Alaska Judicial Council

Judicial Retention Survey: Social Service Professionals

Technical Report

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Executive Summary

Alaska statutes require the Alaska Judicial Council to evaluate Alaska judges eligible to stand for retention election. This survey was conducted among Alaska social service professionals to obtain information about their direct professional and other relevant experience with the judges, and their assessments of judicial performance. This 2020 survey included 20 trial court judges: Judge Romano D. DiBenedetto, Judge Paul A. Roetman, Judge Dani Crosby, Judge Andrew Guidi, Judge Jennifer S. Henderson, Judge Yvonne Lamoureux, Judge Gregory Miller, Judge Christina Reigh, Judge Jennifer K. Wells, Judge Jonathan A. Woodman, Judge Leslie Dickson, Judge Michael Franciosi, Judge J. Patrick Hanley, Judge Michael Logue, Judge Kari L. McCrea, Judge David R. Wallace, Judge Pamela S. Washington, Judge Nathaniel Peters, Judge Matthew Christian, and Judge William T. Montgomery. Seven superior court judges were rated by ten or more respondents, and their results are reported here: Judges Crosby, Guidi, Henderson, Lamoureux, Miller, Woodman, and Peters. The remaining judges were not rated by enough respondents to report valid statistical results.

The Alaska Judicial Council asked social service professionals to evaluate the judges on five characteristics: *Impartiality/Fairness, Integrity, Judicial Temperament, Diligence,* and *Overall*. The rating scale ranged from *Poor* (1) to *Excellent* (5).

Table 1 shows the mean ratings for each judge by respondents with direct professional experience on all five characteristics. Judges are listed in order by judicial district. Within each judicial district, superior court judges appear first and are followed by district court judges. Note that no judges in the First Judicial District were eligible to stand for retention in 2020. No judges in the Second Judicial District were rated by enough respondents to report the results.

Table 1
Mean Ratings of Judges

	n	Impartiality/ Fairness *M*	Integrity *M*	Judicial Temperament *M*	Diligence *M*	Overall *M*
Judge Dani Crosby	10	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.3
Judge Andrew Guidi	21	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.5
Judge Jennifer S. Henderson	12	4.2	4.4	4.8	4.5	4.4
Judge Yvonne Lamoureux	17	4.1	4.2	3.9	4.2	4.2
Judge Gregory Miller	17	3.9	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.0
Judge Jonathan A. Woodman	22	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.5
Judge Nathaniel Peters	10	3.9	4.1	4.3	3.9	3.9

Note: Ratings from only those respondents with direct professional experience with the judges.

2020 Judicial Retention Survey: Social Service Professionals

Introduction

Alaska statutes require that the Alaska Judicial Council (Council) evaluate judges standing for retention in an election year. The Council makes a recommendation to the State's voters to either retain or not retain each judge. As part of the information used to fulfill its mandate, the Council distributed surveys to Alaska social service professionals and asked them to rate judges on five characteristics: *Impartiality/Fairness, Integrity, Judicial Temperament, Diligence,* and *Overall.* Each survey also contained demographic questions about the respondents, including type of work, length of experience, community population, location of work, and gender.

To maintain objectivity, the Council contracted with the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), a research workgroup at the University of Alaska Anchorage. ISER was responsible for all aspects of distribution and data collection for the survey as well as data analysis. ISER prepared this report summarizing survey procedures and results.

The 2020 retention survey for social service professionals included 20 trial court judges eligible for retention. The judges included: Judge Romano D. DiBenedetto, Judge Paul A. Roetman, Judge Dani Crosby, Judge Andrew Guidi, Judge Jennifer S. Henderson, Judge Yvonne Lamoureux, Judge Gregory Miller, Judge Christina Reigh, Judge Jennifer K. Wells, Judge Jonathan A. Woodman, Judge Leslie Dickson, Judge Michael Franciosi, Judge J. Patrick Hanley, Judge Michael Logue, Judge Kari L. McCrea, Judge David R. Wallace, Judge Pamela S. Washington, Judge Nathaniel Peters, Judge Matthew Christian, and Judge William T. Montgomery. Seven superior court judges were rated by ten or more respondents, and their results are reported here: Judges Crosby, Guidi, Henderson, Lamoureux, Miller, Woodman, and Peters. For the judges included in this report, respondents' demographic information is reported in Tables 2 through 5, and not in the judges' individual tables, in order to preserve respondents' anonymity.

