



General Assembly

January Session, 2009

**Governor's Bill No. 6385**

LCO No. 3055

\*03055 \_\_\_\_\_ \*

Referred to Committee on Judiciary

Introduced by:

REP. CAFERO, 142<sup>nd</sup> Dist.

SEN. MCKINNEY, 28<sup>th</sup> Dist.

**AN ACT CONCERNING REFORM OF THE PROBATE COURT SYSTEM.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 45a-2 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2011*):

3 The probate districts of the state, for all purposes for which they  
4 were constituted, shall be [as follows:

5 (a) Hartford County

6 The district of Hartford, consisting of the town of Hartford.

7 The district of Avon, consisting of the town of Avon.

8 The district of Berlin, consisting of the towns of Berlin and New  
9 Britain.

10 The district of Bloomfield, consisting of the town of Bloomfield.

- 11 The district of Bristol, consisting of the town of Bristol.
- 12 The district of Burlington, consisting of the town of Burlington.
- 13 The district of Canton, consisting of the town of Canton.
- 14 The district of East Hartford, consisting of the town of East  
15 Hartford.
- 16 The district of East Windsor, consisting of the towns of East  
17 Windsor and South Windsor.
- 18 The district of Enfield, consisting of the town of Enfield.
- 19 The district of Farmington, consisting of the town of Farmington.
- 20 The district of Glastonbury, consisting of the town of Glastonbury.
- 21 The district of Granby, consisting of the town of Granby.
- 22 The district of Manchester, consisting of the town of Manchester.
- 23 The district of Marlborough, consisting of the town of Marlborough.
- 24 The district of Newington, consisting of the towns of Newington,  
25 Rocky Hill and Wethersfield.
- 26 The district of Plainville, consisting of the town of Plainville.
- 27 The district of Simsbury, consisting of the town of Simsbury.
- 28 The district of Southington, consisting of the town of Southington.
- 29 The district of Suffield-East Granby, consisting of the towns of  
30 Suffield and East Granby.
- 31 The district of West Hartford, consisting of the town of West  
32 Hartford.
- 33 The district of Windsor, consisting of the town of Windsor.

34 The district of Windsor Locks, consisting of the town of Windsor  
35 Locks.

36 (b) New Haven County

37 The district of New Haven, consisting of the town of New Haven.

38 The district of Bethany, consisting of the town of Bethany.

39 The district of Branford, consisting of the town of Branford.

40 The district of Cheshire, consisting of the towns of Cheshire and  
41 Prospect.

42 The district of Derby, consisting of the towns of Derby, Ansonia and  
43 Seymour.

44 The district of East Haven, consisting of the town of East Haven.

45 The district of Guilford, consisting of the town of Guilford.

46 The district of Hamden, consisting of the town of Hamden.

47 The district of Madison, consisting of the town of Madison.

48 The district of Meriden, consisting of the town of Meriden.

49 The district of Milford, consisting of the town of Milford.

50 The district of Naugatuck, consisting of the towns of Naugatuck and  
51 Beacon Falls.

52 The district of North Branford, consisting of the town of North  
53 Branford.

54 The district of North Haven, consisting of the town of North Haven.

55 The district of Orange, consisting of the town of Orange.

56 The district of Oxford, consisting of the town of Oxford.

- 57 The district of Southbury, consisting of the town of Southbury.
- 58 The district of Wallingford, consisting of the town of Wallingford.
- 59 The district of Waterbury, consisting of the towns of Waterbury,  
60 Middlebury and Wolcott.
- 61 The district of West Haven, consisting of the town of West Haven.
- 62 The district of Woodbridge, consisting of the town of Woodbridge.
- 63 (c) New London County
- 64 The district of New London, consisting of the towns of New London  
65 and Waterford.
- 66 The district of Norwich, consisting of the towns of Norwich,  
67 Franklin, Lisbon, Preston, Sprague and Voluntown.
- 68 The district of Bozrah, consisting of the town of Bozrah.
- 69 The district of Colchester, consisting of the towns of Colchester and  
70 Lebanon.
- 71 The district of East Lyme, consisting of the town of East Lyme.
- 72 The district of Griswold, consisting of the town of Griswold.
- 73 The district of Groton, consisting of the town of Groton.
- 74 The district of Ledyard, consisting of the town of Ledyard.
- 75 The district of Lyme, consisting of the town of Lyme.
- 76 The district of Montville, consisting of the town of Montville.
- 77 The district of North Stonington, consisting of the town of North  
78 Stonington.
- 79 The district of Old Lyme, consisting of the town of Old Lyme.

