

## **Guideline for Court Staff Hours Local Administrative Orders (LAO)**

MCR 8.110(D) requires that *the chief judge of every court shall enter an administrative order under MCR 8.112(B) establishing the court's hours.*

Administrative Order 1998-5, section IV, states that *To the extent possible, consistent with the effective operation of the court, the chief judge must adopt personnel policies consistent with the written employment policies of the local funding unit. Effective operation of the court to best serve the public in multicounty circuits and districts, may require a single, uniform personnel policy that does not wholly conform with specific policies of any of the court's funding units.*

Further, paragraph 1 of Administrative Order 1998-5, section IV, requires that *the standard working hours of the court staff, including when they begin and end work, shall be consistent with the standard working hours of the funding unit. Any deviation from standard working hours of the funding unit must be reflected in a local administrative order, as required by the chief judge rule, and be submitted for review and comment to the funding unit before it is submitted to SCAO for approval.*

“Standard working hours” means the standard business hours of the court and is defined as the hours the court and funding unit are open to the public.

Courts located in the same building or complex as the funding unit's [main or public service] offices must have the same standard working hours as the funding unit unless there is a reason for deviation that relates to adequate judicial services or to meeting obligations in a previously negotiated employee bargaining agreement. Courts should endeavor in future employee bargaining to ensure conformity in standard business hours with the funding unit.

Courts which do not currently have a LAO regarding Court Hours required by MCR 8.110(D) must submit one to SCAO as soon as possible. Any deviation from the funding unit's standard working hours must be included in the LAO.

Courts which have a current LAO and whose hours do not deviate from the funding unit's standard working hours need not submit a revised Court Hours LAO. Courts whose standard working hours deviate from the funding unit's, and who have a current LAO which does not reflect this deviation, must submit a revised Court Hours LAO as soon as possible.

The LAO should include language that identifies any deviation from the standard working hours of the funding unit. Examples of deviation include: evening hours, and weekend hours. A difference in lunch hours is not considered a deviation, but a difference in public access during the lunch hour is considered a deviation, for example, the court is closed to the public during the lunch hour while the funding unit is open, or funding unit offices are closed to the public during the lunch hour while court offices are open. Whenever possible, court offices should not be closed during the lunch hour.

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**SCAO Administrative Memorandum 1999-02**  
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**Page 2**

The cover letter to SCAO transmitting a Court Hours LAO that includes deviation in hours must contain the following:

- 1) a statement that court staff hours deviate from those of the funding unit;
- 2) a statement that the LAO had been submitted to the local funding unit for review and comment;
- 3) a summation of any comments received from the funding unit (and a copy of any written communication); and
- 4) the court's response to the comments.