

Long-Range Issue #3—Supporting Competence and Quality

The delivery of justice is affected by the competence and quality of judicial officers, administrators, and court staff. Law and court procedures are increasingly complex, and those within the judicial system face difficult legal and ethical issues as well as heightened societal expectations. Consequently, advanced levels of training and development are critical to enable those who work within the system to effectively perform the challenging work of the courts and meet demands placed on them. The Florida State Courts System is committed to having a workforce that is highly qualified and dedicated to service.

Ongoing professional development, education, and training, with appropriate emphasis on effective resource management policies and practices and ethical behavior, are essential to ensure a competent and high quality work force to adequately address court operations, improve interactions with the public, and enhance perceptions of procedural fairness. Court system users reasonably expect the courts to employ effective management techniques, continuous operational improvement, innovative technologies, and superior service levels. *The State Courts System should continue to foster working environments and organizational cultures marked by high achievement and work satisfaction while successfully meeting these challenges.*

Educational methodologies for judges and others in the State Courts System workforce are continually advancing. In a resource-competitive environment, the State Courts System must pursue innovative ways and means to provide the optimum professional development, education, and training opportunities. The State Courts System should critically assess the core competencies for its workforce positions so that training and development content and approaches are meaningfully aligned in a consistent and cohesive statewide system.

Organizational research suggests that effective human resources management policies and practices make significant and measurably positive contributions to organizational performance and satisfying work environments. However, organizational systems must adapt unique policies and practices most suitable to their circumstances. The State Courts System is dedicated to pursuing progressive and appropriate human resources policies and practices that will attract and retain excellent employees at all levels.

Professionalism is closely linked to ethical behavior and practices. While a code of conduct is in place for judges, the development and implementation of statewide standards of conduct for non-judge State Courts System employees will ensure professionalism and high standards of conduct, integrity, and accountability. This will, in turn, increase public trust and confidence.

Goal 3.1: Judges and court employees will have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to serve and perform at the highest professional levels.

Strategies:

- 3.1(a) Improve and expand training and educational opportunities and offerings, adding self-learning resources and electronic/online tools for judges and court employees.
- 3.1(b) Foster professional development and growth through programs such as succession planning, mentoring, coaching, job shadowing, on the job learning, and introduction to management and leadership.
- 3.1(c) Collaborate with local, state, and national providers to enhance and expand training and development opportunities.
- 3.1(d) Provide training on the use of existing and evolving technologies.
- 3.1(e) Develop and provide programs to strengthen the management and leadership skills of judges, executive management, and supervisory court employees.

Goal 3.2: All court employees will be of good character and adhere to high standards of professionalism and ethics at all times.

Strategies:

- 3.2(a) Develop, adopt, and implement statewide standards of professional and ethical conduct for non-judge court employees.
- 3.2(b) Emphasize professionalism and ethical behavior in training and educational programs and materials.
- 3.2(c) Support effective procedures for responding to complaints of unethical or unprofessional behavior.

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Goal 3.3: The State Courts System will attract, hire, and retain highly qualified and competent employees.

Strategies:

- 3.3(a) Improve, expand, and modernize recruitment methods and practices, including the use of new technologies and networks, to attract competent and qualified candidates.
- 3.3(b) Increase diversity so that the State Courts System better reflects the demographics of individual communities and aids in enhancing effective interactions with people of different cultures.
- 3.3(c) Provide monetary and non-monetary incentives, rewards, and recognition for excellent service and performance.
- 3.3(d) Provide career paths and advancement opportunities for non-judge court employees.
- 3.3(e) Create a motivating, satisfying, and purposeful work environment and organizational culture that values and engages judges and court employees.
- 3.3(f) Advocate for competitive pay and benefits that are comparable to market rates.
- 3.3(g) Provide judges and court employees with the information, resources, tools, and technology needed to do their work well.

Goal 3.4: The judicial branch will attract, retain, and support highly qualified judicial candidates.

Strategies:

- 3.4(a) Ensure that the most challenging judicial assignments have adequate resources and support.
- 3.4(b) Create a motivating, satisfying, and purposeful work environment and organizational culture for judges.
- 3.4(c) Advocate for competitive pay and benefits.

- 3.4(d) Provide judges with the information, resources, tools, and technology needed to do their work well.
- 3.4(e) Support the appropriate consideration of diversity in the selection of judges.