



What is a Court Administrator

Helpful Information for Those Who Want to Know

Nov. 2022
Issue #7

Have you ever been asked:

“What is a court administrator?”

Or:

“What exactly does a court administrator do?”

This publication covers these questions and provides brief and descriptive information on important aspects about the position of court administrator.



“The differences in professional education and organizational focus between a judge and a court executive can actually improve the governance of the system.”

The Improvement of the Administration of Justice, Eighth Edition, American Bar Association, 2016

“The relationship between the chief judge and the court administrator is the pivotal relationship on a court.”

The Art and Practice of Court Administration, 2007

The Court Administrator and Partners: The Chief Judge, Executive Team, Judges, and the Justice System

Court administrators are called upon to establish, maintain, and leverage relationships for justice system excellence. Relationships may be internal or external, and rely on skills to collaborate, communicate, and problem-solve with others. Consider the sources below and their key points about joint leadership.

- Leading and managing a modern trial court is widely viewed as a two-person job. Leadership structures, techniques, and methods enable presiding judges and court executives to flourish.
Adapted from National Association for Presiding Judges and Court Executive Officers, Presiding Judge and Court Executive Officer Trial Court Governance and Leadership Principles, Roles, and Responsibilities 2021
- Effective judicial and court wide case management is a “team sport.”
Adapted from Redefining Case Management, Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System, University of Denver, 2018
- It’s time to look at courts and court executive teams in a different way – as loosely coupled organizations run via the collaboration as productive pairs. It is essential that the different knowledge set of the presiding judge (law) and court manager (public administration, human resources, or any of a number of other disciplines) be linked and that both understand, trust, and value what the other brings to the table.
Adapted from Two Sides of the Gavel, or Court Leaders as Productive Pairs, National Center for State Courts, Trends in State Courts, 2015
- A culture of collaboration ... is more than ... regular meetings of justice stakeholders ... (it) is working together toward a common purpose. Collaboration is the creation of a...shared vision...shared responsibilities, accountability... transparency.
From Silo to System: What Makes a Criminal Justice System Operate Like a System, Justice Management Institute, 2015

Of Note



Instances to Use Partnerships and Collaboration

Partnerships Enable:

- Governance
- Relationship management
- Coordination

- Joint planning and decision-making
- Problem solving and change progress
- Internal and external interactions and mutual interdependence
- Communication and outreach



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www.courtleader.net
Revised 11-4-2022

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