



alaska judicial council

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November 8, 2011

Re: Bethel Superior Court

Dear Member of the Alaska Bar Association:

The Alaska Judicial Council has re-opened its solicitation of applicants for the vacancy on the Bethel Superior Court resulting from the death of Judge Marvin Charles Hamilton, III. This letter provides essential information about the position and the new application deadline. For more information, please contact the Judicial Council at 279-2526, or by e-mail at lcohn@ajc.state.ak.us.

Alaska judges must conform their conduct to the Alaska Code of Judicial Conduct and the laws of Alaska and the United States. They must be familiar with Alaska law, procedure, and trial practice. A superior court judge must meet the qualifications set out at AS 22.10.090. He or she must: be a citizen of the United States and of the State of Alaska; be a resident of Alaska for five years immediately preceding appointment; have engaged in the active practice of law, as defined in AS 22.05.070, for not less than five years immediately preceding appointment; and must be licensed to practice law in Alaska at the time of appointment.

The annual salary of a superior court judge in Bethel is \$184,884. *The Alaska Court System will be seeking a modification in the cost of living adjustment applicable to the salaries of judges in rural Alaska, including Bethel.* The court will request an adjustment that more closely matches the adjustment applicable to executive branch attorneys who work in rural Alaska. It is important for applicants to recognize that the legislature may not approve any such change. Judges also receive personal leave as established by the Administrative Rules of Court, state-paid health and dental benefits, and judicial retirement system benefits.

An application form for this position may be obtained by writing or calling the Alaska Judicial Council. Application forms may also be obtained on-line by visiting the Council's Internet site: www.ajc.state.ak.us. Completed applications for this position must be received by the Alaska Judicial Council no later than **3:00 p.m. on December 28, 2011.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry Cohn".

Larry Cohn
Executive Director

(Over)

Judicial Position Description

Bethel Superior Court, Fourth Judicial District

To be successful, a superior court judge must be proficient in understanding oral and written communications, and must effectively communicate orally and in writing with parties, attorneys, members of the public, and court employees. Judges must regularly employ a high level of analytical legal reasoning, must possess unimpaired judgment, and must be able to concentrate on and evaluate evidence and legal arguments. Judges must be willing and able to render timely and impartial decisions, without regard for popular sentiment. They must treat parties, attorneys, the public, and court employees with fairness, courtesy and respect, and they must work effectively under pressure. In addition to presiding over cases, Alaska judges are expected to serve on court committees working to improve the administration of justice in the state.

The working environment is a courtroom and office setting. Alaska judges typically sit in court or in chambers for long periods of time, but sitting is not an essential requirement of the job; some judges prefer to stand or make comparable adjustments for their individual needs. Judges may be required to travel, including travel to rural areas, often by small airplane. They may be temporarily reassigned to different court locations within the state. Judges may share weekend duty with other judicial officers.

A superior court position is open in Bethel due to a vacancy created by the death of Judge Marvin Hamilton. Bethel has two superior court judges who preside over a general jurisdiction trial court in the Fourth Judicial District. In the 2010 fiscal year, Alaska Court System data indicate that 692 cases were filed in the Bethel Superior Court, including 200 felony cases, 168 probate matters, 70 domestic relations matters, 112 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 66 delinquency matters, and 76 general civil matters. Bethel Superior Court judges hear both criminal and civil matters. The annual salary of a Bethel Superior Court judge is \$184,884, but the Alaska Court System is seeking a modification of the cost of living adjustment applicable to rural judges that may increase this amount.

Superior court judges must meet the qualifications set out at AS 22.10.090. They must be familiar with Alaska law, procedure, and trial practice. Alaska judges must conform their conduct to the Alaska Code of Judicial Conduct and the laws of Alaska and the United States. Superior court judges stand for retention at the first general election held more than three years after their initial appointment and every six years thereafter. Further information regarding the jurisdiction, authority, and duties of superior court judges may be found at AS 22.10.