

COURT RESEARCHER

Job Title: Court Researcher

Department: Charles County Circuit Court
Court Administration

Work Location: La Plata, Maryland

Starting Salary: \$57,310 - \$64,033 Annually

Job Type: Full-time; 37.5 Hours per Week; FLSA Exempt

THIS POSITION IS OPEN UNTIL FILLED WITH A BEST CONSIDERATION DATE OF AUGUST 27, 2021.

Job Description Summary: Appointed by the County Administrative Judge and working under the direct supervision of the Court Administrator, the incumbent of this position serves as the research professional who conducts analyses of court programs to support court administration decision-making; facilitate policy evaluation; improve court performance; promote the efficient and effective use of court resources; and increase the court's accountability. The Court Researcher is expected to establish links to national research/statistical sources in the areas of courts, criminal, family, and civil justice; evaluate court operations; manage court-related research projects; and provide state and regional research and evaluation support. The incumbent will oversee the design, maintenance, and utilization of databases related to research reporting and assist with the production, maintenance, and distribution of court caseload and various other routine and ad hoc reports. Working collaboratively with court administration staff, judges, magistrates, and external agency partners, the Court Researcher will analyze and evaluate court-wide programs, functions, and organization to determine whether practices efficiently and effectively accomplish objectives and to facilitate informed court program improvement and/or project implementation determinations. Successful execution of essential duties requires that one combine strong analytical/research skills; have experience working collaboratively on small and large-scale research projects; be adept with data collection methods, quantitative and qualitative data analyses, program evaluation, statistical principles, and methods for survey data analysis; have demonstrated skill using a variety of statistical and Microsoft software applications; and be able to communicate effectively, written and orally, with internal staff and external partner agencies. A thorough knowledge of legal terminology, court organization, processes, operations, case management principles, or project management in a court setting is preferred.

Essential Functions: Perform quantitative and qualitative analyses on court-wide services, workload/staffing demands, programs, etc., comparing the research outcomes with best practice standards and guidelines, to determine if existing practices are efficient and effective. Collaborate with the bench, court administration staff, Clerk's Office, and external agency partners to identify operational and organizational research needs, coordinate research projects, and execute the data collection, analysis, and reporting. Review and improve data reliability by developing quality control procedures for data entry, data collection/extraction, and data analysis. Conduct research related to data collection, data validity, and case management reporting requirements in the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC)/Odyssey Navigator Case Management System and devise recommendations for optimizing system usage and functionality. Generate periodic reports in MDEC to examine trends in case filings, dispositions, case outcomes, and case activities; to routinely measure overall case time standard performance; and to determine if current case management strategies produce desired outcomes. Perform research for inclusion in grant proposals and conduct post-award programmatic and fiscal performance analyses. Design, utilize, and maintain databases, data tracking instruments, data dashboards, and online surveys related to court research projects. Prepare flow charts, graphs, process maps, project plans, time lines, data arrays, and written narratives to convey complex data arrangements in a straight-forward, meaningful manner. Draft and edit a variety of written materials including: reports; articles; correspondence; data studies; spreadsheets; surveys; brochures; grant narratives; etc., ensuring that the data contained therein accurately measures the court's performance. Assist with the production, maintenance, and distribution of annual and quarterly data reports, as well as project-specific and ad hoc reports. Participate in the data-informed development of new programs, annual goals and objectives, long-range planning initiatives, improvement strategies, and operational policies and procedures. Staff and participate on various circuit court and external agency partner committees to provide data analysis and research support and to convey information and recommendations in written reports and oral presentations. Act as the court's liaison to the Judiciary's Research and Analysis Department to collect and analyze statewide and regional court performance data and serve on various committees to further Judiciary-wide initiatives. Participate in professional development training and pursue professional organization memberships to remain abreast of current and relevant research methodology, research initiatives, and published findings. Investigate and study local and state legislation and national trends to determine their impact on court services and operations. Execute other duties as assigned.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities: Ability to work a full-time court schedule of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with the flexibility to accommodate deviations from the standard work day. Possess strong analytical and research skills to conduct data analyses. Ability to ensure the accuracy, validity, and reliability of data from source systems to the point of reporting. Experience with a range of data collection tools, quantitative and qualitative program evaluation methods, survey research methodology, techniques for survey data analysis, and statistical principles. Ability to identify and analyze problems, translating knowledge and experience into viable solutions. Detail-oriented with excellent organizational abilities including time management, workload prioritization, and record-keeping accuracy. Perform well under pressure to meet established timelines and goals with the ability to quickly adapt behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles. Even temperament and strong interpersonal skills to effectively build and maintain professional relationships, facilitate discussions, and work well with others in a team-oriented environment. Effective communication skills to convey complex data arrangements in a straight-forward and meaningful ways using charts, graphs, and oral/narrative explanations. Superior writing abilities to include drafting, editing, and formatting a variety of document types, with the capability to translate complex concepts into layman's terms and articulate policy and procedural changes necessitated by data analysis outcomes. Ability to simultaneously perform multiple tasks, with minimal supervision, and make independent decisions based on experience, good judgment, and established court policies and procedures. Capacity to exercise a high degree of tact, diplomacy, professionalism, and competence in dealing with diverse groups. Discretion and sound judgment in working with sensitive information to maintain confidentiality. Demonstrated proficiency with database development, online survey software tools, statistical research software applications, Windows operating systems, and Microsoft applications, with an aptitude for learning software programs related to various court administration, case management, and grant functions.

Education and Experience: Requires a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university in criminal/juvenile justice; social science; court, business, or public administration; or other related field, including major course work in statistics and/or research methodologies. Three years of relevant experience involving utilizing statistical research software applications, data collection, research, qualitative and quantitative analyses, data interpretation, statistical report writing, and designing and managing research projects in a social science, criminal/juvenile justice, or court environment. (Minimum)

Master's Degree from an accredited college or university in social science research, public policy, judicial administration, or related field. (Preferred)

Direct research project experience in a court system, with a knowledge of legal terminology, court processes, case management, project management, and grant research and proposal writing, is highly desired. Candidate must possess any acceptable combination of commensurate education, training, and/or experience that provides proficiency in the essential duties, knowledge, skills, and abilities.

The position is grant funded, and continued employment is contingent upon the availability of funds awarded each fiscal year. Excellent benefits including a defined benefit pension plan, deferred compensation, generous leave, and health care programs. The Charles County Employee Pension Plan honors portability of prior eligible Maryland State and local government services in other defined benefit pension plans.

Individuals interested in applying for the Court Researcher position may do so by accessing the Charles County Government website: <http://www.charlescountymd.gov/hr/recruitment/recruitment>. In addition to completing the online application, candidates must attach a current resume and professional writing sample to the application to be considered for this position. Alternatively, one's application, resume, and professional writing sample may be mailed or hand-delivered to the Circuit Court for Charles County, Maryland, Attention: Deborah W. Zrioka, Court Administrator, 200 Charles Street, La Plata, Maryland 20646. Faxed copies or applications electronically submitted directly to an individual's email address will not be accepted.

Charles County Circuit Court is a drug-free workplace and an equal opportunity employer, committed to diversity in the workplace. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability, familial status, genetic information, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by State or federal law. Applicants who need an ADA Accommodation for an interview should request the accommodation when notified of a request to be interviewed. Applicants must be United States citizens or eligible to work in the United States.