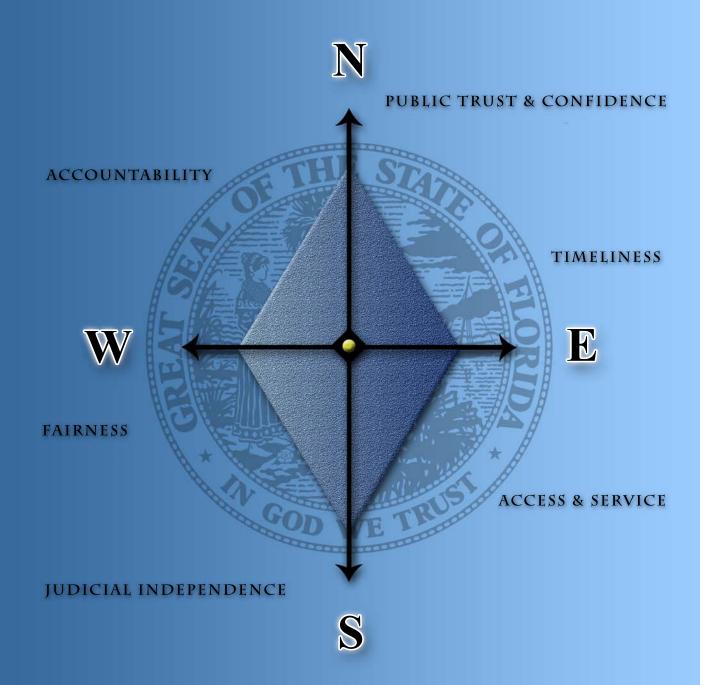
LONG - RANGE STRATEGIC PLAN



CHARTING A COURSE FOR THE FUTURE

THE 20TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

Twentieth Judicial Circuit Of Florida

HUGH D. HAYES CHIEF JUDGE



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A Message from the Chief Judge

The 20th Judicial Circuit has a proud tradition of leading Florida's judicial system with spirited innovation. Having been granted the honor of twenty-eight years of service on the judiciary, I witnessed the 20th Judicial Circuit create the first Family Law Division within the state. This first stroke of modernism grew into a divisionalized court system that included Domestic Violence Courts, Drug Courts, and other successful innovations. Now, as the 20th Judicial Circuit faces the challenges of high population growth, judicial shortages, and one of the fastest growing case filing levels in the state, we can once again take pride that our judges have significantly increased productivity over the last three years.

Modern court administration is key to a judiciary's success in the furtherance of justice. To this end, I am pleased to present the first *Long-Range Strategic Plan* for the 20th Judicial Circuit. *Long-Range Strategic Plan* addresses our need for a clear assessment of the major challenges confronting the 20th Judicial Circuit and provides a sound, thoughtful, and systematic approach to meeting these challenges. Because this comprehensive plan was developed through an extensive and inclusive process, it will holistically enable the 20th Judicial Circuit to assess its environment, anticipate change, and maintain a steady course.

Having begun the task of carefully and deliberately implementing Revision 7, the 20th Judicial Circuit must not forget the principles that this arduous mission represents: Equity, Independence, Accountability, and Responsiveness. By serving as a touchstone for every member of the 20th Judicial Circuit, Long-Range Strategic Plan will aid our efforts in manifesting these principles on a daily basis. First, this plan delivers clarity on the roles and responsibilities we have as members of the judiciary. These responsibilities are made real by eleven compelling objectives to improve the administration of justice. Further, the plan ensures that we are equipped to succeed by establishing four objectives to foster a positive culture and enhance worker productivity. Yet these internal improvements are only meaningful if users of the court sense them, so the plan delineates two objectives that enhance public access and two objectives designed to build public trust.

The remaining challenge is that we must join together to make this noble plan real. Each of us must demonstrate leadership to ensure that the status quo is not latently ratified by our inaction. Now that this vision is in your hands, I trust that 2006 will be positively remembered because we administered a judicial circuit worthy of the promises in our great constitution.

