



# Recommended Steps and Practices for the Recruitment, Selection, and Retention of State Court Administrators



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# Introduction

While traditionally many State Court Administrators (SCAs) may have enjoyed a long tenure in their positions, there has at the same time been an increasingly high turnover of SCAs in recent years.

Regardless of how long the incumbent SCA has been in place, many states have been or will be faced with the daunting task of recruiting and selecting a well-qualified SCA. To assist states meeting this challenge, the CCJ/COSCA Court Management Committee has developed the following recommended steps and practices. These recommendations first published in 2016 stem from the knowledge and experience of Committee members. They have also been broadly informed by an extensive survey distributed by the Committee to all members of COSCA and to six past presidents of NACM. Almost 35 states responded to the survey, reflecting a rich array of experience. Responses to a second survey done in 2019 formed the basis for updates to the recommended steps and practices that strengthen the recommended strategies for recruitment and retention of SCAs.

The recommended steps and practices are organized into the following five broad categories:

- (1) getting started by ensuring that you have the right work environment for the right candidate;
- (2) developing and implementing your search strategy;
- (3) screening and evaluating your candidates;
- (4) making your selection; and
- (5) developing an onboarding plan and strategies.

After reading through the recommended steps and practices, you will also find a list of resources available from CCJ, COSCA, NACM, and the NCSC that can help you in your search and selection efforts.

**To assist states meeting this challenge, the CCJ/COSCA Court Management Committee has developed recommended steps and practices.**



## Getting Started — Ensuring the right work environment for the right candidate

When faced with a current or pending vacancy in your SCA position, make sure that all the foundational elements for the best hire are in place. Before you begin your search, know what you are looking for in a successful candidate, and be confident that you will be providing the selected candidate with a work environment that will foster, and not hinder, his or her success in the position.

### The right work environment

1. Examine your state court system in terms of its size, governance structure, funding and reporting relationships, and consider the impact of these elements on the role and responsibilities of the SCA.
2. Make sure that meeting the constitutional, statutory, and rule requirements for the SCA role are considered. There should also be a SCA job description in place and appropriately reflective of the current job responsibilities as well as the needs and desires of the Supreme Court. See Appendix A for a sample list of SCA job responsibilities.
3. Consider the following questions in the context of hiring a new SCA.
  - ◆ What are the mission, values and operating tenets or standards of your state court system?
  - ◆ What are the Supreme Court's strategic objectives that it would like the new SCA to achieve?
  - ◆ What makes this an attractive position and opportunity for a candidate?

The ability of a new SCA to lead will be based on an understanding or knowledge of the culture of the judiciary. Providing SCA candidates with an understanding of the current culture, to include material strengths and challenges, will be essential. To assist in providing candidates with this understanding, consider undertaking a review of the current culture of the judiciary to identify and highlight its salient characteristics.

4. Review the salary and benefit package of the SCA position. Is the SCA salary and benefit package reasonably competitive? Is there anything that the Supreme Court can do to make it more competitive?

#### Salary.

- ◆ SCA salaries are often set by statute and may be linked (by statute, rule, or practice) to the salary of a judge. From a Judicial Branch perspective, it is preferable if the SCA salary is set by the hiring authority (e.g., Supreme Court, Judicial Council, Chief Justice, etc.).
- ◆ In setting the SCA salary, the hiring authority should review:
  - Salaries within the Judicial Branch. While linking the SCA salary to that of a judge might be a politically palatable alternative, the qualifications and responsibilities for the SCA position, as well as the differences in the benefits package, might warrant a higher level of compensation for the SCA.
  - Salaries of SCA positions nationwide, [as posted here](#). The SCA salary should be at least comparable to the salaries of SCAs in similarly situated states.
  - Other executive-level compensation within state government in your state.

#### Benefit Package.

- ◆ Benefit packages for SCAs are typically those provided to state employees, such as health insurance and a retirement plan.
- ◆ One area where additional benefits might be provided to SCAs is flexibility with

respect to such matters as leave, workhours and workspace. Given the high level of responsibility and stress associated with the work of a SCA, incumbents should be encouraged to strike a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives. Allowing a good deal of flexibility in leave, workhours and workspace would serve to facilitate this balance. For example, the SCA should not only be provided with a generous and flexible leave allowance but should also be encouraged to actually take a reasonable amount of leave off from work

- ◆ Other potential areas for an enhanced benefit package relate to membership and participation in professional organizations (e.g., Bar Association, COSCA, etc.) on both the state and national levels, as well as opportunities for professional and educational development by way of university programs or other offerings within the national court community. Such membership and educational development opportunities on the part of SCAs should be encouraged and financed through the payment of membership and tuition fees and travel expenses.

