

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1621
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Chapter 25 of the Government Code, dealing with statutory county courts, authorizes a statutory probate judge to hire an administrative assistant. At the time Section 25.0024 was enacted in 1987, the concept of court administration was in its infancy in American law. Over the succeeding years, court administration has expanded the idea that an organized approach to handling court business resulted in efficiencies that require fewer courts to handle court cases. The person responsible for organizing a statutory probate court's business was called an administrative assistant. Currently, courts throughout Texas and the nation have designated this person in a court or group of courts to be a court administrator.

S.B. 1621 replaces the term administrative assistant with court administrator. This change in law would modernize the statutory language to reflect modern usage of calling the probate judge's chief assistant the court administrator.

As proposed, S.B. 1621 amends current law relating to a court administrator hired by a statutory probate court.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends the heading to Section 25.0024, Government Code, to read as follows:

Sec. 25.0024. COURT COORDINATORS, COURT ADMINISTRATORS, AND AUDITORS FOR STATUTORY PROBATE COURTS.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 25.0024(a), Government Code, to require a judge of a statutory probate court to hire with the approval of the commissioners court through the county budget process a court coordinator, a court administrator, rather than an administrative assistant, and an auditor for the court.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 25.1034(i), Government Code, to authorize a judge of a statutory probate court, with the approval of the commissioners court, to appoint a court administrator, rather than an administrative assistant, a court coordinator, an auditor, and other staff necessary for the operation of the courts.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 25.2293(j), Government Code, to change references an administrative assistant to a court administrator.

SECTION 5. Provides that on the effective date of this Act a person serving as an administrative assistant in a statutory probate court continues service as a court administrator in the statutory probate court unless otherwise removed as provided by law.

SECTION 6. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.