Respectfully,

Vision and Mission

Vision of the Administrative Office of the Court Twentieth Judicial Circuit of Florida

A vision statement helps an organization to develop a picture of itself in a perfect world. It defines what the organization aspires to be like when it performs at its best. It is also an expression of the organization's basic values.

The vision of the Administrative Office of the Court will provide professional, efficient, effective service to the Court focusing on our core businesses:

- Be fair, equitable, and conduct business with integrity.
- Uphold the principles of judicial independence and accountability.
- Be accessible, convenient, understandable and timely.
- Be effective.
- Be responsive and anticipate the needs of those we serve.

Mission of the Administrative Office of the Court Twentieth Judicial Circuit of Florida

A mission statement defines an organization's purpose. It helps the organization focus and serves as a reference point for developing and prioritizing goals and strategies.

The mission of the Administrative Office of the Court is to provide professional services to support the judiciary in their efforts to protect rights and liberties, uphold and interpret the law, and provide for the peaceful resolution of disputes.

I. Clarifying the Role of the Judicial Branch

<u>Issue Description.</u> The 20th Judicial Circuit is being called to provide an increasingly broad range of services in response to the needs of citizens and the inability of other societal institutions to meet these needs. Many of these expanded services go beyond the historic roles and responsibilities of the court. A consensus over which roles and responsibilities the courts should fulfill would give the judicial branch a clear mandate around which to organize its energies and resources and would reinforce the principle of an independent judiciary.

Long-Range Goals:

- The role and responsibility of the 20th Judicial Circuit will be clearly defined and widely understood.
- Essential court-related services that are not within the roles or responsibilities of the courts will be provided by organizations outside the 20th Judicial Circuit.

Objective I-A—Judicial Independence: Advance court administration positions on proposals affecting the operation of the 20th Judicial Circuit to ensure that our vision and mission are served.

TASK:

• Continue to seek ways to provide appropriate input on matters relating to the administration of justice.

Objective I-B—Court Functions: Clarify the respective roles of court-related constitutional officers regarding the essential functions of the 20th Judicial Circuit and the effective administration of justice.

TASK:

• Continue to communicate the mission of the 20th Judicial Circuit in order to build a consensus on the role, functions, and elements of our unified court system.

Objective I-C—Intergovernmental Relations: Collaborate with other branches of the state and local government.

TASK:

The 20th Judicial Circuit's chief judge and trial court administrator will coordinate with the county governments to address local requirements and local options in support of the trial courts.

II. Improving the Administration of Justice

<u>Issue Description.</u> The effective administration of justice requires deliberate attention to the core processes of the 20th Judicial Circuit. Increasing workloads which arise from explosive population growth, greater demand for adjudication, alternative dispute resolution, other core processes, and core court functions which support court processes will stretch the 20th Judicial Circuit's ability to fulfill its responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

Long-Range Goals:

- The 20th Judicial Circuit provides the full range of services in support of the AOC's three core businesses: (1) adjudication; (2) due process services; and (3) governance that is consistent with and supports State initiatives, guidelines, statutes, and Supreme Court and local court and administrative policies and rules.
- The 20th Judicial Circuit will fairly and timely resolve issues brought before it.
- The 20th Judicial Circuit will seek and secure adequate resources to support the needs of the 20th Judicial Circuit and account for their prudent and efficient use.

Objective II-A: Provide a unified range of services in support of the AOC's three core businesses.

- Identify and implement the full range of services in support of the AOC's three core businesses.
- Ensure all stakeholders understand their roles in supporting these core businesses and function collaboratively within a unified circuit-wide system.

TASKS:

- A clearly defined list of core services within each of the AOC's business area.
- For each service, an on-going gap analysis that:
 - Defines the optimum services where we want to be.
 - ♦ Identifies what services are currently available where are we now.
 - b How we go from where we are to where we want to be.
 - Implement changes to current operating services to fill the gap between where we are and where we want to be.
 - Regular and recurring "gap analysis" process.