5. Assess the principal challenges presently facing the courts of your state and look at what qualities a SCA candidate should possess to be able to successfully address those challenges. The challenges facing your court system today might be very different than those facing your courts the last time an SCA was appointed.

6. Perhaps most importantly, take a close look at the “climate” of the Judiciary, particularly the Supreme Court, as it pertains to the working environment for the performance of the duties and responsibilities of the SCA. Is there overall collegiality on the Supreme Court with respect to the administrative governance of the Judicial Branch, or is there a high degree of dissension or turmoil that will create barriers or impediments to effectively and timely carrying out the responsibilities of the SCA position? Such dissension or turmoil on the Court will not only have a chilling effect on the number of qualified candidates interested in applying for the SCA position, but, more problematic, it can also have a negative impact on the new SCA’s prospects for success and longevity on the job. This same issue of collegiality vs. dissension also applies, but to a lesser extent, to the relationship between the Administrative Office of the Courts and the trial courts. Collegiality on the Supreme Court is crucial in order to provide an environment that will give the new SCA the best chance for success.
7. Understand the reasons for SCA turnover rates, both in your state and nationwide. (As indicated above, as of 2019, there are only 14 SCAs who have served for seven years or more.) The reported primary reason for SCA turnover nationally is a change in Chief Justice. Related to this primary reason, as discussed above, is discord among members of the Supreme Court. Other reasons are retirement of the incumbent SCA, as well as SCA job stress and burnout.

