



Legislation Text

File #: 17-0584, Version: 1

Other/Miscellaneous Request Template (Appointments; ROW; Code Changes; Zoning Action, etc.)

Date Submitted: 06-13-17

Requesting Agency: Denver County Court

Division:

- Name: Presiding Judge Theresa Spahn
- Phone: 720-865-7873
- Email: theresa.spahn@denvercountycourt.org

Item Title & Description:

(Do not delete the following instructions)

*These appear on the Council meeting agenda. Initially, the requesting agency will enter a 2-3 sentence description. Upon bill filling, the City Attorney's Office should enter the title above the description (the title should be in **bold** font).*

*Both the title and description must be entered between the red "title" and "body" below. Do **not** at any time delete the red "title" or "body" markers from this template.*

A bill for an ordinance increasing the hourly rate compa-ratio for part-time County Court magistrates and amending the benefits received by full-time County Court magistrates to allow 10 days of paid time off benefits to be carried over to the following year.

Amends Section 14-109 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code to increase the pay of part-time magistrates by 16.8% and allow full-time magistrates to carry up to 10 days of unused vacation leave to the following year. The Committee approved filing this bill by consent on 6-21-17.

Affected Council District(s) or citywide? Citywide

Executive Summary with Rationale and Impact:

Detailed description of the item and why we are doing it. This can be a separate attachment.

The Court is requesting Section 14-109 (b) D.R.M.C. be amended to reflect an increased compa-ratio of .972, that provides an increase in pay of 16.8% to part-time magistrates effective August 1, 2017. A 16.8% increase in pay creates pay equity with the Court's existing full-time magistrates and greatly improves recruitment efforts.

The current rate of pay of \$59.55 per hour for part-time magistrates is well below the hourly rate of \$75.00 the Court pays for alternative defense counsel (ADC). County Court is conducting a second recruitment because of minimal response to a recruitment late last year.

Recruitment efforts are further complicated by the fact that unlike ADC, an attorney who accepts a contract as a part-time magistrate is prohibited from practicing in Denver County Court and Denver District Court, causing a loss of income.

Part-time magistrates preside over traffic night court, weekend in-custody dockets, and the small claims courtroom. In addition, part-time magistrates provide coverage when judicial officers are on leave in the arraignment and protection order courtrooms. Experienced attorneys serving as part-time magistrates result in efficient hearings and better outcomes for litigants. Efficiency and good decision making has a positive impact on reducing costs for those in custody, reducing wait times for our citizens, and helps victims of domestic violence.

The Court is also requesting Section 14-109 (c) D.R.M.C. be amended to allow full-time magistrates to carry up to 10 days of unused paid time off to the following year. County Court Judges can carry over 10 days of unused paid time off and the Court wishes to do the same for full-time magistrates. As further justification, all other City employees and officials can carry over unused vacation time.

The Court has three full-time magistrates who cover the arraignment dockets in the criminal, general sessions and traffic divisions. These judicial officers run three of our specialty courts to include Behavioral Health Court, Outreach Docket at the Denver Rescue Mission, and the Chrysalis Docket. These dockets are well run, yet exhausting and time consuming.

Estimate cost of the proposed part-time magistrates pay increase is \$35,500 annually. No additional cost I anticipated for the vacation carry over proposal.

Address/Location (if applicable):

Legal Description (if applicable):

Denver Revised Municipal Code (D.R.M.C.) Citation (if applicable):

Draft Bill Attached?