- 80 The district of Salem, consisting of the town of Salem.
- 81 The district of Stonington, consisting of the town of Stonington.
- 82 (d) Fairfield County
- 83 The district of Bridgeport, consisting of the town of Bridgeport.
- 84 The district of Danbury, consisting of the town of Danbury.
- 85 The district of Bethel, consisting of the town of Bethel.
- 86 The district of Brookfield, consisting of the town of Brookfield.
- 87 The district of Darien, consisting of the town of Darien.
- 88 The district of Fairfield, consisting of the town of Fairfield.
- 89 The district of Greenwich, consisting of the town of Greenwich.
- 90 The district of New Canaan, consisting of the town of New Canaan.
- 91 The district of New Fairfield, consisting of the towns of New  
92 Fairfield and Sherman.
- 93 The district of Newtown, consisting of the town of Newtown.
- 94 The district of Norwalk, consisting of the towns of Norwalk and  
95 Wilton.
- 96 The district of Redding, consisting of the town of Redding.
- 97 The district of Ridgefield, consisting of the town of Ridgefield.
- 98 The district of Shelton, consisting of the town of Shelton.
- 99 The district of Stamford, consisting of the town of Stamford.
- 100 The district of Stratford, consisting of the town of Stratford.
- 101 The district of Trumbull, consisting of the towns of Trumbull,

102 Easton and Monroe.

103 The district of Westport, consisting of the towns of Westport and  
104 Weston.

105 (e) Windham County

106 The district of Windham, consisting of the towns of Windham and  
107 Scotland.

108 The district of Ashford, consisting of the town of Ashford.

109 The district of Brooklyn, consisting of the town of Brooklyn.

110 The district of Eastford, consisting of the towns of Eastford and  
111 Chaplin.

112 The district of Hampton, consisting of the town of Hampton.

113 The district of Killingly, consisting of the town of Killingly.

114 The district of Plainfield, consisting of the towns of Plainfield,  
115 Canterbury and Sterling.

116 The district of Pomfret, consisting of the town of Pomfret.

117 The district of Putnam, consisting of the town of Putnam.

118 The district of Thompson, consisting of the town of Thompson.

119 The district of Woodstock, consisting of the town of Woodstock.

120 (f) Litchfield County

121 The district of Litchfield, consisting of the towns of Litchfield, Kent,  
122 Morris and Warren.

123 The district of Harwinton, consisting of the town of Harwinton.

124 The district of New Milford, consisting of the towns of New Milford

125 and Bridgewater.

126 The district of the Northwest Corner, consisting of the towns of  
127 Canaan, Cornwall, Norfolk, North Canaan, Salisbury and Sharon.