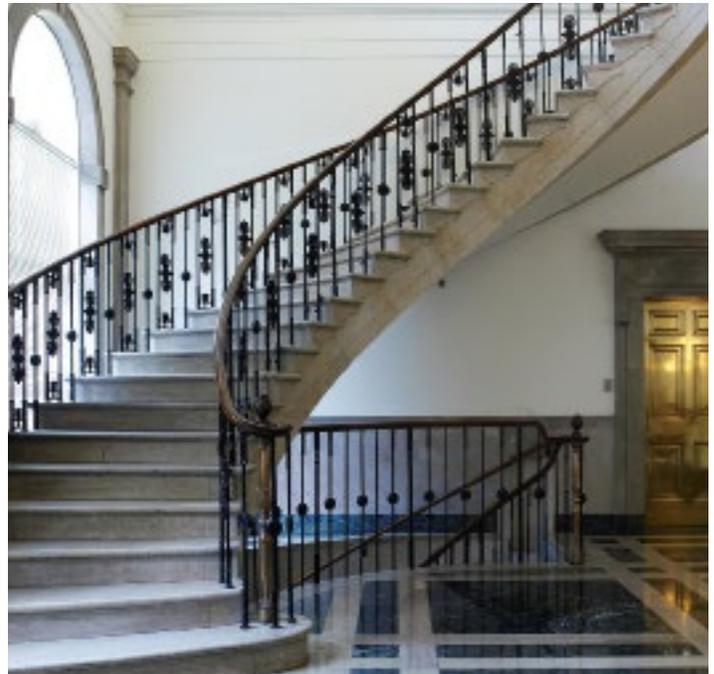


## The right candidate

1. Be aware of the key competencies and experience needed for the new SCA to succeed in the next five-ten years. Understand the personal and professional characteristics required of an ideal candidate.
2. Consider whether you are seeking a candidate with attributes similar to, or different than, the incumbent SCA.
3. Key leadership competencies for an SCA include the following:
  - ◆ The ability to manage change within the court system. This includes the ability to thrive in a demanding, fast-paced environment, to navigate ambiguity, to balance the needs of multiple stakeholders, and to provide innovative solutions to complex organizational problems.
  - ◆ The capacity to understand and appreciate the challenges and opportunities presented by technology, including knowledge and experience related to the management of technology professionals and major technology operations and projects, as well as a proven ability to effectively promote and support an overarching information technology business strategy.
  - ◆ The capacity to appreciate both the internal and external constituencies that an SCA must deal with, and the need to be an effective communicator and listener in relating to these constituencies. The SCA must be able to work collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders including judges, court staff, legislators, justice system partners, and the public.
  - ◆ The ability to plan strategically and to motivate staff.
4. Other important leadership competencies to consider are the ability to:
  - ◆ Inspire commitment and collaboration on the part of Judicial Branch employees, and to create a positive work environment among an increasingly diverse workforce.
5. The two most important personal and professional characteristics to consider for an ideal SCA are:
  - ◆ Set realistic goals and deliver on them.
  - ◆ Commit and adhere to the principles of accountability, professionalism and public service.
  - ◆ Recruit exceptional employees, and to empower those employees to do good work.
  - ◆ Manage large and complex projects from conception to completion.
  - ◆ Be politically astute, media savvy, flexible, and emergency-ready.
6. Additional important personal and professional characteristics to think about in terms of an ideal candidate:
  - ◆ Strong commitment to public service and to mission over politics, ego, and tradition.
  - ◆ Willingness to innovate and the courage to push forward in the face of resistance.
  - ◆ Ability to constantly and quickly learn new skills.
  - ◆ Good crisis management skills.
7. In terms of the knowledge and experiences of an ideal candidate, having worked in a court system may be considered highly desirable, but is not necessarily a prerequisite. Experience at a leadership or management level within the judiciary is particularly important. A second area of experience is other government service, particularly involving legislative or inter-branch issues. A third area of experience is general leadership or management responsibilities in a large or complex organization, requiring a basic understanding of

fundamental matters such as strategic planning, fiscal policy and budgeting, IT management and personnel.

- ◆ Important management experience might include working in a multi-tiered environment involving diverse types of employees. Experience working with elected and other government officials is critical as courts move toward more cooperative involvement between state and local governments. It is helpful if budget and finance experience includes not only the standard appropriation processes but also involvement with grants (federal, state and private), bond financing of capital projects, state-county-city joint projects, and other funding mechanisms.
- ◆ See Appendix B for a sample list of knowledge and experience requirements for SCA a candidate.



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## Developing and Implementing Your Search Strategy

Once you have all the foundational elements in place, it is time to develop and implement your search strategy. There are options. Take those steps that are best designed to meet your objectives.

1. Consider all the possibilities for candidates. Ask if there are good candidates internally that you might wish to promote into the SCA position. Determine if you want to promote from within. Consider how far you want to cast the net in terms of recruitment. Only within your judicial branch? Statewide? Nationally? Court systems only? Government only? All possibilities (court systems, government, business, academia, etc.)? Generally, it is advisable to cast the net as widely as possible, preferably a national recruitment. Court administration is an established profession and a court system owes it to itself to assess what professionals might be attracted to the opportunity to work in your state. Internal candidates are best assessed against the strongest field, and if an internal candidate is ultimately selected, they will be viewed in an even stronger light internally having secured the position against a national search.
2. Develop the SCA position announcement. In addition to the typical format required for postings on a state applicant tracking system, a visually pleasing document can be prepared for wider dissemination. The position announcement should include such items as the Supreme Court's vision and mission statements, an overview of the position and responsibilities, information regarding qualifications and experience, salary and benefits, and general information about the Court, application process, and facts about the geographic location of the SCA position. Template(s) of position announcements are available for use as a point of departure (see Resources at section VIII below).
3. Develop your timelines for the recruitment and selection process.

4. Disseminate the position announcement widely in-state and nationally.
  - ◆ At a minimum, transmit the announcement to the COSCA Listserv, to NACM members, to the COSCAHR listserv, and to the NCSC for posting on its website. You should also disseminate the position announcement to regional, state, and national bar associations, state government websites, in-house legal counsel organizations, and other national entities engaged in the administration of justice.
  - ◆ Social media sites can also be looked to for posting announcements.
5. Conduct an informal search. Justices and others may wish to reach out to their counterparts in other states. There may be candidates in-state that could also be encouraged to apply.
6. Develop a recruitment and selection budget of projected expenses such as a search firm, interview costs for the review/interview panel and candidates, and potential relocation and other negotiated expenses.
7. Search firms have been used by some states, but only to a very limited degree. Generally, a search firm will charge one-third of the first year's cash compensation of the SCA position. The NCSC may in the ordinary course of its work keep an eye out for people with SCA potential or for those looking to move to another state, and perhaps the NCSC can serve as an informal resource for some of the functions a search firm might provide when vacancies arise.



