



alaska judicial council

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Press Release

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Announcing Applicants

Ketchikan, Anchorage, and Fairbanks Superior Courts

Five attorneys have applied to the Alaska Judicial Council for a position on the Ketchikan Superior Court, seven attorneys have applied for a position on the Anchorage Superior Court, and six attorneys have applied for a position on the Fairbanks Superior Court. Applicants for the judgeships will be evaluated by the Council's seven members (the chief justice, three non-attorney members, and three attorney members). Comprehensive background investigations, a survey of Alaska Bar members, and personal interviews with the applicants are all part of the evaluations, according to the Council's Executive Director, Susanne DiPietro. Interviews with applicants and public hearings will be held in May 2022. The Council will select two or more nominees for each vacancy to send to the governor. The governor will have 45 days to make appointments from the Council's nominees after the Council makes its nominations.

The applicants for the Ketchikan Superior Court are:

Daniel Doty: Mr. Doty has been an Alaska resident for 14½ years and has practiced law for 8½ years. He graduated from the William & Mary Law School in 2013 and is currently an assistant U.S. attorney in Fairbanks.

Katherine H. Lybrand: Ms. Lybrand has been an Alaska resident for 18½ years and has practiced law for 8 years. She graduated from the University of Maine School of Law in 2013 and is currently an assistant attorney general in Juneau.

Kristian B. Pickrell: Mr. Pickrell has been an Alaska resident for 23½ years and has practiced law for 16½ years. He graduated from Ohio State University Moritz College of Law in 2004 and is currently an assistant district attorney in Ketchikan.

Amanda M. Schulz: Magistrate Judge Schulz has been an Alaska resident for 20½ years and has practiced law for 19½ years. She graduated from the University of Idaho, College of Law in 2001 and is currently a magistrate judge in Ketchikan.

John M. Whiteside: Mr. Whiteside has been an Alaska resident for 44 years and has practiced law for 16 years. He graduated from Washburn University School of Law in 2004 and is currently the staff attorney at Alaska Legal Services in Kenai.

The applicants for the Anchorage Superior Court are:

Kate Demarest: Ms. Demarest has been an Alaska resident for 11½ years and has practiced law for 13 years. She graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School in 2008 and is currently a senior assistant attorney general in the Opinions, Appeals, and Ethics section at the Department of Law in Anchorage.

Laura Hartz: Ms. Hartz has been an Alaska resident for 13 years and has practiced law for 14 years. She graduated from the University of Oregon School of Law in 2005 and is currently an assistant public advocate in Anchorage.

Margaret Paton Walsh: Ms. Paton Walsh has been an Alaska resident for 17½ years and has practiced law for 16 years. She graduated from Harvard Law School in 2004 and is currently the Chief Assistant Attorney General, Special Litigation Section, at the Department of Law in Anchorage.

Christina Rankin: Ms. Rankin has been an Alaska resident for 19½ years and has practiced law for 19½ years. She graduated from Syracuse University College of Law in 2002 and is currently in private practice in Anchorage.

Peter Sandberg: Mr. Sandberg has been an Alaska resident for 41½ years and has practiced law for 15 years. He graduated from the University of Colorado Law School in 2006 and is currently in private practice in Anchorage.

Ian Wheelles: Mr. Wheelles has been an Alaska resident for 39 years and has practiced law for 13½ years. He graduated from the University of Idaho College of Law in 2007 and is currently in private practice in Anchorage.

John M. Whiteside: Mr. Whiteside has been an Alaska resident for 44 years and has practiced law for 16 years. He graduated from Washburn University School of Law in 2004 and is currently the staff attorney at Alaska Legal Services in Kenai.

The applicants for the Fairbanks Superior Court are:

Daniel Doty: Mr. Doty has been an Alaska resident for 14½ years and has practiced law for 8½ years. He graduated from the William & Mary Law School in 2013 and is currently an assistant U.S. attorney in Fairbanks.

Jennifer Page Hite: Ms. Hite has been an Alaska resident for 20 years and has practiced law for 25 years. She graduated from the University of Akron, School of Law in 1995 and is currently an assistant public advocate in Fairbanks.

Risa C. Leonard: Magistrate Judge Leonard has been an Alaska resident for 12 years and has practiced law for 11 years. She graduated from Syracuse University College of Law in 2008 and is currently a magistrate judge in Fairbanks.

William T. Montgomery: Judge Montgomery has been an Alaska resident for 10½ years and has practiced law for 9½ years. He graduated from William Mitchell College of Law in 2010 and is currently a district court judge in Bethel.

Kirk Schwalm: Mr. Schwalm has been an Alaska resident for 45½ years and has practiced law for 11 years. He graduated from Lewis and Clark Law School in 2010 and is currently in private practice in Fairbanks.

John M. Whiteside: Mr. Whiteside has been an Alaska resident for 44 years and has practiced law for 16 years. He graduated from Washburn University School of Law in 2004 and is currently the staff attorney at Alaska Legal Services in Kenai.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THESE APPLICANTS IS ENCOURAGED DURING THE EVALUATION PHASE OF THE COUNCIL'S WORK. TO COMMENT, OR FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT SUSANNE DIPIETRO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALASKA JUDICIAL COUNCIL, 510 L STREET, SUITE 450, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501-1295, (907) 279-2526.

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