of 2 Lead Probate Court Officer positions (same pay range).

* The Court Assistant analysis includes the information of 1 Security Officer position (same pay range).