

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title: Chief Clerk
Departments: Probate
Job Analysis: May 2007, February 2025

Note: Statements included in this description are intended to reflect in general the duties and responsibilities of this classification and are not to be interpreted as being all inclusive. The employee may be assigned other duties that are not specifically included.

Relationships

Reports to: Probate Judge
Subordinate Staff: Probate Court employees, Public Records employees, Senior Administrative Assistant, Elections Coordinator Office personnel
Internal contacts: Members of Probate Office
External Contacts: General Public, Members of other County office, Attorneys, Members of law Enforcement offices, Members of State Department of Revenue and other offices.
Status: Classified/Exempt/Appointed (S323)

Job Summary

~~Supervises, assigns and reviews work of office staff. Prepares and maintains records for Probate Office and Probate Court. Prepares reports and correspondence. Presides over hearings and performs marriage ceremonies in conjunction with the Probate Judge. Researches records in records room and IBM terminal and researches laws of the state. Performs various other tasks as required.~~

The Chief Clerk of Probate is appointed by the Judge of Probate and serves at the pleasure of the Judge of Probate, pursuant to Section 12-13-40, Code of Alabama, 1975. An employee in this class is the chief administrative official of the Probate Court and is responsible for administratively directing all of the operational processes and procedures of the Probate Court. The Chief Clerk performs statutory functions of the office and ensures compliance with all state and federal laws and regulations applicable to the operations of the Probate Court. Work is performed under the general direction of the Judge of Probate with considerable latitude for independent judgment in accordance with established guidelines and procedures and is evaluated through review of reports, performance and conferences with the Judge of Probate. Direction and supervision are exercised over a staff of clerical and professional employees.

Job Domains

~~A. The Chief Clerk shall have the following powers~~

- ~~1. To issue letters testamentary, of administration and of guardianship, where there is contest.~~
- ~~2. To administer oaths relating to the business of the court and to take and certify acknowledgements and proof of instruments authorized to be recorded.~~
- ~~3. To solemnize matrimony, approve bonds and appoint guardians ad litem.~~
- ~~4. To admit wills to probate and record and to pass and allow accounts of executors, administrators and guardians, where there is no contest.~~
- ~~5. To do all other acts and things and perform all other duties, ministerial and judicial, where there is no contest that the Probate Judge may do and perform.~~

~~B. All of the official acts of such Chief Clerk must be performed in the name of the Probate judge, except when there is a vacancy in that office. (Code 1852, *674; Code 1867, *796; Code 1876, *702; code 1886, *795; Code 1896 *3372; Code 1907 *5430; Code 1923, *9592; Code 1940, T. 13, *300.)~~

~~C. Office Management~~

- ~~1. Interview and select new staff members.~~
 - ~~2. Supervise, assign and review work of office staff.~~
 - ~~3. Explain department policies and regulations to office staff.~~
 - ~~4. Maintain records of absences, vacations, etc.~~
 - ~~5. Maintain communication with office staff.~~
1. Directs the overall operations of all divisions of the Probate Court.
 2. Ensures compliance of Probate Court activities by reviewing, monitoring and administering all state and federal laws and regulations applicable to the functions and administration of the Probate Court, including laws and regulations applicable to state and federal elections and the conduct of elections, legal requirements for the management of indexing and archiving of Probate Court and public records, statutory and constitutional judicial functions and administration, and all state and federal laws and regulations applicable to the employment of the employees by the Probate Court, including Baldwin County Personnel Rules and Regulations.
 3. Assists the Judge of Probate in fulfilling all legal requirements by conducting legal research and preparing legal memoranda and analyses.
 4. Oversees and supervises the planning, development, administration and direction of the Probate Court's employment policies, procedures and performance evaluations in order to ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal employment laws, rules and regulations of the Probate Court's employment.
 5. Provides assistance and guidance to Probate Court supervisory personnel on the administration of employment policies and procedures, including disciplinary procedures.
 6. Reviews legal documents filed or presented to the Probate Court (filed), including documents: (i) for judicial filing, (ii) to resolve issues and exceptions based on legal

requirement, (iii) to determine legal adequacy to meet filing requirements, (iv) to determine appropriate fees and (v) to determine due process compliance, issues and legal notice requirements.