Objective II-B: Guide users to and encourage the use of the services in support of the AOC's three core businesses.

- Ensure stakeholders know what services are available and how to use them.
- Ensure resources are available to implement the plans for stakeholder education.

TASKS:

- Include as part of program/service plans an assessment of and means to ensure stakeholders are aware of available services and how to use them.
 - ♦ Gap analysis:
 - List of desired public and staff educational materials. (What should or could we provide?)
 - List of current public and staff educational materials and their effectiveness. (What materials are currently available and how effective are they?)
 - · Steps for how to go from where we are to where we want to be.
 - Implement changes to current public and staff educational material.
 - ♦ Regular and recurring "gap analysis" process.

Objective II-C: Develop AOC staff proficiencies in the AOC's core businesses.

- Define desired proficiencies in each core business.
- Ensure managers understand and manage by an established set of proficiencies.
- Ensure staff understand and performs in conformance with the established set of proficiencies.

TASKS:

- Desired proficiencies in the AOC's three core businesses are clearly written and are a part of each business unit's and individual's performance reviews and work plans.
- Gap analysis For each business unit and individual employees:
 - ♦ List of the desired proficiencies. (What should or could be done?)
 - Ourrently, what are the proficiencies of each business unit and staff member?
 - ♦ Steps for how to go from where we are to where we want to be.

Objective II-D: Ensure the AOC's three core businesses are responsive to stakeholder needs.

- Understand and anticipate stakeholder needs.
- Respond to stakeholder needs.
- Ensure resources are available to accomplish these objectives.

- Clearly understand stakeholder needs by asking them.
- Gap analysis:
 - What is it they want or need us to be doing?

- What are we currently doing to respond to their needs?
- ♦ How do we fill the gap?
- Implement changes.
- Regular and recurring "gap analysis" process.

Objective II-E: Develop and implement a case management system that supports the courts in its mission to resolve cases in a fair, just, effective, efficient and timely manner, and that is responsive to and consistent with the parties' equal protection and due process rights.

- Performance and Accountability: Promote court performance and accountability by ensuring that court managers have relevant and timely information necessary to monitor and enhance court operations and properly identify resource needs.
- Court Resources: Maximize the availability and use of critical court support resources and activities required for the effective and efficient disposition of cases.
- Due Process Service Delivery and Utilization: Evaluate and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of due process service delivery mechanisms in the trial courts.
- Understand and develop effective and efficient case management practices.
- Identify and address the workflow and resource allocation issues in a systematic, continuous manner.
- Develop statistical systems that enable case managers and the AOC to regularly monitor case management practices and to respond to changing needs.

TASKS:

- Gap Analysis
 - What case management systems are needed/desired?
 - What case management systems are currently in place?
 - b How do we go from where we are to where we want to be?
- Case Management Plans:
 - ♦ Family
 - ♦ Criminal
 - ♦ Civil
- Implement changes.
- Regular and recurring "gap analysis" and revisions to case management plans.

Objective II-F: Ensure that accurate, timely, and complete information is available for judicial decision making.

- Identify the information the judges need.
 - Family
 - Criminal
 - ◆ Civil
- Provide the staff resources to supply the needed information.
- Ensure that information systems are responsive to the judges' needs.

TASKS:

- Gap analysis
 - What information do judges need?
 - b How well are we meeting their needs?
 - b How do we go from where we are to where we want to be?
- Information, staff, and other resources are available when needed.

Objective II-G: Enhance the ability of the courts to effectively enforce compliance with court orders, including collection of fines, fees, and forfeitures.

- Understand the statutory and procedural requirements for compliance with court orders and collection of fines, fees, and forfeitures.
- Develop systems for enforcement of court orders and for collection of fines, fees, and forfeitures.
- Ensure staff understands their role in enforcement of court orders and for collection of fines, fees, and forfeitures.

TASKS:

- Gap analysis.
- Each business unit develops and administers procedural processes for compliance with court orders and collections relative to their business unit.
- Train staff in order enforcement and collections, where appropriate.
- Managers have systems in place to monitor and measure order compliance and collections.