128 The district of Plymouth, consisting of the town of Plymouth.

129 The district of Roxbury, consisting of the town of Roxbury.

130 The district of Thomaston, consisting of the town of Thomaston.

131 The district of Torrington, consisting of the towns of Torrington and  
132 Goshen.

133 The district of Washington, consisting of the town of Washington.

134 The district of Winchester, consisting of the towns of Winchester  
135 and Colebrook.

136 The district of Woodbury, consisting of the towns of Woodbury,  
137 Bethlehem and Watertown.

138 (g) Middlesex County

139 The district of Middletown, consisting of the towns of Middletown,  
140 Cromwell, Durham and Middlefield.

141 The district of Clinton, consisting of the town of Clinton.

142 The district of Deep River, consisting of the town of Deep River.

143 The district of East Haddam, consisting of the town of East  
144 Haddam.

145 The district of East Hampton, consisting of the town of East  
146 Hampton.

147 The district of Essex, consisting of the town of Essex.

148 The district of Haddam, consisting of the town of Haddam.

149 The district of Killingworth, consisting of the town of Killingworth.

150 The district of Old Saybrook, consisting of the town of Old  
151 Saybrook.

152 The district of Portland, consisting of the town of Portland.

153 The district of Saybrook, consisting of the town of Chester.

154 The district of Westbrook, consisting of the town of Westbrook.

155 (h) Tolland County

156 The district of Tolland, consisting of the towns of Tolland and  
157 Willington.

158 The district of Andover, consisting of the towns of Andover, Bolton  
159 and Columbia.

160 The district of Ellington, consisting of the towns of Ellington and  
161 Vernon.

162 The district of Hebron, consisting of the town of Hebron.

163 The district of Mansfield, consisting of the towns of Coventry and  
164 Mansfield.

165 The district of Stafford, consisting of the towns of Stafford, Somers  
166 and Union.

167 (i) Litchfield and Hartford Counties

168 The district of New Hartford, consisting of the towns of New  
169 Hartford, Barkhamsted and Hartland] of a number equal to the  
170 number of state senatorial districts and each district shall be comprised  
171 of the towns or parts thereof that correspond to the boundaries of a  
172 state senatorial district as set forth according to law.

173 Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 45a-8a of the general statutes is



174 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*  
175 *January 1, 2011*):

176 (b) The Probate Court Administrator shall, within available  
177 resources, establish a regional children's probate court in a [region]  
178 probate district that shall consist of, [the probate districts of] or be  
179 adjacent to, one or more of the following: New Haven, Branford, East  
180 Haven, Hamden, Milford, North Branford, North Haven, Orange,  
181 West Haven and Woodbridge. In establishing such court, the Probate  
182 Court Administrator shall consult with the probate [judges] judge of  
183 such [districts, each of whom] district who may participate on a  
184 voluntary basis.

185 Sec. 3. Subsection (a) of section 46b-150h of the general statutes is  
186 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*  
187 *January 1, 2011*):

188 (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 46b-150f and 46b-  
189 150g, the Probate Court Administrator shall establish, within available  
190 appropriations, a pilot program in [the] a probate district that includes  
191 all or part of Middletown for the purpose of exercising jurisdiction  
192 over and administering youth in crisis cases arising in said district in  
193 which the youths in crisis are not truants.

194 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2011*) Notwithstanding the  
195 provisions of section 45a-92 of the general statutes: (1) The salary of  
196 each probate court judge shall be set by the Probate Court  
197 Administrator based upon the weighted workload of each judge's  
198 district, and (2) no probate court judge shall receive an annual salary of  
199 less than eighty thousand dollars or more than one hundred ten  
200 thousand dollars. The Probate Court Administration shall annually  
201 review the salary of each probate court judge.

202 Sec. 5. Section 45a-18 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
203 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

204 (a) There shall be a court of probate in each probate district held by  
205 one judge elected by the electors residing in such district at the state  
206 election in 1974, and every four years thereafter.

207 (b) Each judge of probate shall hold office for four years beginning  
208 on the Wednesday after the first Monday in January next following his  
209 election.

210 (c) Each judge of probate, before entering upon his duties, shall be  
211 sworn and shall record his certificate of election upon the records of  
212 his court of probate.

213 (d) [He] Each judge of probate shall appoint a clerk and may  
214 appoint one or more assistant clerks, each of whom shall be sworn to a  
215 faithful performance of his duties and shall, when required, give  
216 whatever bond the judge deems necessary. Each such clerk shall  
217 continue in office until he resigns, is removed or is superseded.

218 (e) Each judge of probate elected for a term that begins on or after  
219 January 5, 2011, shall be a member of the bar of the state of  
220 Connecticut and shall have been a member for not less than ten years.

