

MANDATORY CONTINUING COURT ADMINISTRATOR EDUCATION

(a) Purpose. The protection of the rights of free citizens depends on the existence of an independent and competent judiciary. Courts require skilled court administrators to ensure an open, fair, and efficient justice system. This is particularly true in courts of limited jurisdiction—the court level the public most often turns to for services. This rule establishes minimum requirements for education and training of court administrators and equivalent employees in courts of limited jurisdiction.

(b) Definitions.

(1) “Court administrator,” as used in this rule, means the court administrator or equivalent employee in a court of limited jurisdiction to whom the presiding judge may delegate administrative functions described in GR 29(f). The presiding judge of each district and municipal court shall designate a minimum of one court administrator or equivalent employee per court to comply with this rule.

(2) “Designee,” as used in this rule, means the court administrator or equivalent employee as designated by the presiding judge.

(3) “CEC” means the Board for Judicial Administration’s Court Education Committee.

(4) “Academy” means the Washington Court Administrator Academy.

(5) “DMCMA” means the District and Municipal Court Management Association.

(6) “AOC” means the Administrative Office of the Courts described in chapter 2.56 RCW.

(c) Minimum Requirement. Each designee shall complete a minimum of 15 credit hours of continuing education approved by the CEC every 3 years.

(d) Court Administrator Academy Attendance.

(1) Each designee shall attend and complete the Academy within 12 months of initial appointment.

(2) Each designee holding this position for fewer than 4 years at the time this rule becomes effective shall attend and complete the Academy within 24 months.

(3) The Academy shall consist of no fewer than 15 hours of education and shall include instruction about roles and responsibilities of court administration, ethics, GR 29, executive branch collaboration, court finances, human resources, and AOC resources and requirements.

(4) The Academy will be offered in conjunction with the annual DMCMA program that receives funding allocated by the CEC. Subject to the availability of CEC and AOC resources, the Academy may also be offered remotely.

(5) In the event of extreme hardship, a presiding judge may request on behalf of their designee a delay of not more than one year to complete the Academy.

(6) The local court jurisdiction’s lack of adequate budgeting for the designee to attend the Academy shall not constitute an extreme hardship.

(e) Accreditation. The CEC shall, in consultation with the DMCMA and subject to the approval of the Washington Supreme Court, establish and publish the required curriculum and accreditation standards for the Mandatory Continuing Court Administrator Education.

(f) Compliance. Each designee shall confirm with the AOC on or before January 31 each year, in such form as the AOC shall prescribe, the designee's progress toward the minimum education requirements of section (c) of this rule during the previous calendar year. If the designee does not respond by January 31, their credits will be confirmed by default. A designee who does not have the requisite number of hours at the end of their three-year reporting period will have until March 1 to make up the credits for the previous three-year reporting period. These credits will not count toward their current three-year reporting period.

(g) Noncompliance. Notification of noncompliance shall be reported to the chair(s) of the CEC and the presiding judge of the appropriate court.

[Adopted effective January 1, 2023.]