Objective II-H: Courts will have sufficient time to fully consider and explain decisions.

- Cases are scheduled to provide judges sufficient time to fully consider and explain decisions.
- Issues are resolved at the earliest possible point, reducing the necessity for judicial intervention and freeing the judges' time to focus on more complex issues.
- Information is available to the judges so that they may fully consider and explain their decision.
- Translation services are available to enable the judges to fully consider the issues and explain their decisions.
- Court technology supports the full and timely consideration of the case and

judicial decisions elements.

TASKS:

- An efficient and effective case scheduling system.
- Implement effective alternative dispute resolution systems and case management practices.
- Information systems are in place to provide the judges the information they need when they need it i.e. staff attorneys' research.
- Qualified translators are available during judicial event.
- Court reporting services capture an accurate record and provide judges with a timely case review tool.

Objective II-I: Develop mechanisms to anticipate and assess future resource needs.

- Establish and implement systems that identify past and current workload trends.
- Identify how workload trends impact current resources.
- From these trends, project future resource needs.

TASKS:

- Gap analysis of what resources are available versus what are needed.
- Managers regularly assess and adjust work plans relative to workload shifts and resource needs.

Objective II-J: Produce budget requests sufficient to carry out the mission of the 20th Judicial Circuit and that reflect the priorities and strategies of the long-range and operational plans established by the State Judicial Branch and the 20th Judicial Circuit.

- Ensure budget requests accurately reflect resources needed in each business unit to support the AOC's mission.
- Develop individual business unit budgets that are linked to the AOC's budget; and manage from those plans.
- Evaluate and project future needs based on an analysis of past expenditures and workload trends.

- Managers understand and develop business plans that ensure the required resources are available when needed to accomplish the business unit's goals and objectives.
- Each manager's budget submissions provide for sufficient resources to support the business unit plan(s) and the AOC's strategic and operational plans.

 Managers conduct regular and continuous gap analyses of the programs within the manager's business unit.

Objective II-K: Adequate and appropriate funding is obtained from each funding entity, including state, local, and federal sources to carry out the mission of the State Judicial Branch and the 20th Judicial Circuit.

- Understand state and county budget processes and the AOC's responsibilities in preparing county and state budgets.
- Identify all available funding sources; and develop plans to tap funding sources outside the regular budgeting process.
- Obtain required funding to support the AOC's mission.
- Be accountable for the efficient and prudent use of appropriated funds.

TASKS:

- Identify funding required to support the AOC's mission.
- Identify current level of funding from all sources.
- Gap analysis the funding needed to support the AOC's mission.
- Managers regularly assess and adjust work plans relative to funding levels obtained.

Objective II-L: Determine the appropriate 20th Judicial Circuit outcomes and establish performance standards and indicators that measure the performance of the circuit.

 Develop and implement performance standards and measures that account for the efficient and prudent use of resources.

TASKS:

- Performance standards and workload measures that support effective and timely budgeting.
- Technology resources that support performance measurement systems.

III. Supporting Competence and Quality

<u>Issue Description.</u></u> Justice depends on the quality and competence of those who work within the court system. The citizens of the 20th Judicial Circuit deserve a court system staffed by highly competent, skilled judges and administrators. Those who work in the 20th Judicial Circuit deserve a high level of support to prepare them to perform their work.

Long-Range Goals:

Judges and court personnel will be prepared to administer justice fairly, effectively, and in a professional and competent manner.

Objective III-A: Staff and Judicial Training.

- Expand judicial education, i.e., case management and decision-making.
- Provide comprehensive and ongoing staff training in case management and operational skills.