221 Sec. 6. Section 45a-19 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
222 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2011*):

223 Each judge of probate shall be an elector [of a town] within the  
224 district in which [he] the judge is elected to serve. If for any reason [he]  
225 the judge ceases to be an elector [of a town] within such district, [he]  
226 the judge shall thereupon cease to hold office in such district, and such  
227 office shall be deemed vacant.

228 Sec. 7. Section 45a-8 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
229 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2011*):

230 (a) The town or towns comprising each probate district shall  
231 provide court facilities meeting the minimum standards required by  
232 this section. If a probate district consists of more than one town, the

233 expense shall be allocated to the towns in proportion to their grand  
234 lists last perfected. Such court facilities shall include: (1) Office space  
235 appropriate for the conduct of judicial business, including (A) a room  
236 for the judge of probate sufficient in size for ordinary matters in which  
237 judicial proceedings may be conducted in private, (B) a separate room  
238 for the court staff, and (C) on a prearranged basis, access to a larger  
239 hearing room for the conduct of unusually large court hearings; (2)  
240 furniture and furnishings appropriate to a court facility; (3) use and  
241 maintenance of a copying machine and the necessary supplies; (4) use  
242 and maintenance of court record systems and equipment, including  
243 such record books and electronic, digital, microfilming or similar  
244 systems required to maintain, provide access to and produce court  
245 records, and the necessary supplies for such systems, equipment and  
246 records; (5) the necessary stationery, postage and other related  
247 supplies in order that the court may properly carry out its duties; (6)  
248 typing equipment with which to complete the necessary records; (7)  
249 basic telephone service, which shall include all local calls; (8) if a court  
250 is computerized, a dedicated telephone line and maintenance of the  
251 computer equipment; and (9) adequate liability, fire, loss, theft and  
252 replacement insurance on the furniture, furnishings, equipment, court  
253 facilities and the records of the court.

254 [(b) If a town or towns comprising a probate district and the  
255 responsible municipal official or officials within such probate district  
256 fail to provide the court facilities required by subsection (a) of this  
257 section, the Probate Court Administrator shall offer in writing to meet  
258 with the judge of probate of the district and the responsible official or  
259 officials to discuss such court facilities. After discussion and  
260 consideration of the circumstances of the court operations, the Probate  
261 Court Administrator may waive or modify the application of a  
262 particular requirement of subsection (a) of this section for court  
263 facilities.]

264 [(c) (b) If suitable court facilities are not provided in accordance  
265 with subsection (a) [or (b)] of this section: (1) The Probate Court

266 Administrator shall provide written notice, by first class mail, to the  
267 judge of probate of the district and the chief executive officer of the  
268 town in which the court is located, on or before October first of any  
269 year in which suitable court facilities are not so provided. Such notice  
270 shall specify the requirements of subsection (a) or (b) of this section  
271 that are not met and shall direct the submission of a plan as required  
272 by this subdivision. Not later than January first of the year following  
273 the year in which such notice is provided, such chief executive officer,  
274 or his or her representative, shall file with the Probate Court  
275 Administrator a plan and time frame for meeting such requirements  
276 and providing suitable court facilities; (2) not later than February first  
277 of the year following the year in which notice is provided under  
278 subdivision (1) of this section, the Probate Court Administrator shall  
279 submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General  
280 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary  
281 concerning the failure of the probate district to provide the required  
282 court facilities, which report may include a recommendation that the  
283 probate district be abolished as a separate district and be consolidated  
284 with a contiguous district where suitable court facilities can be  
285 provided; or (3) if, in the opinion of the Probate Court Administrator,  
286 abolition of the district is not in the public interest and judicial action is  
287 necessary to enforce the provision of suitable court facilities, the  
288 Probate Court Administrator shall bring an action in the Superior  
289 Court to enforce the requirements for the provision of suitable court  
290 facilities.