## Screening and Evaluating Your Candidates

It is important to design and have in place a fair and rigorous process for screening and evaluating candidates. Soon after the deadline for applications has passed, you should begin to implement that process.

1. Identify a process to use for the initial screening of candidates.
2. Include an initial paper review by your HR department to make sure that each applicant meets all the technical requirements of the position. Other planning and coordination support can also be provided by your HR department.
3. Establish a broad-based review and interview panel, consisting of one or more representatives of the following:
  - ◆ Appellate (including the Supreme Court) and trial judges
  - ◆ Trial court administrators
  - ◆ Judicial Council members, if applicable
  - ◆ Senior Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) staff
  - ◆ An SCA from another state, or a representative from the NCSC
  - ◆ Other possibilities might include a representative of a bar association, a law school, or other representatives from state or local government.
  - ◆ The incumbent SCA (if departing in good stead, and if willing and available), may be asked to serve in an advisory capacity to the panel.
4. Assignments for the panel:
  - ◆ Request finalists to submit an essay on one or more selected topics. Some states have found it helpful to request a short writing sample from the final candidates.
  - ◆ Review the applications, with a focus on evaluating the requested essay(s).
  - ◆ Decide whether or not to reach out to others, e.g., in the AOC or trial courts, for additional input about the SCA position or about the finalists.
  - ◆ Conduct initial interviews using standardized questions designed to elicit information about each candidate's background, vision, experience, abilities and overall fit for the SCA position.
  - ◆ Refer a small number of finalists to the appointing authority.
5. Subsequent interviews of finalists recommended by the panel should be conducted by the appointing authority (the Chief Justice, the full Supreme Court, or the Judicial Council). These discussions should entail clarity as to expectations of and by the new SCA. Questions such as the following should be addressed. How will success be measured? To what extent is the tenure of the SCA linked to the tenure of the Chief Justice?



## Making your Selection

You have now found one or more final candidates that you believe will be an effective leader. It is time to make your selection.

- I. While those involved in the selection process (such as members of the review and interview panel) will have had the opportunity for input and to offer advice, the final decision is exclusively up to the appointing authority. Further, even though the appointing authority may be the Chief Justice alone, it is important that the full Supreme Court formally endorse the decision. If members of the Court have serious questions or doubts about the candidate whom the Chief wants to appoint, it will not bode well in terms of the candidate's prospects for a successful tenure as SCA. It is recommended that the hiring decision be unanimously endorsed by the Supreme Court and/or the Judicial Council, if possible.
2. Before making the hiring decision, conduct exhaustive background and reference checks on the finalists. Reference checks should include contacting justices, judges, colleagues, and/or subordinates to elicit candid responses. The reference checks may include members of the legislative and executive branches in addition to the judiciary.
3. After the decision is made, the Chief Justice or designee should contact the top candidate to offer the position and resolve any remaining questions.
4. Negotiate any final issues relating to a start date, compensation, and benefits.

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## Developing an Onboarding Plan

In order to get your new SCA off on the right foot and to maximize the prospects for a long and successful tenure, an effective plan needs to be in place to guide the new SCA once on board. The following elements should be considered as part of an effective “onboarding” plan.

- I. Elements involving the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court:
  - ◆ Require that the following documents be prepared and made available for the new SCA:
    - An “exit memo” by the departing SCA setting forth the principal challenges and opportunities facing the new SCA.
    - Updated organizational charts and contact information for key Judicial Branch judges and staff.
    - Summaries prepared by each AOC senior staff member describing the work of their respective divisions.
  - ◆ The onboarding plan should be tailored to reflect the background of the new SCA. For example, if the new SCA is coming from another state, a specially crafted orientation to your Judicial Branch may be warranted.
  - ◆ Identify for the new SCA key colleagues and stakeholders with whom the new SCA should immediately try to establish a good working relationship.
  - ◆ Provide a clear written set of goals and expectations for the SCA to meet during the first 90 days, six months, and year.
  - ◆ Clearly and tangibly demonstrate support for the SCA through such means, for example, as a welcoming letter distributed to all judges and staff throughout the Judicial Branch and appearing with the new SCA in meetings with judges to express unequivocal support.
  - ◆ Defer to the SCA on those decisions that are strictly within the purview of the AOC.

