

The Maryland Judiciary strives every day to fulfill its mission to “...provide fair, efficient and effective justice for all.” Fulfilling that mission, as well as bringing to fruition the Judiciary’s vision to be an “...efficient, innovative and accessible court system that works collaboratively with justice partners to serve the people with integrity and transparency” begins with a qualified, informed, and motivated workforce.

The Judiciary Human Resources Division supports the mission and continues to review and update the Judiciary Employee Handbook. We encourage all to review the changes to the policies. For any questions, please contact Employee Relations and Compliance at er@mdcourts.gov or (410)-260-1732, or hr@mdcourts.gov.

The following policies will be effective October 16, 2024:

Section 2 Employment Practices
2.1 Accommodations of Disabilities
2.1.1 Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (NEW)
2.1.2 Lactation Breaks (NEW)
2.3 Classification, Compensation, Reinstatement, Reassignment and Transfer
2.6 Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation
2.7
Section 4 Benefits and Services
4.2 Educational Assistance
4.4 Leave

2.1 Accommodations of Disabilities

The updates ensure our policies correctly define and accurately dictate the interactive process and further review of requests for accommodations or denials of a requested accommodation. The updates also include a reassessment period for accommodations and directs the complaint process to Office of Legal Affairs & Fair Practices for state-paid Judiciary employees. Notable changes are located in the following sections:

- Section (b): Definitions
- Section (f): Responding to a Request for Accommodation
- Section (g): Further Review or Action

2.1.1 Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA):

The Judicial Branch is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to its employees and applicants for employment necessitated by pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions pursuant to the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA). The goal is to enable an employee to continue to work despite any associated work limitation(s), and to provide applicants equal opportunities for employment.

2.1.2 Lactation Breaks

The Judicial Branch is committed to providing the necessary accommodations for expressing milk during work hours for employees who are breastfeeding for up to one year after the birth of a child. Employees who need lactation breaks additional paid break time, so they have a total of one (1) hour of paid break time for lactation during an eight (8)-hour shift for up to one (1) year after a child’s birth and encourages constant communication between management and employees that need to express milk during work

hours. Employees may also use their unpaid lunch break for this purpose. If additional breaks are needed, the employee and Administrative Head may contact the JHRD for further guidance.

2.3 Classification, Compensation, Reinstatement, Reassignment and Transfer

The updates to this policy align the leave policy and adds additional eligible positions to shift differential, based on operational needs. Notable sections to review are the following:

- Section (b): Definitions
- Section (c)(17): Overtime
- Section (c)(18): Shift Differential Compensation

2.6 Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

The updates to this policy include the prohibition of discrimination based on an individual's military status and adds military service as a protected class. Notable section to review is the following:

- Section (b): Definitions

2.7 Talent Acquisition, Examination, Selection, and Probation

The updates to this policy include clarification regarding the probationary period. Notable section to review is the following:

- Section (h): Probationary Period

4.2 Educational Assistance

The updates to this policy include clarification to the reimbursement limits and removes language regarding the agreement of employment for a minimum of 12 months after the successful completion of a course or certification. For additional information, please contact Shamika Dent-Williams, Assistant State Court Administrator, Judicial College at judicialcollege@mdcourts.gov. Notable sections to review are the following:

- Section (f) Reimbursement Limits
- Section (h): Employee's Responsibility

4.4 Leave

The updates to this policy include adding a licensed clinical professional counselor as a health care provider and updates to the administrative leave section of this policy, which includes clarity to the time allotted for bereavement leave and adds a new category of bereavement leave, which is parental bereavement leave. Uniformed services and disaster services leave has been increased from 15 days to 30 days. Lastly, regular exempt employees may begin accruing compensatory leave immediately if required by Administrative Head. Notable sections to review:

- Section (b): Definitions
- Section (e)(2): Administrative Leave
- Section (e)(4) (B) Regular Exempt Employees