



United States District Court
District of Massachusetts
One Courthouse Way
Boston, MA 02210

Patti B. Saris
CHIEF JUDGE

PRESS RELEASE
APRIL 3, 2013

The United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts has announced that there will likely be no layoffs or involuntary furloughs for personnel in the District Court Clerk's Office, the Bankruptcy Court, or the Probation Department as a result of the budgetary sequester of funds.

Chief Judge Patti B. Saris explained, " In anticipation of the sequester, court units have engaged in aggressive cost containment measures, including early retirement incentives, deferral of technology purchases and cyclical maintenance, utilization of shared administrative services, consolidation of office space in satellite buildings, reprogramming of funds across court units, and not replacing employees who leave through normal attrition."

Chief Judge Saris cautioned: "While the District Court in Massachusetts as a whole is relatively well positioned this year because of cost containment, the sequester has had a negative impact on court functions. For example, probation is understaffed at 74% of staffing formula. Probation officers have high caseloads for supervision of serious criminal offenders, so cutting probation officers is not a good option. The Probation Office will be reducing the frequency of drug and mental health treatment sessions provided to offenders to offset a 20% cut in funding for these type of services. While we will survive this year's cuts without significantly interrupting the justice system or affecting public safety, we have tightened our belt to the last notch. Any additional cuts next year as a result of the sequester will be painful and interfere with the fair and efficient administration of justice."

The District Court had a 14% cut to the salaries account, a 20% cut to most other

accounts and an 80 % cut to the cyclical facilities maintenance account. The Bankruptcy Court's funding reflects a 12% reduction in personnel funds for the year, and a 34% reduction in all non-salary accounts, except for cyclical maintenance which was reduced by 80%. The Probation Office's salary funding was reduced 14%, non-salary allotments were reduced 20% and there was a 20% reduction in the Law Enforcement Account (which includes drug and mental health treatment and testing dollars).

The Federal Defender office is severely affected. The Federal Defenders anticipate up to 16.5 furlough days through the end of the Fiscal year. Employees who are furloughed will be out of the office on alternate Fridays and on many Mondays. While judges will attempt to accommodate furloughs in the Defender's office, it is not likely that criminal trials will be significantly affected.

Because of 22 days of furloughs at the Office of the United States Trustee, within the Department of Justice, the Bankruptcy Court expects not to be holding hearings involving that office on Fridays through the end of the fiscal year.

Nationwide, the Judiciary's budget was cut nearly \$350 million dollars for fiscal year 2013. The Judiciary expects as many as 2000 employees will be laid off or furloughed for one day per two-week pay period, resulting in a 10 percent pay cut for those employees. This comes on top of an additional 1,800 jobs or 8.5% of court employees eliminated by courts in the previous 18 months.

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