- ◆ Encourage the SCA to:
  - Ask questions of and share concerns with the Chief Justice (and/or other members of the Court) at any time.
  - Follow-through on the “elements involving the SCA” listed below.
  - Take advantage of educational/training opportunities through the NCSC and other providers.
- 2. Elements involving the Chief Justice and new SCA:
  - ◆ Work together to focus on becoming an effective leadership team.
  - ◆ Commit to having weekly one-on-one meetings.
  - ◆ Agree on a clear strategic direction regarding major initiatives and priorities.
  - ◆ Jointly attend CCI/COSCA/NCSC orientation and trainings (e.g., on the executive leadership).
  - ◆ Travel within the state together during the first year, and periodically thereafter, asking for feedback from judges and staff, the other branches of government, and communities.
  - ◆ Advance effective governance strategies and decision making.
  - ◆ Engage in ongoing open and candid evaluation of the SCA’s performance.
  - ◆ Consider creating an SCA Advisory Committee made up of judges and administrators from throughout the Judicial Branch to meet quarterly with the SCA (more frequently if needed), serving as a sounding board and source of guidance, advocacy and support to and for the SCA
  - ◆ Establish a “calendar” or “checklist” of onboarding events and monitor compliance regularly. See Appendix C for a template checklist.
- 3. Elements involving the SCA:
  - ◆ Schedule and attend orientation meetings with key internal and external stakeholders, to include by way of example, justices, presiding judges, AOC senior staff, trial court administrators and clerks of court, executive and legislative branch officials, leaders of the bar, district attorney and public defender associations.
    - [Listen, learn, solicit advice.](#)
  - ◆ Try to understand the Judicial Branch culture as fully and quickly as possible and become familiar with potential material risks and challenges that the SCA will need to address on a priority basis.
  - ◆ Identify and implement “early wins.”
  - ◆ Refine and finalize goals and action plans with the Chief Justice and with the Supreme Court as warranted.
  - ◆ Develop an effective leadership team within the AOC.
  - ◆ Work with senior AOC staff and trial court leadership to share goals and secure buy-in to action plans.
  - ◆ Become and remain strongly involved in COSCA.
  - ◆ Rely on NCSC as a resource.
    - Attend the NCSC orientation for new SCAs.
    - Ask to be assigned “mentor” SCAs who can be contacted frequently for advice.
    - Ask for the assignment of an SCA “swat team” to spend a few days onsite for intensive orientation and advice.



**Provide a clear written set of goals and expectations for the SCA to meet during the first 90 days, six months, and year.**

## Retention Strategy

1. At some point in time, the formal onboarding process will come to an end, and the focus should shift to the goal of retaining the new SCA for the long haul. Ideally, the onboarding plan should be followed seamlessly by a retention strategy. A retention strategy should be put in place early and remain in place throughout the SCA's tenure. The strategy should include some or all of the following elements. Maintain constant and open two-way lines of communication between the SCA and the Chief Justice (and the Supreme Court).
  - ◆ The Chief Justice should consistently encourage the SCA by applauding what is going well but should also be clear when expectations are not being met.
  - ◆ The SCA should be encouraged to voice concerns when frustrated and to seek help and support when needed. The Chief Justice and the Court should remain ready to provide the necessary help and support through such means as coaching or mentoring, educational and training opportunities, as well assisting with problem solving where appropriate.
2. Consider creating a standing advisory committee to provide support, counsel, and encouragement to the SCA. This committee could be composed by way of example of judges and administrators from the appellate and trial courts.
3. Encourage the SCA to consistently maintain the "balance" in life discussed above. For example, make sure that the SCA does in fact take a reasonable amount of leave time each year.
4. Be serious and consistent about providing the SCA with complete and meaningful performance evaluations, at least annually. The evaluations should be generous with praise and encouragement but should also be candid in pointing out where improvement is needed.
5. Institute formal and/or informal means by which the SCA can receive performance feedback from AOC staff as well as from appellate and trial judges and administrators. Evaluate compensation and benefits annually using the criteria discussed above for setting the initial compensation of the SCA. Adjust as necessary and feasible.
6. Significant emphasis should be placed on the interpersonal relationships that the SCA develops with key stakeholders, both internal and external. How well these relationships are developed and maintained should be monitored carefully.
7. Watch for indications of frustration or boredom affecting the SCA over time. Explore and engage in ways to address these problems should they develop.
8. Encourage the SCA to take advantage of the support and mentoring available through the COSCA services to members committee. Continue to encourage the independence and creativity of the SCA. Mistakes will inevitably be made, so be judicious in responding to those mistakes.



