



# **MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP, INC.**

**Virginia**

**Florida**

**North Carolina**

January 15, 2010

The Honorable Paul Knierim  
Probate Court Administrator  
Connecticut Probate Courts  
186 Newington Road  
West Hartford, CT 06110  
(860) 231-2442

Dear Judge Knierim,

Subject: Update – Classification and Compensation for Clerk Positions

Management Advisory Group is pleased to provide this update report on the Compensation and Classification study performed for Clerk positions during 2007-2008. The final report was provided to Probate Court Administration in January 2008. This memo summarizes background information and the results of the survey and analysis.

### ***Original Study of Clerk Positions***

The Office of the Probate Court Administrator recognized that a competitive compensation package for employees is necessary to attract, retain, reward and acknowledge highly skilled and competent personnel to provide the highest level of service to the citizens and residents of the state. In order to accomplish the state's mission, it is essential to develop and maintain a qualified, skilled, and experienced workforce. Recruitment of skilled, qualified entry-level personnel, as well as the retention of current staff, is of great importance to the continued delivery of quality, consistent, professional, and efficient services.

To this end, in the 2007-2008 study, MAG was requested to prepare a pay plan and salary adjustment recommendations for incumbents in the included Probate Courts classifications. The Compensation Committee undertook a comprehensive review of draft recommendations and provided excellent feedback towards the development of the final report.

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The Honorable Paul Knierim  
Probate Court Administrator  
Connecticut Probate Courts  
January 15, 2010  
Page Two

The objectives of the original study were to:

- Conduct job analysis of included classifications;
- Gather compensation data from similar/competitor organizations;
- Develop a revised classification plan; and,
- Develop a revised compensation and pay plan.

MAG evaluated the included classifications in order to assign positions to an appropriate new pay range. Each job evaluation included various factors, such as:

- Involvement with Data, People, and Assets
- Experience/Vocational Requirements
- Educational/Vocational Requirements
- Mathematical Requirements
- Communications Requirements
- Judgment Requirements
- Impact of Decisions
- Complexity of Work
- Safety of Others
- Americans with Disabilities Act Requirements
- Physical Requirements
- Equipment Usage
- Unavoidable Hazards
- Sensory Requirements

Information about each employee's job was collected through a *Job Analysis Questionnaire*® (JAQ). The total number of participating employees was 268 of 321 incumbents. The participation rate was approximately 83%.

Based on the assessment of the external market and the result of the internal equity analysis, MAG developed a new proposed pay and classification plan. In that original report, MAG provided an implementation report based on the implementation date of January 1, 2008. Implementation recommendations were provided by court, based on the current employee data available.

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The Honorable Paul Knierim  
Probate Court Administrator  
Connecticut Probate Courts  
January 15, 2010  
Page Three

### ***Current Study of Clerk Positions***

MAG was recently (November 2009) requested to provide an update to the compensation structure. Over the last two years, the Probate Courts have utilized the recommended pay structure and classification assignments.

Due to the fact that markets change and employers occasionally adjust their compensation structures and strategies, it is valid to review the market periodically to determine if any adjustment is appropriate. The goal of this study effort is to ensure that the Probate Courts retain a competitive posture in the marketplace for its various positions.

If it is determined through the market review that an overall compensation structure adjustment is needed, the adjustment will be applied to the entire pay structure. This approach retains the internal relationships and equity established in the original study.

### ***Market Survey Findings***

The goal of the survey of other agencies was to determine what, if any, kind and amount of adjustments to their pay structures may have been made over the last two years.

This report recaps the market findings in November-December 2009, and evaluates the need for a recommendation for a structural adjustment for 2010.

To retain consistency over time in the survey process, MAG contacted all of the agencies originally surveyed in 2007. The following agencies responded to the questions posed in this current survey:

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The Honorable Paul Knierim  
Probate Court Administrator  
Connecticut Probate Courts  
January 15, 2010  
Page Four

- Massachusetts Probate Courts;
- Pennsylvania First Judicial District;
- City of Providence;
- Town of West Hartford;
- City of Brockton;
- State of Texas Court System;
- State of California Court System;
- Connecticut Courts (Superior, Appellate, Supreme);
- Rhode Island Supreme Court.

### ***Budget Cycle***

MAG inquired about the budget cycle for each of the surveyed agencies. Currently the Connecticut Probate Courts operate on a calendar year. Beginning in January of 2011, the Connecticut Probate Courts will be on a July 1<sup>st</sup> fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). Changing to a budget year that begins July 1<sup>st</sup> will make the Probate Courts consistent with all of the other agencies that responded, with the exception of the Texas Court System, whose budget year begins September 1<sup>st</sup>.

