

JOB OPPORTUNITY

10/19/11 - until filled
Posting Dates

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Administrative Office of the Trial Court

Court Administrator

This position will remain open until filled.

Who We Are

The Massachusetts Trial Court, the largest component of the Massachusetts Judicial Branch, is seeking to hire its first professional executive administrator. The Trial Court consists of seven state-wide Trial Court departments (Superior, Boston Municipal, District, Housing, Probate and Family, Juvenile, and Land Court), each of which handles a discrete portion of the judicial work of the Trial Court, and each of which is headed by a departmental Chief Justice. Approximately 42,000 litigants seek justice in the Trial Court every day. The Office of Jury Commissioner and the Office of the Commissioner of Probation also operate within the Trial Court. Trial court judges are appointed and serve until the mandatory retirement age of 70. Some clerks of court and all registers of probate are elected for six-year terms. The majority of clerks, however, are appointed by the Governor to lifetime terms.

The Administrative Office of the Trial Court, commonly known as AOTC, performs the Trial Court's central administrative functions. Under prior legislation, the Trial Court was headed by a Chief Justice for Administration and Management, who was charged with oversight of the Trial Court's judicial and administrative functions. In addition to a small executive staff, the AOTC is composed of nine administrative departments, each of which is headed by a director. Each department provides some aspect of administrative support - financial, information technology, human resources and other - for the work of Trial Court judges, clerks, and staff working in courthouses throughout the Commonwealth.

The seven-member Supreme Judicial Court, the oldest constitutional court of continuous jurisdiction in the Western Hemisphere, exercises superintendence authority over the Trial Court. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court is the head of the Judicial Branch.

Before the first major Trial Court reorganization in 1978, the seven court departments, each of which has its own strong traditions and history, had been separately managed and

had separate legislative appropriations. Administrative services were provided on a department by department basis, but no umbrella organization provided centralized administrative support. The 1978 legislation reorganized the Court by giving the Chief Justice for Administration and Management a number of court-wide responsibilities but left intact the existing departments, each headed by a Chief Justice whom the Chief Justice for Administration and Management appointed. Today, each of the departments continues to operate within a statutory framework detailing its jurisdiction, responsibilities and the roles of many departmental employees.

Over the past eight years, the Court has made significant advances in a number of key areas, including use of data driven metrics for case flow management, transparent reporting of the results the metrics reveal, greatly increased use of automation for information storage, retrieval and transfer, and financial planning and controls.

The Position

[Recent legislation](#) eliminates the position of Chief Justice for Administration and Management and creates two new Trial Court leadership positions: the Chief Justice of the Trial Court and the Court Administrator. The Chief Justice of the Trial Court is the judicial head of the Trial Court with responsibility for defining and maintaining support for its overall mission. As such, the Chief Justice is responsible for all matters of judicial policy, including appointment of departmental chief justices, creation of policies for case flow management and the metrics for determining their effectiveness, and creation of policies and procedures for ensuring effective access to justice by all segments of the Commonwealth's population. The Chief Justice, in sum, is responsible for all matters of judicial policy and innovation in a highly dynamic public environment.

Operating under the new legislation, the Court Administrator will be the administrative head of the Trial Court, charged with providing effective, timely, and innovative support to the judges, clerks, probation officers and staff who work daily to deliver justice to litigants across the Commonwealth. He or she, working collaboratively with the Chief Justice of the Trial Court, will be a leader with overall responsibility for shaping administrative functions that support the Trial Court's mission, including budget preparation and oversight, labor relations, information technology, capital projects, and personnel policy. The Court Administrator therefore has the flexibility and breadth of responsibility necessary to maintain a system that delivers support services throughout the Commonwealth in highly efficient fashion.

The Court Administrator will be appointed by a majority vote of the Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court for a five year renewable term but can be terminated before the end of a term by a similar majority vote. The Court Administrator and the Chief Justice of the Trial Court work collaboratively and in consultation with each other. Ultimately, both report to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court.

The Challenges

Key components of the Court Administrator's work include:

Collaboration Statutory changes and Judicial Branch initiatives re-orient the management of the Trial Court to take advantage of management best practices and to capture the efficiencies of standardization and centralization of administrative functions.

The Court Administrator will partner with the Chief Justice of the Trial Court and with the departmental Chief Justices to implement and sustain the governance structure set out by statute and maintain a state-of-the-art, 21st Century model of court management excellence. They will also work with representatives of the Trial Court's key internal and external constituencies to build ongoing support for this management model.

Dynamic Planning Continuing reductions in budget and staff, demographic changes, and innovations in information technology necessitate continuous rethinking of the administrative operations of the Trial Court. This effort must ensure that administrative operations provide modern, effective, and efficient support to judges and court staff working to deliver justice in rapidly changing and frequently challenging circumstances.

In consultation with the Chief Justice of the Trial Court, the Court Administrator will oversee development of plans necessary for the Court's effective operations. The planning will utilize data-driven decision-making in all operations, and be characterized by measurable long and short-range operational targets, all focused on supporting delivery of justice. Planning efforts will reflect the input of chief justices, deputy court administrators, commissioners, clerk-magistrates, administrative department directors, the Court Management Advisory Board, bar leaders, and other key stakeholders. The planning efforts will also realistically address budgetary constraints and provide for a periodic review and adjustment of strategic plans.

Human Resources Currently, approximately 6,000 Trial Court employees are employed in approximately 100 locations across the Commonwealth. This level of staffing represents a decrease of more than 1,100 positions since October 8, 2008, when the Trial Court instituted a hard hiring freeze. Approximately 85 % of Trial Court employees are unionized. The new legislation requires a

significant revamping and standardization of Trial Court employment practices and the recommendations of an outside task force envision a larger and more proactive role for the Court's human resources department.