291 [(d) Any town located in a probate district that desires to (1)  
292 consolidate such probate district with one or more districts, (2) be  
293 removed from such probate district to a separate district established  
294 for any such town, or (3) be located in another probate district, may, by  
295 resolution of its legislative body, petition the General Assembly for  
296 such consolidation, separation and creation of a new probate district or  
297 relocation. The Probate Court Administrator shall provide such  
298 assistance in the preparation of the petition as the officials of the town  
299 or towns may request. At the time of submission of a petition to the

300 General Assembly, a copy of the petition shall be sent to the judges of  
301 probate in the probate districts to be affected. No probate district may  
302 be consolidated with another district until the expiration of the term of  
303 office of any probate judge in an affected probate district.]

304 [(e)] (c) Each judge of probate shall provide suitable records and  
305 supplies, in accordance with subsection (a) of this section, for the court  
306 in the judge's district. The judge of probate shall cause a complete  
307 record to be made of all orders passed by such court and of all wills,  
308 inventories, distributions, accounts, bonds and returns made to or  
309 lodged with such court. The expense of records, microfilming or the  
310 equipment to produce records, and of supplies which the judge deems  
311 necessary, shall be paid, upon the order of the judge, by the town or  
312 towns composing the district in proportion to their grand lists last  
313 perfected.

314 [(f)] (d) When the Probate Court Administrator, by regulation,  
315 requires that the courts of probate use specified forms, education  
316 materials, supplies or equipment not otherwise required by this  
317 section, they shall be furnished by the Probate Court Administrator  
318 and the expense paid from the Probate Court Administration Fund  
319 established under section 45a-82.

320 Sec. 8. Section 45a-77 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
321 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2011*):

322 (a) The Probate Court Administrator may attend to any matters that  
323 the Probate Court Administrator considers necessary for the efficient  
324 operation of the courts of probate and for the expeditious dispatch and  
325 proper conduct of the business of such courts. The Probate Court  
326 Administrator shall administer and enforce the provisions of this  
327 chapter and the regulations issued under this section, and shall ensure  
328 performance of the duties of judges of probate and clerks of the courts  
329 of probate in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and such  
330 regulations. The Probate Court Administrator may make  
331 recommendations to the General Assembly for legislation for the

332 improvement of the administration of the courts of probate.

333 (b) (1) The Probate Court Administrator may issue and shall enforce  
334 regulations, provided such regulations are approved in accordance  
335 with subsection (c) of this section. Such regulations shall be binding on  
336 all courts of probate and shall concern the following matters for the  
337 administration of the probate court system: (A) Auditing, accounting,  
338 statistical, billing, recording, filing and other court procedures; (B)  
339 reassignment and transfer of cases; (C) training of court personnel and  
340 continuing education programs for judges of probate and court  
341 personnel; and (D) the enforcement of the provisions of this chapter  
342 and the regulations issued pursuant to this section, including, but not  
343 limited to, recovery of expenses associated with any such enforcement,  
344 as permitted by such regulations.

345 (2) The Probate Court Administrator may adopt regulations, in  
346 accordance with chapter 54, provided such regulations are approved in  
347 accordance with subsection (c) of this section. Such regulations shall be  
348 binding on all courts of probate and shall concern: (A) The availability  
349 of judges; (B) court facilities, personnel and records; [(C) hours of court  
350 operation;] and [(D)] (C) telephone service.

351 (c) (1) Either the Probate Court Administrator or the executive  
352 committee of the Connecticut Probate Assembly may propose  
353 regulations authorized under subsection (b) of this section. Any  
354 regulation proposed by the Probate Court Administrator shall be  
355 submitted to the executive committee of the Connecticut Probate  
356 Assembly for approval. Any regulation proposed by the executive  
357 committee of the Connecticut Probate Assembly shall be submitted to  
358 the Probate Court Administrator for approval. If either the Probate  
359 Court Administrator or the executive committee of the Connecticut  
360 Probate Assembly fails to approve a proposed regulation, such  
361 proposed regulation may be submitted to a panel of three Superior  
362 Court judges appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The  
363 panel of judges, after consideration of the positions of the Probate

364 Court Administrator and the executive committee of the Connecticut  
365 Probate Assembly, shall either approve the proposed regulation or  
366 reject the proposed regulation.