### ***Per Cent Structure Change to Pay Ranges 2008-2009***

MAG sought to identify whether the surveyed agencies made any changes to the pay structure itself during the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Making such a change does not necessarily mean that individual pay adjustments were made for employees. The question focused on whether there were actual structural changes. The Connecticut Probate Courts did not make any structural adjustment during this time period. Other agencies responded as follows:

***Per Cent Structure Change to Pay Ranges 2008-2009***

<b>Agency</b>	<b>2008-2009 Compensation Structure Change</b>
City of Brockton	Created step structure for those positions without a step structure based on years of service. Also increased hourly rates by .25 per hour for union representing clerical positions (an average salary of \$10 per hour would be 2.5%).
Connecticut Appellate, Superior Court, and Supreme Court	3%
First Judicial District of PA	None
MA Probate Courts	None
Rhode Island Supreme Court	None
CA Court System	No change to the pay structure during the fiscal year of 08/09.
Rhode Island State	2.5%
Texas Court System	None
Town of West Hartford	There were various General Wage Adjustments effective July 1, 2008, depending on the specific bargaining unit. The office staff received a 2.75% wage increase.

Of the nine (9) responding agencies, five (5) indicated that there was no adjustment at all to their respective pay structures. Those agencies that did make adjustments indicated a range between 2.5% and 3%. The overall average of structure change for the nine (9) responding agencies during 2008-2009 is 1.19% (10.75% divided by 9).

The Honorable Paul Knierim  
 Probate Court Administrator  
 Connecticut Probate Courts  
 January 15, 2010  
 Page Six

***Per Cent Structure Change to Pay Ranges 2009-2010***

MAG sought to identify whether the surveyed agencies made any changes to the pay structure during the 2009-2010 fiscal year. The Connecticut Probate Courts did not make any structural adjustment during this time period.

<b>Agency</b>	<b>2009-2010 Compensation Structure Change</b>
City of Brockton	7/1/09 increased hourly rates prior to percentage increases, hourly rates varied by unions. 1% on 4/1/09; 2% on 7/1/09
Connecticut Appellate, Superior Court, and Supreme Court	None
First Judicial District of PA	None
MA Probate Courts	None
Rhode Island Supreme Court	None
CA Court System	None
Rhode Island State	3%
Texas Court System	None
Town of West Hartford	None

Of the nine (9) responding agencies, seven (7) indicated that there was no adjustment at all to their respective pay structures. The agencies that did make adjustments indicated a maximum of 3% as an adjustment. The overall average of structure change for the nine (9) responding agencies during 2009-2010 is .66% (6% divided by 9).

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The Honorable Paul Knierim  
Probate Court Administrator  
Connecticut Probate Courts  
January 15, 2010  
Page Seven

***Summary of Market Review Findings***

The review of the surveyed agencies indicates that relatively little change has occurred to their pay structures. Further, very little change, if any, is anticipated in the next fiscal year by the surveyed agencies.

The average pay structure change for the 2008-2009 year is 1.19%. The average pay structure change for the 2009-2010 year is .66%.

Relative to other years in the 1990's and 2000's, the amount of change over the last two (2) years has been very limited and at a low level.

**Recommendation**

MAG recommends that the pay structure be adjusted to reflect an increase of 1% for the market change in 2008, and an additional 1% structural adjustment for 2009.

The recommended pay structure table is included. It was developed by starting with the pay table recommended in the original study. The proposed table for 2010 was adjusted, using a compounding calculation (and not an additive approach) to ensure that fractional calculations were not lost in the process.

MAG would be pleased to answer any questions you might have concerning this recommendation.

We appreciate this opportunity to assist the Connecticut Probate Courts.

Sincerely,



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Proposed Pay Plans  
Connecticut Courts Administration

<i>Code</i>	<i>Proposed Class Title</i>	<i>Hrly Min</i>	<i>Mkt</i>	<i>Hrly Max</i>
<b>Unified</b>				
<b>104</b>		<b>\$14.07</b>	<b>\$16.89</b>	<b>\$19.70</b>
CA01	Court Assistant			
S001	Security			
<b>105</b>		<b>\$15.48</b>	<b>\$18.58</b>	<b>\$21.67</b>
AC01	Assistant Clerk			
<b>106</b>		<b>\$17.03</b>	<b>\$20.44</b>	<b>\$23.84</b>
DC01	Deputy Clerk			
<b>107</b>		<b>\$18.73</b>	<b>\$22.48</b>	<b>\$26.23</b>
PA01	Paralegal Clerk			
PC01	Probate Court Officer			
<b>108</b>		<b>\$20.61</b>	<b>\$24.73</b>	<b>\$28.85</b>
CC03	Clerk of the Court			
<b>109</b>		<b>\$22.67</b>	<b>\$27.20</b>	<b>\$31.73</b>
CC01	Chief Clerk (Hrtfd,NH,Watrbry,Stamfd,B'port)			
CA03	Court Law Clerk			
<b>110</b>		<b>\$24.93</b>	<b>\$29.92</b>	<b>\$34.91</b>
CA02	Court Staff Attorney			

10 Active Proposed Classes in the Unified Pay Plan