## **COURT OFFICER**

## **APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES**

(MCR 3.106)

## **COURT OFFICER**

## **EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES**

#### PROCEDURES FOR APPOINTMENT OF COURT OFFICERS

Because of different issues associated with employee and independent contractor classifications, separate procedures for appointing court officers as employees and appointing court officers as independent contractors have been developed. The first set of procedures apply to appointing court officers as employees. The second set of procedures apply to court officers who are appointed as independent contractors.

A model independent contractor agreement is included. If any changes are made to this form, courts should have labor counsel review those changes.

In addition to the model independent contractor agreement form, both sets of procedures include model application and other forms associated with the appointment processes. The forms can be formatted to allow courts to enter the appropriate court number, funding unit(s) and court letterhead, where appropriate. Courts may use locally developed forms that solicit and provide the same information as the model forms. Courts should ensure that local forms are in compliance with applicable state and federal statutes and regulations.

Access to applications for employment as a court officer is subject to trial court or funding unit policy for applications for court employment.

#### **COURT OFFICER - EMPLOYEE**

#### **Employment Forms**:

The following model forms are attached in the sequence in which they are discussed in steps of the employment procedures:

- Employment Application Form
- Reference Check Form
- Consent Form: Conviction/Criminal History Background Check
- Credit Report Authorization Form-Employee
- Certification to Consumer Reporting Agency Form
- Arrest Authorization Form
- Order of Appointment-Employee

#### **EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES**

#### 1. <u>Employment Opportunity Announcement</u>:

As an equal employment opportunity employer, it is important that the court announce the Court Officer employment opportunity.

A Court Officer job opening announcement should include the essential job functions to be performed, minimum employment qualifications, rate of pay, and deadline for submitting applications. Employment qualifications should be commensurate with the job duties and responsibilities assigned. The deadline for submitting applications should allow reasonable time for the potential applicants to view the announcement. Generally, three weeks after the announcement appears in all publication and posting resources is a reasonable deadline.

The job opening announcement should be posted conspicuously in court offices and the funding unit/county courthouse. The announcement should also be sent to courts, colleges, professional organizations, community outreach organizations, newspapers, and other individuals, organizations and media to provide qualified applicants notice and an opportunity to compete for the employment opportunity.

#### 2. <u>Application</u>:

All applicants should be required to complete and sign the Employment Application Form before being considered for employment. Resumes should not be substituted for a completed application form, but may be attached to the application form as a supplement.

#### 3. <u>Screening Applications</u>:

All applications should be reviewed prior to scheduling interviews to ensure that all questions have been answered, the form has been properly signed and dated, and to determine which applicants meet or exceed minimum bona fide employment qualifications.

#### 4. <u>Interviews</u>:

Only applicants whose qualifications meet or exceed the minimum bona fide employment qualifications should be offered an invitation to interview. It is recommended that at least two individuals serve on a court interview team.

It is recommended that an interview guide be developed to solicit information from applicants about experience, education, and job related knowledge during interviews. Interview guides should be followed in all interviews. However, use of the interview guide should not prevent interviewers from asking additional follow-up questions about knowledge, abilities, qualifications, an applicant's answers and other relevant job related questions. All questions should **not** contain illegal and/or inappropriate inquiries.

Each member of the interview team should be given a copy of the Pre-Employment Inquiry Guide, which is prepared by the Michigan Department of Civil Rights and is available on its website (<u>www.mdcr.state.mi.us</u>) at the Online Pamphlet location. Prior to interviews, interview team members should determine which team member will ask which questions, and should carefully review and become thoroughly familiar with the interview guide and the Pre-Employment Inquiry Guide.

#### 5. <u>Reference Checks</u>:

Professional reference checks should be conducted **before** making an employment offer. The Reference Check Form should be completed for each reference check conducted. Where possible, at least two former employers should be contacted. For an applicant who has recently completed some phase of an educational or certification process, instructors, professors, or certification officials should be contacted for verification.

#### 6. Criminal Record Check:

A criminal record check should be conducted **after** the applicant completes the Consent Form: Conviction/Criminal History Background Check. Criminal history information may be obtained directly from a court's LIEN terminal or, in the absence of a LEIN terminal, from the State Police or local police or sheriff department.

#### 7. <u>Credit Reports</u>:

Because of the nature of work that court officers perform, courts should consider requesting credit reports on applicants for employment and current court officers, if deemed necessary. The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) requires that specific procedures be followed when requesting credit reports.

Courts must comply with the following steps when requesting the credit report of any applicant or when using any non-court employee to screen, interview, perform background checks or otherwise investigate a current or prospective employee:

# A. Obtain written permission from the consumer (applicant) before ordering a consumer report.

Before obtaining a consumer report (even if voluntarily provided by an applicant), courts must notify the consumer that it may ask for a report and get his or her written permission. The written permission cannot be part of an employment application or employee handbook. Courts must therefore ask prospective employees to fill out and sign a fair credit authorization form. A Credit Report Authorization Form-Employee has been provided for that purpose.

Courts must comply with additional requirements if they hire a third party, such as an private investigator or a firm that conducts employee background checks, to conduct a background investigation that will involve, even in a small part, information about the consumer's "character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living ... obtained through personal interviews with neighbors, friends, or associates." Because such an investigation fits into the definition of an "investigative consumer report," Courts must, in addition to the steps outlined above, give the consumer (i) written advance notice that an investigative consumer report may be obtained; (ii) a copy of the Federal Trade Commission's summary of his or her rights as a consumer;<sup>1</sup> and (iii) notification that he or she may request "a complete and accurate disclosure of the nature and scope of the investigation requested." Such notice must be made in a written statement that is mailed, or otherwise delivered, to the consumer no later than 5 days after the date on which the request was received from the consumer or the report was first requested, whichever is later.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A *Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act* may be downloaded from the FTC's web site at <u>www.ftc.gov/bcp/online-/edcams/fcra/summary.html</u>. The summary describes the consumer's rights to (i) access his or her file; (ii) dispute the accuracy of the information in the file; (iii) correct or delete inaccurate information; (iv) prevent the release of outdated information; (v) consent before information is released; and (vi) sue violators.

Courts must certify to any "consumer reporting agency" that it has taken these steps. A Certification to Consumer Reporting Agency Form has been provided for that purpose.

#### **B.** Notice requirement before taking adverse action on the basis of a report.

At least five days before taking adverse action (such as denying someone a job, a promotion or a reassignment) based in whole or in part on a consumer report (or an investigative consumer report), courts must: (i) notify the consumer of the action it plans to take; (ii) give the consumer a copy of the FTC's summary or rights.

#### C. Notice requirements after taking adverse action on the basis of a report.

Within a reasonable time after making an adverse employment decision on the basis of a consumer report, courts must (i) give the consumer (applicant) notice of the adverse decision; (ii) provide the name, address and phone number of the credit reporting agency that provided the report the court relied upon, in whole or in part; (iii) provide a statement explaining that the consumer reporting agency simply provided the report and that it is not the one that made the adverse decision; (iv) explain that he or she can get a free copy of the report from the consumer reporting agency within sixty days; and (vii) explain to the consumer reporting agency agency or completeness of the report with the consumer reporting agency.

#### 8. Valid Driver's License:

The court should verify that an applicant has a valid driver's license, issued by the State of Michigan, and check the applicant's driving record.

#### 9. <u>Employment Offer</u>:

Applicants whose experience and other qualifications meet the court's criteria are eligible for an offer of employment. When making an employment offer, it is important to tell the applicant that the offer is conditioned on an employment physical examination (if required). Court officers may be appointed for a term not to exceed two (2) years [MCR 3.106 (C)], and a court shall, in its sole and complete discretion, have the option to offer an additional term of appointment for a period of time up to two (2) years. During the term of appointment, employment is at will, which means that the court has the right to discharge or lay off a court officer at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice for any reason or no reason at all.

#### 10. Employment Physical Examination:

Because of the duties typically assigned to court officers, courts should require an employment physical examination **following the job offer and acceptance**. If the court chooses to require a post offer employment physical examination, the court must make arrangements for an examination

**at court expense**. The examining physician must receive a description of assigned job duties and responsibilities prior to the examination, and limit the examination to an assessment of the individual's ability to perform the assigned job duties.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Michigan Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act (MPDCRA) are applicable to employees and job applicants who are deemed to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities; have a record of such an impairment; or are regarded as having such an impairment. The ADA permits qualified individuals to request accommodations, and requires employers to make reasonable accommodations, subject to specific conditions and circumstances, on a case-by-case basis. While not required by the ADA, the MPDCRA requires employees to request accommodations in writing within 182 days of the time they knew or reasonably should have known of their need for an accommodation. For assistance with requests for accommodations and other ADA/MPDCRA related matters, contact the State Court Administrative Office Trial Court Services Division (517/373-0130).

#### 11. Arrest Authorization:

It is important for courts to confirm in writing if arrest powers pursuant to MCR 2.103 (D) **have** or **have not** been delegated. The Arrest Authorization Form can be used for this purpose, but may not be necessary if the Order of Appointment-Employee is used (see 12. <u>Confirming Appointment</u>).

#### 12. <u>Confirming Appointment</u>

Courts should confirm the appointment of a Court Officer as an employee with an Order or letter. A model Order of Appointment-Employee has been provided for that purpose. Courts can convert the Order to a letter format, if desired.

#### 13. <u>Personnel Files</u>:

It is recommended that courts establish a primary personnel file, a confidential personnel file, and a medical personnel file for each court officer hired by the court.

The primary personnel file should consist of:

- Basic employee data
- Employee status changes
- Employee selection (personnel requisition, resume, application for employment, authorization for former employers to release information, offer/acceptance letter, etc.)
- Employee development
- Performance documentation
- Miscellaneous and separation data (employee handbook receipt, requests to inspect personnel file, attendance records, written voluntary resignations, exit interviews, etc.)

The principal purpose of a confidential personnel file is to protect the privacy of the employee, and should contain employee information that is not job related and should not be seen by supervisors and others. Examples of file content would be:

- Interview evaluation forms
- Pre-employment reference checks (employees and supervisors do not need to see reference checks after an employee has been hired)
- EEO/affirmative action data (including pictures)
- Dependent and beneficiary information
- Credit checks and reports

The medical information personnel file should contain medical exams, drug tests and other medical information that must be protected. Examples of file content would be:

- Post-offer medical information
- Injury reports
- Health care provider certifications
- Doctors' notes and reports
- Fitness for duty results
- Workers' compensation injury forms and reports
- Drug and alcohol test results
- Disability leave documentation
- Benefit claim forms
- Reimbursement request for medical expenses
- Disability self-identification form
- Any voluntary medical information from an employee health program
- Medical insurance claim forms
- Requests for reasonable accommodations
- Benefit plan choices/enrollments

Access to confidential employee information should be limited to the chief judge or designee. The designee typically would be another judge, the court administrator or court personnel/human resources director.

#### 14. <u>Record Retention</u>:

Personnel files of current employees must be kept while employed, and for 10 years after employment ends (inactive employees). Applications and resumes, and all recruitment related records, such as advertising, recruitment summaries, interview schedules, background information, acknowledgment letters, interview guides, interview notes, and related correspondence or documents must be retained for 3 years.

#### COURT OFFICER EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

(	Judicial District Court	Judicial	Circuit Court	County Probate	e Court )
ALL	QUESTIONS MUST BE ANSWER	RED		PLEASE PRINT	
GEN	NERAL INFORMATION		DA	ТЕ:	
Nam	ne:		So	c. Sec. No.:	
	Last	First	Middle		
Hom	ne Address:				
	Street		City	State	Zip
Phor	ne No.:		Fax No.:		
Pager No.:			Cellular No.:		
1.	Are you authorized to work Please submit copies of your drive			rd.	
2.	Are you a resident of the State of Michigan? [] Yes [] No				
3.	Are you over 18 years of age? [] Yes [] No				
4.	Did you graduate high school or obtain a G.E.D. certificate? [] Yes [] No				
_					

5. List all courts in which you are currently appointed to serve process under MCR 3.106. Include the name of the court, the date(s) of appointment, the approximate expiration date of the appointment, and the nature of services you performed, are performing or are authorized to perform.

<u>Court</u>	Appointment From: To:	Services Performed

(Use Separate Sheet, If Needed)

6. List all counties in which you are currently deputized to serve process under MCR 3.106. Include the name of the department, the date(s) of appointment, the expiration date of the appointment, and the nature of services you performed, are performing or are authorized to perform.

<u>Court</u>	Appointment From: To:	Services Performed

(Use Separate Sheet, If Needed)

7. List all previous court appointments where you were appointed to serve process under MCR 3.106 (excluding current court appointments). Include the name of the court, the dates of appointment and the services you performed.

<u>Court</u>	<u>Appointment</u> From: To:	Services Performed
(Use Separate Sheet, If Ne	eded)	

8. List all previous counties that you were deputized to serve process under MCR 3.106 (excluding current counties where you are deputized). Include the name of the department, the dates of appointment and the services you performed.

<u>Court</u>	Appointment From: To:	Services Performed
(Use Separate Sheet, If Needed	1)	

9. Have you ever been denied appointment or re-appointment as a court officer or had your appointment or employment revoked or terminated by any court? []Yes []No (If yes, provide details on a separate sheet).

- Have you ever been convicted of a felony (or misdemeanor within the last 10 years)?
  [] Yes [] No (If yes, provide details on a separate sheet).
- Have you had a civil judgment (excluding civil infractions) entered against you in the past ten years?
  [] Yes
  [] No (If yes, provide details on a separate sheet).
- 12. Are any lawsuits pending or have there been any lawsuits or judgments filed against you as result of your duties as a Court Officer, Bailiff or Deputy? [] Yes [] No (If yes, provide details on a separate sheet).
- 13. Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? [] Yes [] No (If yes, provide the date of filing, name of court, case number and other relevant details).
- 14. Do you have a permit to carry a concealed weapon? []Yes []No
  If yes, (a) attach a copy of your CCW Permit.
  (b) do you or would you carry a weapon in the course of your duties as a Court Officer? []Yes []No
- 15. Have you ever had a complaint filed against you with a court or a law enforcement agency regarding the use of your weapon during the performance of your duties as a Court Officer
  [] Yes
  [] No If yes, provide the date and circumstances on an additional sheet.
- 16. Have you ever had your license to carry a concealed weapon revoked? If yes, please state the date and describe the circumstances of the incident(s).
- 17. List any special skills, training or certifications you have that are related to this position:

\_\_\_\_\_

- 18. List any professional organizations to which you belong that are related to this position:
- 19. Were you in active U.S. Military Service [] Yes [] No If yes, type of separation:
- 21. Why do you want to be employed by the court?

### 22. EDUCATION

School	Name of School	Location City/state	Highest Yr. Completed	Major, Degree, Credential(s)	Graduate?
High School			1234		
College					Yes [ ] No [ ]
Post-Graduate					Yes [ ] No [ ]

### 23. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (last 5 years)

Name of Employer:	
Address:	Phone No.:
Start Date:	_ End Date :
Supervisor/Contact Person:	
	List Main Duties:
If no longer employed, reason for leaving?	
Name of Employer:	
Address:	Phone No.:
Start Date:	_ End Date :
Supervisor/Contact Person:	
Position Held:	List Main Duties:
If no longer employed, reason for leaving?	

Nan	e of Employer:	
Add	ress:	Phone No.:
Star	Date:	End Date :
Supe	ervisor/Contact Person:	
Posi	tion Held:	List Main Duties:
		or leaving?
Add	ress:	Phone No.:
Start Date:		End Date :
Supe	ervisor/Contact Person:	
Posi	tion Held:	List Main Duties:
		or leaving?
		I telephone numbers of three references and explain your relationship with e, each reference should be from courts or law firms for which you have as a court officer.
	1	
	2.	
	3	

25. If currently employed by or under appointment with another Court(s), may we contact the Court(s) with which you are under appointment or are employed? Yes [] No []

26. Do you have a reliable means of transportation? Yes [] No []

27. Name of relative(s) employed with the court, if applicable:

#### PLEASE READ BEFORE SIGNING THE CERTIFICATION AND AGREEMENT. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONSULT THE COURT OR YOUR ATTORNEY.

#### **AT WILL EMPLOYMENT**

In consideration of any employment of me by the court, I understand and agree that my employment is at the will of the court, which means that the court has the right to discharge me or lay me off at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice.

It is expressly agreed and understood that this is the entire agreement between the court and myself on the subject of discharge, termination, and/or layoff, and that this agreement may be changed only by an agreement in writing signed by the chief judge of the court and myself.

#### **LIMITATIONS PERIOD**

I further recognize that if employed by the court, I agree, in partial consideration for my employment, that I shall not commence any action or other legal proceeding relating to my employment or the termination thereof more than one year after the termination of such employment and agree to waive any statute of limitations to the contrary.

#### **AUTHENTICITY**

I certify that all information submitted by me in this application is true and correct and understand that if any such information is found to be false or otherwise incorrect or incomplete, it may result in disciplinary action against me up to and including termination from employment at the sole discretion of the court.

#### **AUTHORIZATION**

I hereby authorize an investigation of my past employment/contract activities and statements contained in this application and specifically authorize the court to consult with all third parties with whom or which I have been associated concerning my qualifications, or with any third parties who may have information bearing thereon and to receive and utilize any information which may be material to my qualifications; and I hereby release all third parties who provide information to the court with or without notice to me, from any and all liability for the transmittal of any information bearing on my qualifications, in connection with any such request. I further authorize the court to secure a copy of any criminal, driving, court or credit record about me or any of my employees or subcontractors at any time before or during any appointment as a court officer and to conduct whatever investigation the court deems appropriate.

I authorize and release the court from all liability for forwarding to any other entity to which I may apply for employment, any information concerning me or my qualifications as the court has at the time of my application or hereafter acquires. I release from all liability any and all third parties for any statements made or any action taken in connection with this application, or in connection with any other form of review of my qualifications. I hereby waive on behalf of the court and any and all third parties any and all notice(s) to which I would otherwise be entitled.

#### **ACCOMMODATION**

I understand that I am applying for a position located in the state of Michigan and that if I have a disability I must tell the court in writing of my need for accommodation within 182 days after I know or reasonably should know that accommodation is needed. I further understand that my failure to do so prevents me from alleging a violation of the accommodation requirement of the persons with disabilities civil rights act.

I hereby acknowledge that I have read the above statements and understand same.

I further recognize that if I am employed by the court, I will receive compensation and benefits and be subject to rules and regulations, but I agree that such compensation, benefits, rules and regulations are subject to change by the court. I acknowledge that my assigned work hours and place of work may be modified by the court. I recognize I will be required to work overtime, as needed.

Date

Signed

#### FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

INTERVIEWED BY		POSITION	DATE
APPLICATION APPROVED:		l	DATE
HIRED: YES [] NO [] POSITION		DEPT	
		NORM HOURS	
AFF ROVED FOR TIRE			DATE
EMPLOYMENT PHYSICAL	G	DRIVING RECORD CHECK	G
CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK	G	CREDIT REPORT (IF REQU	RED) G

### COURT OFFICER TELEPHONE REFERENCE CHECK

Name of Applicant:					
Nam	Name of Employer/Client: Phone #:				
Cont	Contact Person (Name and Title):				
1.	What was the title and general description of the position that the applicant occupied?				
2.	The applicant indicates having worked for you from: to: Is that correct?				
3.	How would you characterize the professional/technical skills of the applicant?				
4.	Describe the applicant's interpersonal communication skills.				
5.	Would you rehire the individual?				

- 6. In your opinion, is there any reason we should not consider this applicant for employment/appointment with the court?
- 7. Are there other comments you would care to add?

Name of person conducting reference check

Date

#### **CONSENT FORM**

### CONVICTION/CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECK

As a prospective Court Officer of the Court, I understand that it is the Court's policy to secure conviction-only criminal history information as a part of the application process. I hereby authorize the Court to utilize the information given below for the sole purpose of obtaining a conviction-only criminal history report on me.

Name		
Last	First	Middle
Maiden name/names previously used	l:	
Social Security Number:		
Driver's License Number:		
Signature		Date

#### **CREDIT REPORT AUTHORIZATION - EMPLOYEE**

I acknowledge that the Court may, in considering my application for employment as a Court Officer, or at any time during the existence of my employment with the Court, if any, request, obtain, review and consider a copy of my credit report. I hereby authorize the Court to, from this date until the termination of my employment as a Court Officer, if any, request, obtain, review and consider my credit report.

(Date)

(Signed)

#### CERTIFICATION TO CONSUMER REPORTING AGENCY

Re: Certification to Consumer Reporting Agency Dear Consumer Reporting Agency: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_is requesting a consumer report regarding \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Pursuant to Section 604(b) of the Fair Credit Reporting Act, as amended, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_hereby certifies the following:

1. \_\_\_\_\_has provided \_\_\_\_\_\_ with a clear and conspicuous written disclosure, in a document that consists solely of the disclosure, that a consumer report is being obtained for appointment purposes;

2. \_\_\_\_\_ has authorized in writing the procurement of a consumer report by \_\_\_\_\_\_; a copy of same is attached;

3. Before taking any adverse action based in whole or in part on the consumer report, shall provide to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, a copy of the consumer report and a summary description in writing of the rights of the consumer.

4. \_\_\_\_\_\_ will not use the information from the consumer report on \_\_\_\_\_\_ in violation of any Federal or State equal employment opportunity law or regulation.

Sincerely,

#### **ARREST AUTHORIZATION**

The ( \_\_\_\_\_ Judicial District Court/ \_\_\_\_\_ Judicial Circuit Court/ \_\_\_\_\_ County Probate Court)

Does

Does not

Authorize \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to serve process that requires making arrests pursuant to MCR 2.103 (D).

Court

Court Officer

Date

Date

#### **ORDER OF APPOINTMENT - EMPLOYEE**

Order (year) - (number)

#### IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

That [<u>full name of Court Officer</u>] is hereby appointed to be a Court Officer for [name of the Court] in a manner consistent with the terms and conditions of MCR 3.106. [<u>Name of Court Officer</u>] is expected to perform [his or her] assigned job duties effectively, efficiently and in full compliance with any and all applicable statutes, regulations, administrative orders, court rules and directives from this Court.

This appointment is for a period commencing [month/day/year]; and not to exceed two (2) years pursuant to MCR 3.106.

This appointment means that the Court Officer may be requested, on an as needed basis, to perform the following duties:

□ Orders of Eviction

□ Orders for the Seizure or Attachment of Property

□ Orders requiring Arrest authority pursuant to MCR 2.103(D)

□ Other services the Court may require

[<u>Name of Court Officer</u>] is and will be employed at will, meaning that the Court has a right to discharge [him or her] at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice.

**Chief Judge** 

Date