367 (2) Any proposed new regulation and any change in an existing  
368 regulation issued under this section on or after July 1, 2007, shall be  
369 submitted to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly  
370 having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary for approval or  
371 disapproval in its entirety, provided, if more than one proposed new  
372 regulation or change in an existing regulation is submitted at the same  
373 time, said committee shall approve or disapprove all such proposed  
374 new regulations and changes in existing regulations together in their  
375 entirety. Unless disapproved by said committee within ninety days of  
376 the date of such submittal, each such regulation shall become effective  
377 on the date specified in such regulation, but not in any event until  
378 ninety days after promulgation.

379 (d) The Probate Court Administrator shall regularly review the  
380 auditing, accounting, statistical, billing, recording, filing,  
381 administrative and other procedures of the courts of probate.

382 (e) The Probate Court Administrator shall, personally, or by an  
383 authorized designee of the Probate Court Administrator who has been  
384 admitted to the practice of law in this state for at least five years, visit  
385 each court of probate at least once during each two-year period to  
386 examine the records and files of such court in the presence of the judge  
387 of the court or the judge's authorized designee. The Probate Court  
388 Administrator shall make any additional inquiries that the Probate  
389 Court Administrator considers appropriate to ascertain whether the  
390 business of the court, including the charging of costs and payments to  
391 the State Treasurer, has been conducted in accordance with law, rules  
392 of the courts of probate, regulations issued under this section and the  
393 canons of judicial ethics, and to obtain information concerning the  
394 business of the courts of probate which is necessary for the Probate  
395 Court Administrator to perform properly the duties of the office.

396 (f) The Probate Court Administrator shall establish and maintain a  
397 budget for the probate court system, which budget shall (1) reflect all  
398 costs related to the group hospitalization and medical and surgical  
399 insurance plan, dental insurance plan and retirement benefits for  
400 probate judges and employees, and (2) be funded solely by revenue  
401 generated by the probate courts. The Probate Court Administrator  
402 shall allocate the budgets for each court based upon the weighted  
403 workload of the court. The Probate Court Administrator shall ensure  
404 that all staff, including judges, who are offered insurance or retirement  
405 benefits work a minimum of twenty hours per week.

406 Sec. 9. Section 45a-84 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
407 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2011*):

408 (a) On or before April first of each year, the Probate Court  
409 Administrator shall prepare a proposed budget in accordance with  
410 section 45a-77, as amended by this act, for the next succeeding fiscal  
411 year beginning July first, for the appropriate expenditures of funds  
412 from the Probate Court Administration Fund to carry out the statutory  
413 duties of the Probate Court Administrator and the probate courts. The  
414 Probate Court Administrator shall submit the proposed budget to the  
415 executive committee of the Probate Assembly for review. The  
416 executive committee shall return the proposed budget to the Probate  
417 Court Administrator no later than May first, together with its  
418 comments and recommendations concerning the proposed  
419 expenditures. The Probate Court Administrator shall thereafter  
420 prepare a proposed final budget, including such changes  
421 recommended by the executive committee as the Probate Court  
422 Administrator deems appropriate. On or before May fifteenth, the  
423 Probate Court Administrator shall transmit the proposed final budget  
424 to the Chief Court Administrator for approval, together with the  
425 comments and recommendations of the executive committee of the  
426 Probate Assembly. On or before June fifteenth of that year, the Chief  
427 Court Administrator shall take such action on the budget, or any  
428 portion thereof, as the Chief Court Administrator deems appropriate.



429 If the Chief Court Administrator fails to act on the proposed budget on  
430 or before June fifteenth, the budget shall be deemed approved as  
431 proposed.