## Succession Planning

Even if you have succeeded in implementing the best of onboarding and retention efforts, the time will inevitably come when you will need to recruit and hire yet another SCA. Having a solid succession plan in place will put you in good stead when that time comes. Consider the following guidelines with respect to succession planning:

1. Have a succession plan in place at all times. A good succession plan needs to unfold over time. Do not wait until the incumbent SCA announces his or her intent to leave or leaves without much notice.
2. Succession plans should be aligned with the Court's strategic priorities and vision for the future.
3. Articulate clearly the important elements of the plan. What are the traits the Court is looking for in a successor SCA? Is there a preference that a successor will come from the AOC, from within the Judicial Branch, or from other preferred sources? Clearly distinguish between requirements vs. preferences.
4. Identify possible successors, both internal and external to the Judicial Branch. Examples include potential candidates from the AOC, trial courts, other in-state stakeholders (e.g., executive branch agencies, bar association, etc.). Candidates from outside the state might come from other judiciaries and could be identified via NCSC, NACM, etc.
5. Cultivate and develop potential successors.
  - ◆ Give potential successors exposure/experience in statewide issues, exposure that will bring them to the attention of the Chief Justice and other members of the Court.
  - ◆ Encourage service on statewide committees.
  - ◆ Provide educational/development opportunities.
6. Let individuals know they are regarded as potential successors and encourage them to apply when the time comes. Be transparent but avoid making promises.
7. Succession planning can be part of an overall Judicial Branch leadership development program, or it can be tailored specifically to potential SCA successors.
8. Monitor, review progress of potential candidates. Provide coaching and mentoring as warranted.
9. Develop clear criteria by which to weigh the relative strengths and weaknesses of potential candidates.



## Resources Available from CCJ, COSCA, NACM, NAPCO and NCSC

The following resources are available from CCJ, COSCA, NACM, NAPCO, and the NCSC. These can help you in your search and selection efforts. They can also assist your new SCA in the onboarding process.

1. The NCSC will distribute this Recommended Steps and Practices document to all Chief Justices upon learning of a SCA vacancy. An experienced Chief Justice is also available as a resource, as are representatives from NCSC.
2. Technical Assistance is available from the NCSC to strengthen court governance, assess the organization and effectiveness of the AOC, and to assist in the recruitment and selection of the SCA. Contact the Court Consulting Services division of the NCSC for further information and assistance.
3. COSCA offers orientation programs and materials to promote Leadership Strategies for Success; Understanding the Major Challenges, and Issues and Trends Affecting State Courts and State Court Leaders. COSCA has also identified other resources to assist its new members, including a mentor program and a [book of advice and quotes from SCAs](#).
4. The NCSC has developed a Leadership Academy to strengthen Court Leadership Teams. Also, NAPCO offers an Annual Leadership Day for “Productive Pairs.”
5. A national scan, trends, and backgrounds of SCA’s, as well as templates of job announcements and competencies required, are available from the NCSC upon request.
6. NACM has numerous publications and resources available on its website, including THE CORE, that can assist Supreme Courts in identifying SCA leadership competencies.
7. A comprehensive list of [SCA salaries](#) by state is available from NCSC.

NOTE: The recommended best practices outlined in this document are for the most part applicable not only to the recruitment, selection, and retention of SCAs but also to other key positions within the Judicial Branch as well (e.g. senior AOC staff, trial court administrators, etc.).



# Appendix A

## SCA Job Description Sample List of Elements to Include

### Overall Strategic Direction

- ◆ Works closely with the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court in order to set the strategic direction for the Judicial Branch.
- ◆ Assists the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court in critical policymaking to support Judicial Branch strategic priorities.
- ◆ Assumes primary responsibility to implement major policy-making decisions.