Methodology

State of Alaska social service professionals, specifically Office of Children's Services protective service specialists and managers (also known as social workers), guardians ad litem, and court appointed special advocate (CASA) volunteers, were invited via email to participate in an online survey.

Of the 430 social service professionals invited via email to participate, 117 initiated an online survey for a return rate of 27.2%. Of the 117 returned surveys, 44 did not rate any judges; 73 (62.4%) respondents evaluated one or more judges. Table 2 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 2
Respondent Characteristics

		All Respondents		Respondents who Rated ≥ 1 Judge	
		n	*%*	*n*	*%*
	All respondents	**117**	**100**	**73**	**100**
Type of Work					
	No response	-	-	-	-
	Protective Services Specialist (aka Social Worker)	80	68.4	51	69.9
	Guardian Ad Litem (GAL)	12	10.3	8	11.0
	CASA Volunteer	20	17.1	10	13.7
	Other	5	4.3	4	5.5
Length of Experience					
	No response	2	1.7	-	-
	5 years or fewer	70	59.8	44	60.3
	6 to 10 years	24	20.5	16	21.9
	11 to 15 years	10	8.5	7	9.6
	16 to 20 years	6	5.1	4	5.5
	More than 20 years	5	4.3	2	2.7
Community Population					
	No response	8	6.8	2	2.7
	Under 2,000	4	3.4	2	2.7
	Between 2,000 and 35,000	36	30.8	20	27.4
	Over 35,000	69	59.0	49	67.1
Location of Work					
	No response	8	6.8	2	2.7
	First District	17	14.5	2	2.7
	Second District	5	4.3	4	5.5
	Third District	72	61.5	56	76.7
	Fourth District	15	12.8	9	12.3
	Outside Alaska	-	-	-	-
Gender					
	No response	3	2.6	1	1.4
	Male	22	18.8	9	12.3
	Female	92	78.6	63	86.3

* This includes all respondents to the survey who rated at least one judge.

Instrumentation

The survey contained the names of the judges eligible for retention, questions about demographic information for each respondent, five evaluation items for each judge, and space for respondents to provide additional comments regarding each judge.

Respondents evaluated judges in five areas of performance. Detailed instructions for each domain were provided:

Impartiality/Fairness: Please evaluate the judge's sense of basic fairness and justice and whether the judge treats all parties equally.

Integrity: Please evaluate whether the judge's conduct is free from impropriety or appearance of impropriety and whether the judge makes decisions without regard to possible public criticism.

Judicial Temperament: Please evaluate the judge's courtesy and freedom from arrogance and whether the judge manifests human understanding and compassion.

Diligence: Please evaluate whether the judge is prepared for court proceedings, works diligently, and is reasonably prompt in making decisions.

Overall Evaluation: Please provide your overall assessment of the judge's performance.

Respondents assigned ratings for each domain using a five-point Likert scale that ranged from *Poor* (1) to *Excellent* (5). Detailed descriptions of the meaning of each point on the Likert scale were provided:

(1) *Poor*	(2) *Deficient*	(3) *Acceptable*	(4) *Good*	(5) *Excellent*
Seldom meets minimum standards of performance for this court	Does not always meet minimum standards of performance for this court	Meets minimum standards of performance for this court	Often exceeds minimum standards of performance for this court	Consistently exceeds minimum standards of performance for this court

Confidentiality and Data Safety

The survey introduction included a statement that reassured respondents of the confidentiality of their responses. Confidentiality is also a paramount concern at ISER and translated into specific procedures related to data security. Because data such as those collected through the judicial retention survey are of a sensitive nature, ISER has rigorous procedures to protect data. Organizational policies and procedures highlight the requirement for confidentiality and ensure that only staff involved with the project have access to the data. All data are maintained on a secure server.

Each potential respondent was provided with a unique URL that could only be used once and only accessed from the e-mail address to which it was sent. Online data were downloaded from the survey website and imported into SPSS for analysis.

