

Judges Marino, Yamin, and Knierim,

I am writing in regard to the job classifications adopted at the last budget committee meeting and the newly completed Compensation Plan Report up for discussion at the upcoming budget committee meeting. As the Judge of a district that will merge with only 1 other town and therefore remain small I am particularly concerned with the Clerk designations. Presently my court is staffed with a Chief Clerk 1 who also serves as the staff attorney. It seems these designations of 1, 2, and 3 are arbitrary and capricious when coupled with a substantial difference in salary for each level. As far as I can determine the job descriptions are exactly the same with 1 exception, the difference of the number of staff supervised. The argument for that difference in pay is that the additional staff managed means more work for the Clerk. However, I believe that less staff puts a greater burden on the Chief Clerk in that they need to actually do more of the work themselves rather than delegating. In addition, the scope of their knowledge needs to be broader to cover all areas of the courts jurisdiction. This is especially true of my court which makes both commitment and ECT decisions due the presence of The University of Connecticut's John Dempsey Hospital in our jurisdiction. The simple reality is that all of our clerks and court staff work hard and are dedicated to their jobs. They should not be subjected to a false financial ceiling due to the size Court they serve when the actual work being performed is the same.

The committee has already decided that staff attorneys are only to be utilized in large courts with a weighted workload of greater than 8,000. When I became Judge in Farmington, the Court was already staffed with a clerk who happened to be an attorney. This has proven to be an invaluable resource to the Court and to me as Judge. An attorney on staff increases the professionalism of each court.

I am not sure of the exact number of attorney clerks there are in the system but the number is not inconsiderable. I see no provision for this role specifically if the attorney clerk is in a small court. Their salary will be substantially lower. Based on the numbers as they are provided in the recent report the difference between the salaries for Chief Clerk 1 and Chief Clerk 3 is \$9,900.80 for the minimum wage, \$11,876.80 for the market wage, and \$13,873.60 for the hourly maximum.

These salary classifications appear to place them at a disadvantage and will discourage them from continuing to work with the system. In my situation my Chief Clerk/Staff Attorney has been with the court 6 years it seems inappropriate to now put her on a lesser career path. Grandfathering those presently within our system should be considered. If this situation is not rectified it will prove to be a long-term disadvantage to our courts. We need to encourage not only the look of professionalism but professionalism in fact.

Regards,
Evelyn M. Daly, Judge, Farmington