7. Oversees the plans, lay out, and directions of the procedures and methods necessary to perform such clerical court operations as cash accounting, record keeping, computing fees and charges, filing and general clerical functions.
8. Administers the set up and maintenance of proper controls over court functions.
9. Confers with supervisory personnel to solve new or unusual problems.
10. Confers with the Judge of Probate on proposed changes and improvements in court operations.
11. Supervises the preparation of reports on the operations of the Probate Court.
12. Makes decisions as to the proper handling of unusual complaints.
13. Advises attorneys, government officials and the public on proper procedure and law as it affects the activities of the Probate Court.
14. Oversees and supervises the maintenance and storage of court records.
15. Serves as records custodian and furnishes original records to other courts and attorneys.
16. Assists in the preparation and administration of the Probate Court's budget.
17. Issues letters testamentary, of administration, of conservatorship, and of guardianship in uncontested cases.
18. Administers oaths relating to the business of the Probate Court.
19. Takes and certifies acknowledgements and proof of instruments authorized to be records.
20. Assists in the supervision, preparation and administration of all elections conducted by the Probate Court.
21. Approves bonds and appoints guardians ad litem.
22. Admits wills to probate and records and to pass and allow accounts of executors, administrators, and guardians in uncontested cases.
23. Performs related work as required.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

(Any item with an asterisk will be taught on the job.)

- ~~1. Verbal skills to communicate effectively with office staff, attorneys and general public and preside over hearings and perform ceremonies.~~
- ~~2. Math skills to perform basic mathematical operations.~~
- ~~3. Writing skills to clearly and neatly complete forms, reports, post docket cases, etc.~~
- ~~4. Reading skills to read and understand codes, regulations and policies.~~
- ~~5. Knowledge of county rules, policies and regulations.~~
- ~~6. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with subordinates, supervisors, other employees, general public.~~
- ~~7. Ability to give clear and concise instructions to the staff.~~
- ~~8. Ability to supervise an office staff.~~
- ~~9. Ability to exercise good judgment in making decisions in accordance with department policies and procedures.~~
- ~~10. Ability to operate office machines such as copy machine, calculator, typewriter, IBM Terminal.~~
- ~~11. Knowledge of filing systems.~~

~~12. Knowledge of Driver License Manual, Code of Alabama, Acts of Legislature.~~

1. Comprehensive knowledge of state and federal statutes, Alabama Rules of Civil Procedure, Alabama Rules of Evidence and other court rules, especially as such pertain to the Probate Court.
2. Comprehensive knowledge of court procedures and legal documents pertaining to the Probate Court.
3. Comprehensive knowledge of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to election procedures.
4. Comprehensive knowledge of legal requirements for the management of indexing and archiving of Probate Court and public records.
5. Comprehensive knowledge of statutory and constitutional judicial functions and administration.
6. Comprehensive knowledge of state and federal laws and regulations applicable to employment of the employees by the Probate Court, including Baldwin County Personnel Rules and Regulations.
7. Thorough knowledge of the organization, functions and authority of the Probate Court.
8. Thorough knowledge of office management methods and procedures.
9. Skill in the use of word processing software.
10. Ability to evaluate operations and procedures to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
11. Ability to formulate and implement operating policies and procedures.
12. Ability to plan, schedule, supervise and evaluate the activities of professional and clerical personnel.
13. Ability to prepare and present complex and comprehensive reports, both orally and in writing.
14. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
15. Ability to learn and comprehend specific tasks performed on computer relating to the operations of the courts.
16. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with the Judge of Probate, department heads, state and local officials, attorneys, employees, and the general public.

Physical Characteristics

(In cases of physical handicap, reasonable accommodations will be made.)

1. See well enough to read manuals and written instructions.
2. Hear well enough to respond to verbal communication and to talk on the telephone.
3. Speak well enough to answer questions in a polite and courteous manner.
4. Body movement or mobility to stand, lift, bend and move.
5. Physical tolerance to work under stress due to constant contact with the public.
6. Ability to exert physical effort in sedentary to light work, which may involve some lifting, carrying, pushing or pulling of objects and materials and walking, standing, and sitting.

Other Characteristics

1. Be willing to travel to attend workshops, conferences, seminars, etc., and to attend court out of town as needed.

2. Be willing to work overtime, non-standard hours or weekends to complete work within specific time period.
3. Any other duties that may be allowed by statutory authority, as well as any other duties assigned by the Judge of Probate, from time to time, and related to the operation of the office.

Minimum Qualifications

~~Minimum of 10 years related experience is desirable, 4 year college degree, equivalent, or both.~~

1. Attainment of a minimum of a bachelor's degree from a recognized college or university in business administration, law, accounting, or closely related field, preferably supplemented by a law degree, and a minimum of five (5) years' governmental and court administrative experience, including three (3) years' experience in the Probate Court, preferably supplemented by experience as an attorney working in public administration, employment law, or employment relations; or a combination of education and experience equivalent to these requirements.
2. Must be bondable with corporate surety in such amount as required by the Judge of Probate.