

§ 954. Vacancy in clerk position; absence of clerk

When the office of clerk is vacant, the deputy clerks shall perform the duties of the clerk in the name of the last person who held that office. When the clerk is incapacitated, absent, or otherwise unavailable to perform official duties, the deputy clerks shall perform the duties of the clerk in the name of the clerk. The court may designate a deputy clerk to act temporarily as clerk of the court in his or her own name.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 926; Pub. L. 92-310, title II, § 206(f), June 6, 1972, 86 Stat. 203; Pub. L. 104-317, title II, § 204(a), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3850.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §§ 8, 222 and 327 (Mar. 3, 1911, ch. 231, §§ 4, 125, 221, 36 Stat. 1087, 1132, 1153).

Section consolidates parts of sections 8, 222 and 327 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed.

Sections 8, 222 and 327 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., related only to district courts, courts of appeals and the Supreme Court, respectively. This section applies to all Federal courts and is in conformity with section 548 [546] of this title relating to death of a United States marshal.

The provision for continuance of the salary of the clerk of the Supreme Court until his successor is appointed and qualifies was inserted to preserve existing law as declared in the unpublished opinion of Chief Justice Taft, March 23, 1932 (filed in the Department of Justice), with respect to a deceased clerk of the Supreme Court.

Other provisions of sections 8, 222 and 327 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., are incorporated in sections 671, 711, and 751 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

1996—Pub. L. 104-317 substituted “Vacancy in clerk position; absence of clerk” for “Death of clerk; duties of deputies” in section catchline and amended text generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows:

“Upon the death of any clerk of court, his deputy or deputies shall execute the duties of the deceased clerk in his name until his successor is appointed and qualifies.

“The compensation of a deceased clerk of the Supreme Court may be paid to his personal representatives until his successor is appointed and qualifies.”

1972—Pub. L. 92-310 struck out “and remedies against” before “deputies” in section catchline and repealed provisions which related to the default or misfeasance of a deputy in connection with the bond of a deceased clerk of a Federal court.

§ 955. Practice of law restricted

The clerk of each court and his deputies and assistants shall not practice law in any court of the United States.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 926.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §§ 395 and 396 (Mar. 3, 1911, ch. 231, §§ 273, 274, 36 Stat. 1164).

Section consolidates parts of sections 395 and 396 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed. The remainder, relating to United States marshals and their deputies, is incorporated in section 556 of this title.

Sections 395 and 396 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., have been extended to include all clerks, deputies, and assistants.

The revised section substitutes as simpler and more appropriate, the prohibition against practice of law “in any court of the United States.” (See reviser’s note under section 556 of this title.)

For explanation of provisions omitted from sections 395 and 396 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., also see reviser’s note under section 556 of this title.

Changes in phraseology were made.

§ 956. Powers and duties of clerks and deputies

The clerk of each court and his deputies and assistants shall exercise the powers and perform the duties assigned to them by the court.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 926.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §§ 221, 244, 304 and 305 (Mar. 3, 1911, ch. 231, §§ 124, 139, 191, 192, 36 Stat. 1132, 1136, 1144; June 16, 1930, ch. 494, 46 Stat. 589).

This section contains only a part of sections 221, 244, 304 and 305 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed. The other provisions of such sections are incorporated in sections 604, 711, 831, 833, 834, 957 and 1926 of this title.

Sections 221, 244, 304 and 305 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., related to the clerks of the circuit courts of appeals, the Court of Claims and the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals.

The phrase “assigned to them by the court” was substituted for the indefinite provision of section 221 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., that the clerk of each circuit court of appeals “shall exercise the same powers and perform the same duties * * * as are exercised and performed by the clerk of the Supreme Court, so far as the same may be applicable.”

This section is new insofar as it affects the Clerk of the Supreme Court and clerks of the district courts and the Customs Court. Existing law does not prescribe the powers and duties of those clerks. The duties of the clerk of the Customs Court have been prescribed by the rules of such court adopted May 29, 1936.

Changes were made in phraseology.

§ 957. Clerks ineligible for certain offices

A clerk of a court or any of his deputies shall not be appointed a commissioner, master, referee or receiver in any case, unless there are special reasons requiring such appointment which are recited in the order of appointment.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 926; Pub. L. 95-598, title II, § 234, Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2667; Pub. L. 97-164, title I, § 122(b), Apr. 2, 1982, 96 Stat. 36; Pub. L. 98-353, title I, § 109, July 10, 1984, 98 Stat. 342.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §§ 127, 304 (Mar. 3, 1911, ch. 231, §§ 68, 191, 36 Stat. 1105, 1144).

Section consolidates section 127 with part of 304 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed.

Provisions of section 304 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., relating to appointment, powers, duties, and compensation of the clerk of the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals, and table of fees are incorporated in sections 604, 831, 956 and 1926 of this title.

Appointment and compensation of masters for district courts, see Rule 53(a) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

The words “commissioner” and “referee” did not appear in section 127 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed. They were added to subsection (a) to remove possible ambiguity.

Words “by the court or any judge thereof” in section 304 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., were omitted as surplusage.

Words “or assistant clerks” and “in any case” were added in subsection (b) to make the section applicable to that officer and consistent with the prohibition in this section against deputies of district court clerks.

Minor changes were made in phraseology.

AMENDMENTS

1984—Pub. L. 98-353 struck out “district” before “court”.