TASKS:

- Coordinate circuit judges' training plan and schedules to better maximize resources and meet judges' needs.
- Training Coordinator for circuit assigned as a liaison between OSCA education unit and circuit judges by July 2005.
 - Annual training agenda/plan coordinated with OSCA and Chief Judge by June 2006 (graph).
 - ♦ Check quality of annual training plan.
 - Check judges' satisfaction with training support.
 - ♦ Check number of judicial training hours.
 - ♦ Check number of judicial training applications returned.
- Ensure fairness and consistency of circuit HR practices.
 - ♦ Recruitment/selection.
 - ♦ Performance appraisal.
 - ♦ Employee discipline/grievance.
- Institute regular diversity, EEO/AA, and sexual harassment education.
- Develop new judges orientation plan.
 - New judges orientation provides introduction to the AOC's functions and services by June 2006.
- Expand employee orientation program to cover court programs review/ mandatory EEO training/customer service training.
 - Staff training needs assessment—annual plan—Tap existing abilities in circuit by October 2005 (survey).
 - ♦ Redesign employee orientation—expand 3-5 days by October 2005.
 - ♦ Check employee rating of quality of training.
- Institute Court Management (ICM) certification program.
 - Check number of managers certified CMP.
- Design a regular in-service training program for professional and supervisory staff.
- Circuit training center by July 2006.
 - Possibly a facility in each county.

Objective III-B: Fairness of Personnel Practices.

Service to the diverse population of Florida without respect and without bias.

TASKS:

- Revise the PPR process to be a consistent circuit-wide format/timetable.
 - ♦ Redesign PPR system.
 - · Move to objective based system.
 - · Simplify rating system to a 2-point scale with an exceptional bonus linked to extraordinary measurable results.
 - Review; revise HR policy and procedures for recruitment, interview and selection, promotion, discipline and grievance handling.
 - · County and state on the same time frame.
 - Train supervisors on writing objective based goals based on circuit and division goals.
 - Create a Sr. Manager HR/Training Steering Committee.
 - Check revised PPR program, forms, and training completed.
 - ♦ Check the number of revised personnel policies developed.
 - Check quality of training of supervisors.
 - ♦ Check employee survey on fairness of HR policies.
- Ensure fairness and consistency of circuit HR practices.
 - ♦ Check recruitment/selection.
 - ♦ Check performance appraisal.
 - ♦ Employee discipline/grievance.
- Institute regular diversity, EEO/AA, and sexual harassment education.
 - ♦ EEO consultant review of interview/selection procedures.
 - ♦ Employee survey of fairness of HR policy.
 - ♦ Bi-annual diversity, EEO, and sexual harassment training.

Objective III-C: Workforce Compensation.

High standards of professionalism, ethics and personal behavior.

- Workforce compensation: recruit and retain highly qualified, skilled workforce by securing competitive compensation for staff.
 - Perform a circuit class and compensation study to develop strategies for internal/external equity among state/county salaries.
 - Identify ways to create incentives/rewards for high performers and build "Espirit de Corps."
- Workforce compensation plan.
 - Contract for circuit class and compensation study parallel to state C&C study as a way to improve equity between state and county titles.
 - · Quality of local C&C plan.
 - Take a lead role on State Personnel Committees.
 - ⋄ Explore exceptional pay pool concept to give managers discretion

- based on criteria.
- ♦ Explore flexible work hours/schedules.
- ♦ Celebrate achievements.
- Awareness of healthy practices.
 - · Reduced sick leave.
- ♦ Employee satisfaction.

Objective III-D: Customer Service and Organizational Development.

- High standards of professionalism, ethics, and personal behavior.
 - Customer service training.
 - Mandatory customer service training as a component of new hire orientation and in-service training.
 - Regular use of employee, judge, and public satisfaction surveys.
 - ♦ Check public and judge satisfaction.
 - Employee involvement.
 - ◊ Team and staff meetings encouraged.
 - ♦ Check quality of training.
 - ♦ Check employee survey of quality of communication.
 - Organizational structure.
 - ♦ Create a learning environment.
 - Reorganize into teams and integrate functional units under a single manager where possible.
 - ♦ Establish an administrative judge/court management forum for discussion and decision on policy issues.