432 (b) The Probate Court Administrator may, from time to time,  
433 request authority from the Chief Court Administrator to expend  
434 additional money from the Probate Court Administration Fund to  
435 respond to any matter that could not have been reasonably anticipated  
436 in the regular budget process. A copy of all such requests shall be sent  
437 to the president judge of the Connecticut Probate Assembly. If the  
438 Chief Court Administrator fails to act on the request within twenty-  
439 one calendar days of receipt of the request, the request shall be deemed  
440 approved.

441 (c) The Probate Court Administrator may authorize such  
442 expenditures from the Probate Court Administration Fund for  
443 emergency purposes as from time to time may be necessary, provided  
444 the aggregate amount of such emergency expenditures for any one  
445 fiscal year shall not exceed five thousand dollars. A report on each  
446 such expenditure shall be sent to the Chief Court Administrator and  
447 the president judge of the Connecticut Probate Assembly within ten  
448 days after the expenditure is made.

449 Sec. 10. Section 45a-79c of the general statutes is repealed and the  
450 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2011*):

451 (a) A court of probate shall be open to the public for the conduct of  
452 court business not less than [twenty] forty hours each week, Monday  
453 through Friday, excluding holidays, on a regular schedule between the  
454 hours of eight o'clock a.m. and five o'clock p.m. The judge of probate  
455 of a probate district may close a court temporarily owing to inclement  
456 weather, an emergency or other good cause. Such judge shall  
457 immediately give notice of a temporary closing to the Probate Court  
458 Administrator, together with the reason for such closing and the date  
459 and time when the court will reopen.

460 (b) The Probate Court Administrator may, for good cause shown,  
461 modify the requirements of this section.

462 Sec. 11. Section 45a-34 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
463 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2011*):

464 The following words and phrases as used in sections 45a-34 to 45a-  
465 54, inclusive, as amended by this act, and 45a-75 except as otherwise  
466 provided, shall have the following meanings:

467 (1) "Average final compensation" means, in the case of a judge of  
468 probate, the average annual compensation for the three highest paid  
469 years of service while serving in the probate court to which the judge  
470 was elected or by citation to any other court or courts, provided, for  
471 purposes of this section, the compensation for any one year shall not  
472 exceed the maximum net annual income currently allowed by law,  
473 and, in the case of an employee, the average annual rate of pay during  
474 the employee's three highest paid years of employment;

475 (2) "Credited service" means (A) all periods during which a person  
476 held the office of judge of probate and any period of service elected by  
477 a judge pursuant to section 45a-36a, as amended by this act, with  
478 respect to a probate district merger occurring prior to January 1, 2011,  
479 or (B) any period during which a person served as an employee of any  
480 probate court or (C) subject to the requirements of subsections (a) and  
481 (b) of section 45a-54, a period of not more than three years for service  
482 as a member of the General Assembly and military service or (D) the  
483 aggregate of any periods of service provided for in subparagraphs (A),  
484 (B) and (C) of this subsection;

485 (3) "Employee" means a person employed by any probate court for  
486 more than four hundred thirty hours per year or a person who served  
487 for more than four hundred thirty hours per year performing under  
488 any contract of employment with any court of probate;

489 (4) "Fund" means the retirement fund established by section 45a-35;

490 (5) "Member" means any judge of probate or employee who is or  
491 may become eligible for retirement benefits under sections 45a-34 to  
492 45a-54, inclusive, as amended by this act, and 45a-75;

493 (6) "Normal retirement age" means the age of sixty-two for any  
494 judge of probate or any employee;

495 (7) "Old Age and Survivors System" means the system established  
496 under Title II of the Social Security Act, as amended;

497 (8) "Pay" means the salary, wages or earnings of an employee, but  
498 does not include any fees or allowances for expenses;

499 (9) "Retirement Commission" means the State Retirement  
500 Commission;

501 (10) "Social Security Act" means the Act of Congress, approved  
502 August 14, 1935, Chapter 531, 49 Stat. 620, officially cited as the Social  
503 Security Act, including regulations issued pursuant thereto, as such act  
504 has been and may from time to time be amended.