Results

Two sets of results are presented in this section of the report. First, respondents' level of experience with each judge is shown. Then, a summary table presents the ratings and comparisons of the judges. Many of the cross tabulations yield results based on small numbers of respondents. Results based on small numbers of respondents should be regarded with caution and more weight given to the overall results.

In the tables, judges appear in order based on court/district. Within each district, superior court judges appear first and are followed by district court judges.

Seven superior court judges were rated by ten or more respondents, and their results are reported here: Judges Crosby, Guidi, Henderson, Lamoureux, Miller, Woodman, and Peters. The remaining judges were not rated by enough respondents to report valid statistical results.

Respondents' Level of Experience with Each Judge

All respondents were asked to describe the basis of their evaluation for each judge they rated, with options of direct professional experience, professional reputation, and other personal contacts.

Table 3 shows the type of experience of respondents for each judge.

Ratings of Judges

In the tables that follow, responses to the rating questions are shown in a variety of ways. Most tables show the number of respondents (*n*) and the average rating (*M*). Tables 4 and 5 present details on the *Overall* item. Table 4 compares all ratings to those from respondents with direct professional experience and includes the median rating (*Mdn*) and the standard deviation (*SD*) in addition to number of respondents and average. Table 5 presents data only from those respondents who indicated direct professional experience. Table 5 provides the distribution of responses on the *Overall* item.

For each individual judge, Tables 6-21 provide information on frequency and ratings by level of experience with each judge.

Table 3
Level of Experience with Judges

	n	% of all respondents who rated judge	Percent of Respondents Basing Ratings on…		
			Direct Professional Experience	Professional Reputation	Other Personal Contacts
Judge Dani Crosby	10	8.5	100	-	-
Judge Andrew Guidi	23	19.7	91.3	4.3	4.3
Judge Jennifer S. Henderson	13	11.1	92.3	7.7	-
Judge Yvonne Lamoureux	17	14.5	100	-	-
Judge Gregory Miller	20	17.1	85.0	5.0	10.0
Judge Jonathan A. Woodman	24	20.5	91.7	8.3	-
Judge Nathaniel Peters	10	8.5	100	-	-

Table 4
Summary of Ratings on the "Overall" Variable

	All Respondents				Respondents with Direct Professional Experience			
	n	*M*	*Mdn*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*Mdn*	*SD*
Judge Dani Crosby	10	4.3	4.0	0.7	10	4.3	4.0	0.7
Judge Andrew Guidi	23	4.5	5.0	0.7	21	4.5	5.0	0.7
Judge Jennifer S. Henderson	13	4.5	5.0	0.7	12	4.4	4.5	0.7
Judge Yvonne Lamoureux	17	4.2	4.0	0.9	17	4.2	4.0	0.9
Judge Gregory Miller	19	4.1	4.0	1.1	17	4.0	4.0	1.1
Judge Jonathan A. Woodman	24	4.4	4.0	0.6	22	4.5	4.5	0.6
Judge Nathaniel Peters	9	3.9	5.0	1.4	9	3.9	5.0	1.4

Table 5
Distribution of Responses for Overall Rating

		Poor		Deficient		Acceptable		Good		Excellent	
	n	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Judge Dani Crosby	10	-	-	-	-	1	10.0	5	50.0	4	40.0
Judge Andrew Guidi	21	-	-	-	-	3	14.3	4	19.0	14	66.7
Judge Jennifer S. Henderson	12	-	-	-	-	1	8.3	5	41.7	6	50.0
Judge Yvonne Lamoureux	17	-	-	1	5.9	2	11.8	7	41.2	7	41.2
Judge Gregory Miller	17	1	5.9	-	-	4	23.5	5	29.4	7	41.2
Judge Jonathan A. Woodman	22	-	-	-	-	1	4.5	10	45.5	11	50.0
Judge Nathaniel Peters	9	-	-	2	22.2	2	22.2	-	-	5	55.6

Note: Ratings from only those respondents with direct professional experience with the judge

Table 6
Judge Dani Crosby
Demographic Description of Respondents' Experience

		n	%
	All respondents	**10**	**100**
Experience with Judge			
	Direct professional experience	10	100
	Professional reputation	-	-
	Other personal contacts	-	-
Detailed Experience*			
	Recent experience (within last 5 years)	10	100
	Substantial amount of experience	3	30.0
	Moderate amount of experience	3	30.0
	Limited amount of experience	4	40.0

*Only among those respondents reporting direct professional experience with the judge.