### Administration

- ◆ Manages the State Court Administrator's Office, which provides central administrative infrastructure services for the Judicial Branch through several divisions and offices such as: Information Technology, Finance, Human Resources, Court Services, Legal Counsel, Education and Organizational Development, Court Information, Intergovernmental Relations and the Executive Office.
- ◆ Provides fiscal policy and direction for the Judicial Branch budget including audit and budget development and expenditures. Prepares budget estimates of state appropriations necessary for the maintenance and operation of the judicial system and submits the budget request, as approved by the Supreme Court, to the legislature.
- ◆ Provides leadership in the area of information technology. Ensures that major project initiatives receive the support necessary to drive successful implementation.
- ◆ Periodically inspects and examines the administrative methods and systems in use and make recommendations to the Chief justice for the improvement of such administrative methods and systems.
- ◆ Examines the state of the calendars of all courts, determines the need for assistance by any court and confers with justices and judges on the status of their calendars and administrative matters.
- ◆ Obtains reports from presiding judges, area court administrators, and clerks of court in accordance with the requirements of the Supreme Court on cases and other judicial business in which action has been delayed beyond periods of time specified by law or rules of court and makes report thereof to the chief justice and the supreme court.
- ◆ Crisis management (whether shooting in courthouse or national media at a trial).
- ◆ Establishes and oversees a system of prescribed accounting practices for all courts including uniform procedures, consistent with existing law, for calculating interest on judgments and allocating payments to costs, interest, and principal.
- ◆ Adopts and oversees procedures to govern the procurement of supplies, services, professional services, and construction by the judicial branch.

### Relations with Other (non-court) Entities

- ◆ Advocates for the Judicial Branch with the legislative and executive branches and interacts on behalf of the Chief Justice with various constituencies including the bar, state and local justice system partners and citizen groups.
- ◆ Develops and maintains constructive relationships with the state legislature and monitors and reports on legislative matters of interest to the Judicial Branch. Directs the development of the legislative agenda and annual appropriation and coordinates the judiciary's testimony at numerous legislative hearings
- ◆ Develops and maintains constructive relationships with executive branch government officials, agencies, and departments.
- ◆ Provides appropriate public accountability through media relations and efforts designed to retain public trust and confidence in the judicial branch of government.
- ◆ Coordinates with county and municipal units of government to support local courts.

### Innovation

- ◆ Identifies emerging issues and assigns staff support for special projects, initiatives, and task forces.
- ◆ Identifies areas for improvement in process, procedure, and services to ensure the Judicial Branch is fulfilling its mission and vision.
- ◆ Identifies, recommends, and implements administrative and policy solutions to improve the operations of each division, cross-divisional operations, the Judicial Branch as a whole.
- ◆ Oversees innovative projects and programs that meet the diverse current and future needs of the state courts.
- ◆ Identifies emerging issues that may impact the courts and makes recommendations for meeting challenges.
- ◆ Formulates and submits to the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court recommendations of policies for the improvement of the judicial systems.

## Appendix B

### Sample List of Knowledge and Experience Requirements for a SCA Candidate

- ◆ A minimum of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is required. An advanced degree in law, business administration, judicial administration, public administration, or related discipline, or ICM Fellowship is preferred.
- ◆ A minimum number of years of public or private sector executive-level experience leading administrative functions including human resources, finance, training, technology, and legal counsel, with experience overseeing executive level positions, including the ability to develop a strong executive leadership team.
- ◆ A minimum number of years of managerial administrative experience in the judiciary or a related legal setting.
- ◆ Experience with public sector budgeting and finance processes, including the ability to advocate for and present budget and financial information to legislative committees or to a similar funding authority, and experience creating innovative solutions to manage public sector budget challenges.
- ◆ Experience creating a compelling vision for the future of court operations.
- ◆ Experience managing multiple priorities, with intense demands for results and accountability, and large amounts of information.
- ◆ Experience building coalitions with both internal and external stakeholders.
- ◆ Experience creating and delivering major presentations to stakeholder groups to educate and inform about judicial branch activities.
- ◆ Experience implementing large-scale innovative solutions to complex organizational problems.
- ◆ Experience developing and implementing organization-wide strategic plans.
- ◆ Knowledge and understanding of the operations of state trial and appellate courts
- ◆ General knowledge of Human Resources disciplines – organizational structure, employment law compliance, classification, compensation, staffing, performance management, employee development, and employee relations and engagement.
- ◆ Prior experience in an organizational leadership role that involves setting strategic direction, engaging multiple stakeholders; previous experience with a governing board is preferred.
- ◆ Proven ability to recruit, develop and manage a diverse professional staff.
- ◆ Experience in public sector budgeting; legislative experience preferred.
- ◆ Working knowledge and experience related to the management of technology professionals and major technology operations and projects.
- ◆ Knowledge of court operations gained through experience in a trial court may be helpful.
- ◆ Experience working with legislative and executive branches experience.
- ◆ Experience working with top leadership in key stakeholder organizations, both inside and outside of government.
- ◆ Experience working with elected officials.

