

JOHN E. MARTINELLI
JUDGE



FRANK S. LOMBARDI
CLERK
JULIA M. ROLLINS
DEPUTY CLERK

**PROBATE COURT OF THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE
RHODE ISLAND**

January 9, 1997

To The Honorable Vincent A. Cianci, Mayor and
The Honorable Council of the City of Providence

I am proud to submit the annual report of the operations of the Probate Court of the City of Providence for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1995 and ending June 30, 1996.

The cash receipts for this period amounted to \$211,127.81 which represents an increase of over \$4,000.00 from the previous year.

In the period from July 1, 1996 to December 31, 1996 the collections totaled \$106,210.39 which is up from \$97,596.69 from the same time of the previous year. This represents an increase of nearly \$9,000.00.

If the receipts continue as in the past, I would anticipate that the receipts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1997 to be around \$212,000.00 or an increase of over two thousand dollars.

The number of wills filed for probate this past year was 229 compared to 233 from last year, and the number of petitions for administration was 77 as compared to 90 for the previous year. There were 7 custodianships granted.

The Court has seen a proliferation of guardianships and the clerical responsibility associated therewith. The number of guardianships granted by the Court for this fiscal year was 80 representing a 23% increase in such filings from the previous year. There was a three-fold increase in the number of temporary guardianships filed. In addition thereto, the Court oversaw the filing of 107 status reports. This latter figure actually represents an underestimation since several status reports are filed by attorneys but never actually heard. Nonetheless they must be processed by the staff. There was 1 new petition for conservatorship granted and there were 3 adult adoptions granted during this period.

Name change petitions increased dramatically by 32% this past year. In addition, there were 39 petitions for the sale of real estate filed by various executors, guardians and administrators. There were also 372 miscellaneous petitions filed and granted or denied for various reasons.

There were 347 inventories filed by the fiduciaries and the necessary fees calculated, collected and reflected in the total receipts of the year. It should be noted that each inventory is monitored individually by the Court staff.

During the year there were 207 accounts filed and processed by guardians, conservators, executors and administrators. There were 196 affidavits of completed administration filed. Once again, the staff must monitor these accounts individually for accuracy and statutory compliance.

There were 4 new registry accounts opened for absentees totaling \$56,469.16. There were no new registry accounts opened for minors.

All of the above petitions were processed by the staff and advertised when required by statute. In addition, all petitions requiring a hearing were acted upon by the Judge or Acting Judge, in his absence.

The Court has continued its' tracking of pending estates. While the Court has continued with its' manual tracking system of monitoring guardianship estates for the filing of annual accounts and status reports, it has begun the process towards computerization. The staff has written throughout the US and has travelled to a number of Courts seeking input herein. We have also met with the City's computer people for a specialized Probate program.

All registry accounts, which have dramatically increased, are currently computerized in two separate formats. This has facilitated the presentation of these accounts to the internal auditors. In short, auditors can be provided with "on the spot" current status of all registry accounts.

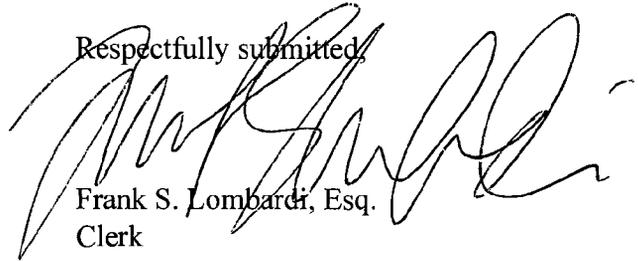
The ultimate goal is the installation of a program into our system and dissemination of the software to other Probate Courts throughout the State. Moreover, with computerization, timely filing of accounts will be facilitated through up-to-date communications with attorneys handling these pending files.

The Court also has been sending out notices and orders regarding petitions which have been pending for a considerable time without activity. In addition, we order attorneys and/or fiduciaries to file inventories, accounts, status reports and/or pay bond premiums, when said fiduciaries have failed to comply with the applicable statutes. During this report period, we have sent 196 citations and 178 orders to various attorneys

and fiduciaries. The automation of the Court has facilitated in this endeavor as well. Compliance by attorneys is the ultimate goal of this Court in this regard.

The Probate Court, as stated above, has taken action, sua sponte in all estate matters, in order to insure that the fiduciaries are complying with Rhode Island General Laws. The Probate Court is committed to further improvements, despite being shortstaffed, in all of the above referenced areas.

Respectfully submitted,



Frank S. Lombardi, Esq.
Clerk

IN CITY COUNCIL

JAN 16 1997

READ

WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.

Richard A. Clement CLERK

1-10-97

JAN 9 10 10 AM '97

DEPT. OF
PROVIDENCE, R.I.

RECEIVED
JAN 9 10 10 AM '97