505 Sec. 12. Section 45a-36a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
506 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2011*):

507 Any judge of probate in office on or after October 1, 1997, whose  
508 probate district is merged with another district prior to January 1, 2011,  
509 and who has not been elected to a term which begins at the time of, or  
510 subsequent to, such consolidation, (1) may elect to receive four years of  
511 credited service, as defined in subdivision (2) of section 45a-34, as  
512 amended by this act, (2) may elect to receive a reduction of his  
513 retirement age of not more than four years pursuant to subsection (a)  
514 of section 45a-36 or (3) may elect any combination of subdivisions (1)  
515 and (2) of this section, provided such combination shall not exceed  
516 four years in total.

517 Sec. 13. Subsection (a) of section 45a-43 of the general statutes is  
518 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*

519 *January 1, 2011*):

520 (a) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section and  
521 subdivision (5) of this subsection, each married member shall, subject  
522 to regulations issued by the Retirement Commission, make an election  
523 in accordance with subsections (d) and (e) of this section to receive a  
524 reduced retirement allowance with the provision that the reduced  
525 retirement allowance, or such part which is specified by such person in  
526 his notice of election, shall be continued after his death to his spouse  
527 named in the election for as long as his spouse lives. The reduced  
528 retirement allowance shall be in an amount which the Retirement  
529 Commission determines to be the actuarial equivalent of the retirement  
530 allowance that would have been payable had not the election been  
531 made. A member may elect to receive his retirement allowance in  
532 accordance with any of the following options: (1) A reduced amount  
533 payable to the member for his lifetime with the provision that after his  
534 death his spouse, if surviving, shall be entitled to receive a lifetime  
535 income equal to fifty per cent of the reduced monthly amount payable  
536 to the member; (2) a reduced amount payable to the member for his  
537 lifetime with the provision that after his death his contingent annuitant  
538 shall be entitled to receive a lifetime income equal to either fifty or one  
539 hundred per cent of the reduced amount payable to the member; (3) a  
540 reduced amount payable to the member for his lifetime with the  
541 provision that if he shall die within either a ten or twenty-year period  
542 following the date his retirement income commences, whichever is  
543 selected by the member, the reduced amount continues to his  
544 contingent annuitant for the balance of the ten or twenty-year period;  
545 (4) an amount payable to the member for his lifetime with no  
546 payments continuing after the member's death, except for a lump sum  
547 death benefit equal to the member's retirement contributions plus  
548 interest reduced by the federal tax exclusion ratio times the income  
549 payments made to the member from the fund; or (5) for [judges] any  
550 judge of probate eligible for retirement benefits under section 45a-36a,  
551 as amended by this act, an unreduced amount payable to the member  
552 for his lifetime with the provision that after his death his spouse, if

553 surviving, shall be entitled to receive a lifetime income equal to fifty  
 554 per cent of the unreduced monthly amount payable to the member. If a  
 555 member who has been married for one year dies before retirement but  
 556 after completion of the age and service requirements that would  
 557 permit him to retire upon his own application, the retirement  
 558 allowance shall be payable to his spouse commencing at his death, in  
 559 accordance with regulations to be established by the Retirement  
 560 Commission.

561       Sec. 14. (*Effective January 1, 2011*) Sections 45a-3 to 45a-6k, inclusive,  
 562 of the general statutes are repealed.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	45a-2
Sec. 2	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	45a-8a(b)
Sec. 3	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	46b-150h(a)
Sec. 4	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	45a-18
Sec. 6	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	45a-19
Sec. 7	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	45a-8
Sec. 8	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	45a-77
Sec. 9	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	45a-84
Sec. 10	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	45a-79c
Sec. 11	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	45a-34
Sec. 12	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	45a-36a
Sec. 13	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	45a-43(a)
Sec. 14	<i>January 1, 2011</i>	Repealer section

**Statement of Purpose:**

To implement the Governor's budget recommendations.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*