Table 7
Judge Dani Crosby
Detailed Responses

	n	Impartiality/ Fairness M	Integrity M	Judicial Temperament M	Diligence M	Overall M
All respondents	10	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.3
Basis for Evaluation						
Direct professional experience	**10**	**4.0**	**4.4**	**4.3**	**4.2**	**4.3**
Experience within last 5 years	10	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.3
Experience not within last 5 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
Substantial amount of experience	3	4.3	4.7	4.3	4.3	4.7
Moderate amount of experience	3	4.0	4.0	4.7	4.0	4.0
Limited amount of experience	4	3.8	4.5	4.0	4.3	4.3
Professional reputation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other personal contacts	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 8
Judge Andrew Guidi
Demographic Description of Respondents' Experience

		n	*%*
	All respondents	**23**	**100**
Experience with Judge			
	Direct professional experience	21	91.3
	Professional reputation	1	4.3
	Other personal contacts	1	4.3
Detailed Experience*			
	Recent experience (within last 5 years)	20	95.2
	Substantial amount of experience	8	38.1
	Moderate amount of experience	5	23.8
	Limited amount of experience	8	38.1

*Only among those respondents reporting direct professional experience with the judge.

Table 9
Judge Andrew Guidi
Detailed Responses

	n	Impartiality/ Fairness *M*	Integrity *M*	Judicial Temperament *M*	Diligence *M*	Overall *M*
All respondents	23	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.5
Basis for Evaluation						
Direct professional experience	**21**	**4.6**	**4.6**	**4.5**	**4.5**	**4.5**
Experience within last 5 years	20	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.6
Experience not within last 5 years	1	4.0	3.0	2.0	4.0	3.0
Substantial amount of experience	8	4.5	4.8	4.6	4.6	4.5
Moderate amount of experience	5	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4
Limited amount of experience	8	4.8	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.6
Professional reputation	1	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0
Other personal contacts	1	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0

Table 10
Judge Jennifer S. Henderson
Demographic Description of Respondents' Experience

		n	*%*
	All respondents	**13**	**100**
Experience with Judge			
	Direct professional experience	12	92.3
	Professional reputation	1	7.7
	Other personal contacts	-	-
Detailed Experience*			
	Recent experience (within last 5 years)	12	100
	Substantial amount of experience	5	41.7
	Moderate amount of experience	3	25.0
	Limited amount of experience	4	33.3

*Only among those respondents reporting direct professional experience with the judge.

Table 11
Judge Jennifer S. Henderson
Detailed Responses

	n	Impartiality/ Fairness *M*	Integrity *M*	Judicial Temperament *M*	Diligence *M*	Overall *M*
All respondents	13	4.2	4.5	4.8	4.5	4.5
Basis for Evaluation						
Direct professional experience	**12**	**4.2**	**4.4**	**4.8**	**4.5**	**4.4**
Experience within last 5 years	12	4.2	4.4	4.8	4.5	4.4
Experience not within last 5 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
Substantial amount of experience	5	4.6	4.6	4.8	4.6	4.8
Moderate amount of experience	3	3.3	4.0	5.0	4.0	3.7
Limited amount of experience	4	4.3	4.5	4.8	4.8	4.5
Professional reputation	1	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Other personal contacts	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 12
Judge Yvonne Lamoureux
Demographic Description of Respondents' Experience

		n	%
	All respondents	**17**	**100**
Experience with Judge			
	Direct professional experience	17	100
	Professional reputation	-	-
	Other personal contacts	-	-
Detailed Experience*			
	Recent experience (within last 5 years)	15	93.8
	Substantial amount of experience	6	35.3
	Moderate amount of experience	10	58.8
	Limited amount of experience	1	5.9

*Only among those respondents reporting direct professional experience with the judge.