TASKS:

- Recruit and retain a high quality workforce.
 - Clarify organizational structures, roles, and relationships of administrative judges, court managers and supervisors/team leaders.
 - ⋄ Develop professional code of conduct.
 - ♦ Continue to develop the 20th Judicial Circuit as an organization that is team based, open, innovative, and focused on customer service.

IV. Enhancing Public Access and Service

<u>Issue Description.</u> Justice requires the ability to petition for the redress of injuries, and the right to equal access to the legal system. Barriers to meaningful access to the legal system can result in unequal treatment and injustice.

Long-Range Goals:

All people will have equal access to the courts.

People will be able to understand and utilize the judicial system.

Objective IV-A—Meaningful Access: Identify and remedy barriers to meaningful access and disparities in court-related services for people who use the courts without the assistance of an attorney.

- A better understanding of public experiences, perceptions, and expectations of the courts in the 20th Judicial Circuit.
- Identify and remove procedural barriers to court access both real and perceived.
- Expand survey project into an "ongoing" process that provides feedback on court performance as perceived by the public and court users.
- Eliminate physical barriers to court access.

TASKS:

- Opinion surveys.
 - Onduct a survey of the general public's perception of the courts in the 20th Judicial Circuit.
 - ♦ Conduct an "Exit" survey of the courts' users.
- Identify and remove physical barriers to court access.
 - Review all new construction projects for full ADA compliance.
 - Review existing facilities on a regular basis for ADA compliance and correct deficiencies.
- Form partnership with local colleges and universities to design survey format and process.
- Research possible funding sources.
- Conduct initial surveys.

Objective IV-B—Electronic Access: Examine and develop policies regarding electronic access to court records in line with policy recommendations of The Committee on Privacy and Court Records. Enhance access to the courts through the application of emerging technologies such as the Internet.

- Expanded services for Pro Se litigants.
- Improved access for Pro Se litigants.
- Enhanced availability of accurate, helpful, and understandable information to court users.

- Expand the Pro Se litigant program.
 - ♦ Small Claims Court—2006

♦ County Court Civil—2007

V. Building Public Trust and Confidence

<u>Issue Description.</u> A communication plan is needed because the 20th Judicial Circuit relies upon public respect for the courts and the perceived legitimacy of the judicial process. As people understand the unique role of the courts, they have increased respect for judicial decisions. Public involvement in the court process facilitates accountability and shard expectations, and increases public trust and confidence, ensuring that the courts are relevant providers of justice.

Long-Range Goals:

- The judicial system will be accountable to the public.
- The judicial branch will inform the public about the functioning of the courts.
- The judicial branch will be responsive to the expectations of the public regarding the courts.

Objective V-A: Develop standards for the 20th Judicial Circuit's public relations.

- Develop standards for court publications (end of 2005).
 - Incorporate standards into existing publications.
 - Develop new publications as needs are identified.
- Continue existing liaison with Media, TV, and News press.
 - Develop written media policy (2005).
 - Refine media plan for high profile trials (2005).

TASKS:

- Annual reports (Spring 2006 and every year thereafter).
- Court performance based on Court Performance Standards.
- Court programs.
- Continue to publish the newsletter on a regular basis.
- Continue to develop our Internet and Intranet sites.
 - On-going project.
 - Develop self-help center on the Internet.
 - Web-casting of court proceedings.
- High profile trials.
- Routine court proceedings for educational purposes i.e., first appearance, arraignment, traffic court.

Objective V-B: Create an institutionalized outreach system.

- An institutionalized outreach program.
- Systems and procedures that provide accountability to the citizens we serve.
- Enhance availability of accurate, helpful and understandable information to the court users and public.
- A better-informed public.

- Develop an "Inside the Courts" Program (2006).
- Tours.
 - ♦ Continue existing student tour program.
 - ♦ Conduct on-going review of tour program and refine.
- Volunteer program.
- Study feasibility of developing a volunteer program (2006-2007).

Twentieth Judicial Circuit of Florida Administrative Office of the Courts

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