



FRANKLIN COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT

375 South High St.

Columbus, Ohio 43215-4520

(614) 645-8214

Contract Employment Opportunity

JOB TITLE:	Contract Attorney
DEPARTMENT:	Self Help Resource Center
REPORT TO:	Self Help Resource Center Managing Attorney
SALARY:	\$27.41 per hour/\$57,012.80 annually
HOURS:	Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or as assigned
POSTED:	Dec. 27, 2021
DEADLINE:	until position is filled

Classification: Limited employment, appointment to and continued services in this position is subject to cessation of funding from the City of Columbus.

JOB PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

The Franklin County Municipal Court is one of the largest and busiest municipal courts in Ohio. The court has 14 judges in its general division and one judge in its environmental division. Judges are elected countywide for six-year terms and preside over civil, criminal and traffic cases, and conduct both jury and non-jury trials. The court's jurisdiction includes cases involving traffic offenses, criminal misdemeanors and civil actions where the amount at issue is \$15,000 or less. The environmental division has exclusive jurisdiction to enforce local codes and regulations affecting real property such as fire and building codes.

The court has six magistrates who preside in traffic arraignments, eviction cases and small-claims cases; one magistrate who presides in the environmental division under the supervision of the environmental judge; more than 250 employees; and an annual operating budget of \$20 million. All of the court's employees are unclassified, at-will and serve at the pleasure of the court. The geographic jurisdiction of the court is all of Franklin County and those portions of the City of Columbus that extend beyond the boundaries of Franklin County. The Franklin County Municipal Court is the judicial branch of the City of Columbus government from which it receives the majority of its funding despite its jurisdiction and name.

The Franklin County Municipal Court Self Help Resource Center was created in 2015 as a cost-effective solution to Ohio's access to justice problem. Center staff provide legal information, not legal advice, about civil matters in municipal court including the sealing of criminal records, landlord/tenant disputes, small claims and general claims lawsuits, and commercial debt collection. The center assists the court through the three goals in its mission: to improve court filings, increase access to justice, and provide a positive point of contact between the court and the community.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following duties are typical for this position, but they are not to be construed as exclusive or all-inclusive. Other duties may be required or assigned.

- Provides legal information to self-represented litigants that otherwise would not have access to legal assistance and ensures that visitors are provided with referrals to legal and non-legal resources as necessary
- Plans, manages, reviews, evaluates and proposes new court programs to provide assistance to self-represented litigants across a variety of case types, including record sealing, landlord/tenant disputes, small claims, general division claims and consumer/debt collection
- Participates in community outreach on behalf of the court; serves as a center of knowledge for best practices of serving pro-se litigants for the court; assists with supervising community volunteers; and performs other related duties
- Recommends, facilitates and consults with the managing attorney on the implementation of process, policy and procedural changes to maximize assistance to self-represented litigants
- Stays abreast of technological solutions and other innovations that can enhance the provision of court services to self-represented litigants and leverages those solutions for the benefit of court users
- Works closely with judges, the clerk of courts, and other court staff to ensure that self-represented litigants are receiving the assistance necessary to improve court filings and improve the efficiency of the court system
- Assists in the preparation of a variety of correspondence, periodic and special reports, narrative and statistical reports, informational publications, program documentation, policies, procedures and other written materials; and may access varied databases or use information from various sources to prepare such materials
- Operates a variety of modern office hardware and software
- Maintains effective working relationships with judicial officers, court staff and justice partners engaged in the provision of services to self-represented litigants and alternative dispute resolutions services
- Works with the clerk's office and other court departments to develop forms and educational materials designed to better serve self-represented litigants and improve the quality of filings received by the clerk's office

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a juris-doctorate degree
- Experience with access to justice projects, especially related to record sealing, landlord/tenant disputes, small claims, general division claims and consumer/debt collection
- Ability to serve as a strong advocate for the court and court programs to the public, and to assist the court in providing services to self-represented litigants
- License requirement: active member in good standing with the State Bar of Ohio, are currently awaiting Ohio Bar Exam results or have been approved to sit for the Ohio Bar Exam
- Ability to plan, organize, administer and coordinate projects, programs and operations consistent with court policies and goals
- Ability to exercise excellent time-management, triage and multitasking skills
- Ability to exercise initiative and proactively identify and make improvements to existing processes both within the center and throughout the court

- Experience with exercising excellent independent judgment in dealing with complex and/or sensitive matters and maintaining confidentiality
- Experience with preparing clear and concise correspondence, reports and related written materials; read, understand, interpret and apply a variety of statutes, rules and regulations; analyze complex issues, apply applicable legal authorities and reach legally sound decisions
- Experience with engaging with the public with respect, tact and empathy; work cooperatively and professionally and communicate effectively with judicial officers, court personnel and justice partners
- Experience with analyzing complex matters, formulate recommendations and alternatives, anticipate problems and present ideas and solutions in a logical and justifiable manner often while under pressure
- Ability to communicate emphatically, neutrally and clearly with individuals of diverse socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds including people with disabilities
- Ability to provide high-quality, trauma-informed services to individuals facing stressful and difficult situations
- Operate modern office equipment, including computers, smart phones, tablets and software applications designed to assist self-represented litigants
- Experience working in a team-oriented and collaborative environment
- Ability to effectively and professionally communicate verbally and in writing in English to diverse audiences including the ability to communicate technology terminology for lay audiences
- Pleasant personality, ability to interact, communicate and maintain effective working relationships with judges, other elected officials, employees, law-enforcement officers, lawyers and others conducting business with the court
- Conscious of and sensitive to the diversity within the court's jurisdiction and ability to interact on a regular basis professionally with this diverse population of people from many different geographic, socioeconomic, religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds
- Professional appearance and demeanor appropriate for the position and expected of a representative of elected official.
- Demonstrated dependability, reliability and excellent attendance record
- Patience, objectivity, maturity, effectiveness under stress, initiative, adaptability, leadership and sound judgment

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience working with judges and court staff

SALARY

Salary is not negotiable.

BENEFITS

This contracted position does not include benefits.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The following application materials should be submitted via e-mail to CourtHR@fcmcclerk.com by the application deadline.

- Resume and cover letter describing with some specificity how the applicant’s qualifications match those required for the position
- Completed Franklin County Municipal Court Judges’ application:
<https://municipalcourt.franklincountyohio.gov/About/Employment/Employment-Opportunities>

Receipt of application materials via e-mail will be acknowledged. Applicants invited for interviews will be contacted directly by the court’s human resources assistant. Candidate may be required as a part of the selection process to perform skills tests that could include exercises to test their writing ability, understanding of court systems, knowledge of legal terminology and procedures, and knowledge of Franklin County Municipal Court. The successful applicant will be required to undergo a criminal-record check.

COURT EXPECTATIONS OF CONTRACTOR

The court expects the contractor in completing the duties and responsibilities of the position will adhere to all court policies, guidelines, practices and procedures; act as a role model both inside and outside the court; perform duties as workload necessitates in a timely, accurate and thorough manner; be conscientious about meeting department productivity standards; and communicate regularly with supervisor about department issues.

AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT AND EQUAL-OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Employees of the court are at-will employees and serve at the pleasure of the court; they are not in the classified civil-service system and are not members of bargaining units. The court is an equal-opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, religion, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, disability, military status or genetic information.