Table 13
Judge Yvonne Lamoureux
Detailed Responses

	n	Impartiality/ Fairness M	Integrity M	Judicial Temperament M	Diligence M	Overall M
All respondents	17	4.1	4.2	3.9	4.2	4.2
Basis for Evaluation						
Direct professional experience	**17**	**4.1**	**4.2**	**3.9**	**4.2**	**4.2**
Experience within last 5 years	15	4.1	4.3	4.0	4.1	4.2
Experience not within last 5 years	1	5.0	4.0	3.0	5.0	4.0
Substantial amount of experience	6	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.2
Moderate amount of experience	10	4.2	4.3	3.7	4.1	4.2
Limited amount of experience	1	3.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Professional reputation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other personal contacts	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 14
Judge Gregory Miller
Demographic Description of Respondents' Experience

		n	*%*
	All respondents	**20**	**100**
Experience with Judge			
	Direct professional experience	17	85.0
	Professional reputation	1	5.0
	Other personal contacts	2	10.0
Detailed Experience*			
	Recent experience (within last 5 years)	17	100
	Substantial amount of experience	6	35.3
	Moderate amount of experience	7	41.2
	Limited amount of experience	4	23.5

*Only among those respondents reporting direct professional experience with the judge.

Table 15
Judge Gregory Miller
Detailed Responses

	n	Impartiality/ Fairness *M*	Integrity *M*	Judicial Temperament *M*	Diligence *M*	Overall *M*
All respondents	20	3.9	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.1
Basis for Evaluation						
Direct professional experience	**17**	**3.9**	**4.2**	**4.1**	**4.1**	**4.0**
Experience within last 5 years	17	3.9	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.0
Experience not within last 5 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
Substantial amount of experience	6	3.7	4.2	4.0	3.8	3.8
Moderate amount of experience	7	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0
Limited amount of experience	4	4.3	4.5	4.0	4.3	4.3
Professional reputation	1	-	-	-	-	-
Other personal contacts	2	5.0	4.5	4.5	5.0	4.5

Table 16
Judge Jonathan A. Woodman
Demographic Description of Respondents' Experience

		n	*%*
	All respondents	**24**	**100**
Experience with Judge			
	Direct professional experience	22	91.7
	Professional reputation	2	8.3
	Other personal contacts	-	-
Detailed Experience*			
	Recent experience (within last 5 years)	22	100
	Substantial amount of experience	6	27.3
	Moderate amount of experience	13	59.1
	Limited amount of experience	3	13.6

*Only among those respondents reporting direct professional experience with the judge.

Table 17
Judge Jonathan A. Woodman
Detailed Responses

	n	Impartiality/ Fairness *M*	Integrity *M*	Judicial Temperament *M*	Diligence *M*	Overall *M*
All respondents	24	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.4
Basis for Evaluation						
Direct professional experience	**22**	**4.4**	**4.4**	**4.6**	**4.4**	**4.5**
Experience within last 5 years	22	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.5
Experience not within last 5 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
Substantial amount of experience	6	4.5	4.7	4.7	4.3	4.5
Moderate amount of experience	13	4.3	4.3	4.6	4.4	4.5
Limited amount of experience	3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3
Professional reputation	2	4.0	4.5	4.0	3.5	4.0
Other personal contacts	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 18
Judge Nathaniel Peters
Demographic Description of Respondents' Experience

		n	%
	All respondents	**10**	**100**
Experience with Judge			
	Direct professional experience	10	100
	Professional reputation	-	-
	Other personal contacts	-	-
Detailed Experience*			
	Recent experience (within last 5 years)	10	100
	Substantial amount of experience	6	60.0
	Moderate amount of experience	3	30.0
	Limited amount of experience	1	10.0

*Only among those respondents reporting direct professional experience with the judge.

Table 19
Judge Nathaniel Peters
Detailed Responses

	n	Impartiality/ Fairness M	Integrity M	Judicial Temperament M	Diligence M	Overall M
All respondents	10	3.9	4.1	4.3	3.9	3.9
Basis for Evaluation						
Direct professional experience	**10**	**3.9**	**4.1**	**4.3**	**3.9**	**3.9**
Experience within last 5 years	10	3.9	4.1	4.3	3.9	3.9
Experience not within last 5 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
Substantial amount of experience	6	4.0	4.0	4.3	4.3	4.2
Moderate amount of experience	3	3.0	4.0	4.0	2.5	2.5
Limited amount of experience	1	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0
Professional reputation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other personal contacts	-	-	-	-	-	-