# Appendix C

## Onboarding Plan Checklist

#	Action Step	Person(s) Responsible	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date
1	Exit memo from departing SCA	Chief Justice/ Departing SCA		
2	Summaries from AOC senior staff	Chief Justice/ Departing SCA		
3	Identify key colleagues and stakeholders for new SCA	Chief Justice/ Departing SCA		
4	Written goals and expectations for new SCA	Chief Justice		
5	Distribution of welcoming letter	Chief Justice		
6	Weekly meetings	Chief Justice and new SCA		
7	Agree on a clear strategic direction regarding major initiatives and priorities	Chief Justice and new SCA		
8	Jointly attend CCI/COSCA/NCSC orientation and trainings (e.g., on the executive leadership team)	Chief Justice and new SCA		
9	Travel within the state together during the first year, and periodically thereafter	Chief Justice and new SCA		
10	Engage in ongoing open and candid evaluation of the SCA's performance	Chief Justice and new SCA		
11	Create a SCA Advisory Committee	Chief Justice and new SCA		
12	Schedule and attend orientation meetings with key internal and external stakeholders	New SCA		
13	Identify and implement "early wins"	New SCA		
14	Develop an effective leadership team within the AOC	New SCA		
15	Work with senior AOC staff and trial court leadership to share goals and secure buy-in to action plans	New SCA		
16	Become and remain strongly involved in COSCA	New SCA		
17	Attend the NCSC orientation for new SCAs	New SCA		
18	Ask to be assigned "mentor" SCAs who can be contacted frequently for advice	New SCA		
19	Ask for the assignments of a SCA "swat team" to spend a few days onsite for intensive orientation and advice	New SCA		



# Conference of Chief Justices Conference of State Court Administrators

## RESOLUTION 4

WHEREAS, it is important for a state to develop and implement an effective strategy to attract strong State Court Administrator candidates; and

WHEREAS, it is important to design and have in place a fair and rigorous process for screening, evaluation, and selection of the successful candidate; and

WHEREAS, the CCJ/COSCA Court Management Committee has developed the Recommended Steps and Practices for the recruitment, selection, and retention of State Court Administrators;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators commend the Recommended Steps and Practices for the recruitment, selection and retention of State Court Administrators developed by the CCJ/COSCA Court Management Committee, and encourage their members to review and consider these Recommended Steps and Practices as the need to recruit and select an SCA may arise in the future.

Adopted as proposed by the CCJ/COSCA Court Management Committee at the CCJ/COSCA Annual Meeting on July 27, 2016.

Special thanks to the CCJ/COSCA Court Management Sub-committee for their contributions to this report:

Chief Justice Rita B. Garman, Illinois

Chief Justice Matthew B. Durant, Utah

State Court Administrator Kingsley W. Click, Oregon

Director of Court Administration David W. Slayton, Texas



# MISSION

The mission of the Conference of State Court Administrators is to provide a national forum to assist state court administrators in the development of a more just, effective, and efficient system of justice, by:

- ◆ Identifying and studying issues and, when appropriate, developing policies, principles, and standards relating to the administration of judicial systems.
- ◆ Providing an effective network for the exchange of information, ideas, and methods to improve state courts.
- ◆ Facilitating cooperation, consultation, and exchange of information by and among organizations directly concerned with court administration.
- ◆ Assisting in the formulation and implementation of national issues that affect state courts.
- ◆ Establishing and maintaining an organization that is open, inclusive, participatory, dynamic, and responsive.
- ◆ Offering educational opportunities.



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