The Court Administrator, who will be the Trial Court's employer for collective bargaining purposes, will work with all departments to strengthen the human resources operations of the Trial Court. He or she will develop strategies to motivate and empower Trial Court employees to embrace organizational change conceptually and in operational detail, and maintain a professional culture that prizes teamwork and creative problem-solving. The Court Administrator will support and oversee use of current best practices for recruitment, retention, promotion, performance evaluation, discipline, termination, and professional development.

**Information
Technology**

The Trial Court currently is in the final stages of implementing its case management system, MassCourts, in every Trial Court Department. Other technological projects underway or in the planning stages include e-filing, electronic notification, website redesign, use of social media, and technology initiatives to broaden access to justice. At the same time, court-wide bandwidth is often insufficient to meet internal and external demands; not all court staff are computer-literate; and most courthouses lack wireless access.

The Court Administrator will build on the Court's recent technological advances by facilitating comprehensive, data-driven development of information technology planning, policies, and procedures. The planning will focus on capturing the benefits of emerging technologies to eliminate redundancies and speed information transfer within the Court and between the Court and its outside partners. The Court Administrator will conduct and support periodic analysis of existing and emerging information and performance technologies and their applicability to all phases of court operations. The Court Administrator will also facilitate delivery of the training necessary for all court employees to make effective use of the technologies the Court has deployed.

**Budgeting and
Fiscal Affairs**

The Trial Court budget for FY12, ending on 6/30/12, will be approximately 15% less than its budget for FY 2009. Transferability among line-item budget accounts is limited by statute. Personnel costs account for approximately 75 % of the Trial Court's budget. Fiscal reporting requirements across Trial

Court departments sometimes impose heavy burdens on court staff.

In concert with the Chief Justice of the Trial Court, the Court Administrator will oversee the preparation of annual budgets for the Trial Court and represent the Trial Court in budget negotiations with the Legislature and the Office of the Governor. He or she will submit budget requests based on demonstrated need supported by appropriate metrics, including the use of workload assessment models and application of appropriate performance measures. The Court Administrator will work to establish strong, productive and ongoing relationships with leaders and members of the elected branches. He or she will facilitate streamlined and automated fiscal reporting to eliminate any unnecessary duplication and complexity while maintaining the highest degree of accountability and transparency.

Capital Management

The 100 facilities that house Trial Court divisions and the other buildings used by the Trial Court range from very modern, state-of-the-art structures to buildings that are much older and in various states of disrepair. Many of the latter lack the infrastructure to support the latest information technologies. Some Trial Court facilities are rented; most are owned by the Commonwealth. Courthouse construction, renovation, planning, and development are undertaken jointly by the Trial Court's Office of Court Capital Projects and the Division of Capital Asset Management within the Executive Branch's Office of Administration and Finance.

The Court Administrator will work closely with the Chief Justice of the Trial Court, the Executive Branch and the Legislature to develop a capital plan that is consistent with evolving requirements for delivery of justice and will work to obtain the funding required to effect that plan. Among other things, and after input from key stakeholders, he or she will analyze and report on the benefits and costs of court consolidation, multi- vs. single-use courthouses, virtual vs. physical courtrooms, renovation vs. new construction, and sustainability.

Qualifications and Competencies

- * A graduate degree in business administration, public administration, or a related field of study.
- * Significant experience in collaboratively leading a complex public entity through a period of comprehensive managerial change, or equivalent experience in the

private sector, with a desire to contribute significantly to promoting justice in an often high-pressure, high-impact public position.

- * The ability to create, with the Chief Justice of the Trial Court, a model for smooth, efficient, and cooperative governance of the Trial Court.
- * The demonstrated capacity to collaborate, build consensus, and to motivate and inspire others to realize the Trial Court's overarching vision. The openness to solicit input from a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders, coupled with the ability to make difficult and sometimes unpopular decisions.
- * A deep understanding of intergovernmental relations and the public appropriations process, together with a firm grasp of the interconnection between judicial priorities and budgeting. The ability to work with legislators and members of the Executive Branch to obtain the funding and structural support necessary for the Court to carry out its mission.
- * A commitment to transparency and accountability through the use of performance measures and evaluation at all levels of the Trial Court's administration.
- * Experience with the implementation of innovative technologies to enhance operations.
- * Development and successful implementation of complex strategic plans.
- * Outstanding communications and team-building skills.
- * An understanding of the legal requirements applicable to employers operating in a unionized work environment.
- * As the Trial Court's first professional executive administrator, the confidence and focus to establish the Office of Court Administrator as vital to the mission of the Trial Court.
- * Ability to work in an environment with a co-equal manager.

Compensation

By statute, the Court Administrator and the Chief Justice of the Trial Court receive identical salaries. The current salary, as determined by statute, is \$140,358 plus an excellent benefit package.

How to Apply

Interested applicants must submit a cover letter, a resume, and be prepared to submit references upon request. This information should reflect the size of the organizations in the applicant's employment history, highlight any upper level management experience, the candidate's significant accomplishments of note, and all other professional positions held. Questions may be directed to Carol Lev at 617-557-1074

Applicants may apply by one of the following methods:

Via mail:

Carol R. Lev
Supreme Judicial Court
John Adams Courthouse
One Pemberton Square
Boston, MA 02108-1741
Attn: Court Administrator position

Via email: carol.lev@sjc.state.ma.us

For additional information about the Judicial Branch, visit our website at <http://www.mass.gov/courts>

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER