

CIRCUIT COURT COMMISSIONER

FUNCTION OF THE JOB

Under direction, to assist circuit court judges in legal actions relating to family, criminal, civil, traffic, juvenile, evictions, and probate law in assigned matters as authorized by statute and directed by a judge; performs other duties as required.

CHARACTERISTIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. In criminal matters, issues summonses, arrest warrants or search warrants, determines probable cause to support a warrantless arrest, conducts initial appearances of persons arrested, sets bail, conducts preliminary examinations and arraignments, and accepts pleas.
2. In traffic and County ordinance cases, conducts initial appearances, receives non-contested forfeiture pleas, orders the revocation or suspension of operating privileges, and imposes monetary penalties.
3. In small claims actions, conducts initial appearances, conferences, and hearings; examines pleadings; identifies issues; issues decisions that shall become judgments unless a demand for trial is filed.
4. In civil actions, conduct hearings on garnishment issues.
5. In paternity and divorce cases, conducts initial appearances or temporary hearings, non-contested judgments, and post-judgment hearings; hears testimony; issues judgments and/or temporary orders regarding establishment of paternity, counseling, custody, visitation, physical placement, child support, maintenance, use of assets, and payment of debts.
6. In any action affecting the family, informs the parties of any services offered by the family court commissioner and family court services; provides parties with written information on their case.
7. In matters affecting the family, presides at hearings held to determine whether a judgment of divorce or legal separation shall be granted if all material issues are resolved; presides at any hearing held to determine whether a judgment of divorce or legal separation shall be granted if one party does not participate in the action.
8. In juvenile matters, issues summonses and warrants, conducts juvenile detention, shelter care hearings, permanency hearings, and preliminary appearances, and orders the release or detention of children apprehended; conducts uncontested juvenile proceedings and enters dispositions, but may not impose confinement.
9. Hears petitions for mental commitment for juveniles and adults and conducts mental commitment probable cause hearings; completes reviews of adult and child guardianships, protective placements and protective services, and conducts non-contested probate proceedings.
10. Reviews petitions for domestic and harassment restraining orders and issues temporary orders; conducts hearings and issues injunctions in domestic abuse cases and harassment cases.
11. Recommends the assigned trial court; appoints guardians ad litem and advocate attorneys.
12. Reviews eviction pleadings to assure compliance with state statutes and local rules, makes legal rulings upon the pleadings, conducts eviction hearings, issues writs of restitution, and conducts hearings on the second and third causes of action post-first cause of action.
13. Issues warrants, summonses, capiases, orders to show cause, and orders to appear.
14. Is on-call 24/7 for a week at a time several times per year to review warrant requests for blood draws.
15. Administers oaths and takes testimony; advises individuals of constitutional rights; makes referrals to the Public Defender's Office; directs cases to the appropriate circuit court, if necessary.
16. Researches issues of fact in a case, examines accounts, and reports the findings to the Court.
17. Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with staff, attorneys, court officials, other County departments, and the public.

CHARACTERISTIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (continued)

18. When requested, acts in an advisory capacity to circuit judges on the latest aspects and changes in case or statutory law.
19. May select or assist in the selection of staff; may supervise employees; may evaluate performance or provide input in the evaluation process; may handle any personnel issues of the staff
20. Maintains prompt, predictable, and regular attendance.
21. Performs other duties as required.

QUALIFICATIONS

Essential Knowledge and Abilities

1. Thorough knowledge of legal proceedings under the jurisdiction of circuit courts.
2. Thorough knowledge of family, criminal, civil, traffic, probate, and juvenile laws of Wisconsin.
3. Comprehensive knowledge of judicial procedures and rules of evidence.
4. Comprehensive knowledge of the practices and techniques used in the presentation of cases in court.
5. Ability to oversee numerous high-volume court calendars.
6. Ability to analyze and interpret legal documents and instruments.
7. Ability to appraise and organize facts, and to apply legal principles based upon a review and evaluation of the facts presented.
8. Ability to negotiate and resolve disputes in a variety of situations.
9. Ability to effectively present material in written and oral formats.
10. Ability to deal tactfully and effectively with attorneys, the public, and representatives of other governmental agencies.
11. Ability to deal effectively with people who are under great emotional and economic stress on a daily basis.
12. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff, attorneys, court officials, other County departments, and the public.
13. Ability to effectively interact with sensitivity with persons from diverse cultural, socioeconomic, educational, racial, ethnic, and professional backgrounds, and persons of all ages and lifestyles.
14. Ability to utilize word processing programs and access the Internet for information.

Training and Experience

1. Licensed to practice law in the State of Wisconsin.
2. Three (3) years of work experience as a practicing attorney, with varied experience in civil, criminal, and family law preferred.