
Supreme Court Administrative Rules

RULE 15 COMMISSIONER OF THE SUPREME COURT

(a) Appointment. To promote the effective administration of justice, the Justices of the Supreme Court will appoint a commissioner of the court. The salary of the commissioner will be fixed by the court. The commissioner may be removed at the pleasure of the Supreme Court.

(b) Deciding Motions. The commissioner will hear and decide those motions authorized by the Rules of Appellate Procedure and any additional motions that may be assigned to the commissioner by the court. The commissioner will determine whether to accept cases certified by the Court of Appeals to the Supreme Court.

(c) Screening for the Court. The commissioner will screen petitions for review and direct appeals to the Supreme Court and recommend whether Supreme Court review should be granted. Except for motions to modify a ruling of the commissioner, the commissioner will also screen motions which are to be decided by the Justices and recommend to the court an appropriate disposition for each motion. When necessary, screening memoranda will contain an evaluation sufficiently comprehensive to assist each Justice in independently deciding the matter being screened.

(d) Assisting Chief Justice. The commissioner will assist the Chief Justice with motions to file amicus curiae briefs.

(e) Judicial Law Clerks. The commissioner will present an annual orientation for the new law clerks. The commissioner will prepare and periodically revise a manual for use by the judicial law clerks.

(f) Improving Administration of Justice. The commissioner will make recommendations to the court regarding procedures. The commissioner will serve on court committees when appointed thereto by the Chief Justice.

(g) Central Staff. The commissioner will employ and train staff attorneys and other personnel to assist the commissioner in carrying out the duties of the commissioner's office. These employees shall serve at the pleasure of the commissioner. To the extent appropriations permit, the court will authorize the commissioner to employ sufficient staff to assist the court in expeditiously fulfilling its duties to promptly fulfill the duties of the office.

(h) Duties To Benefit Full Court. All duties performed by the commissioner are for the benefit of the court as a whole. The court may alter or add to the duties of the commissioner.

(i) Qualifications. The commissioner must be a member in good standing of the Washington State Bar Association and, prior to appointment, have at least 5 years of experience in the practice of law or in a judicially related field.

(j) Oath of Office. Before entering upon the duties of the office, the commissioner will take and file an oath of office in the form prescribed by order of the Supreme Court. The oath will include a requirement that the commissioner adhere to the Code of Judicial Conduct.

(k) Prohibition From Practice of Law. The commissioner and the attorneys employed by the commissioner are prohibited, during term of office, from acting as an attorney.

(l) Deputies. The commissioner may have one or more deputies, to be appointed by the commissioner in writing, to serve during the commissioner's pleasure. The deputies shall have the power to perform any act or duty relating to the commissioner's office that the commissioner has, and the commissioner is responsible for their conduct.

[Amended effective January 3, 2006.]
