



alaska judicial council

1029 W. Third Avenue, Suite 201, Anchorage, Alaska 99501-1969
<http://www.ajc.state.ak.us>

(907) 279-2526 FAX (907) 276-5046
E-mail: postmaster@ajc.state.ak.us

Press Release

January 6, 2012

Judicial Vacancy Announcement

Bethel District Court Fourth Judicial District

The Alaska Judicial Council is now receiving applications for a judgeship on the Bethel District Court. The vacancy will occur due to the upcoming retirement of Judge Dennis P. Cummings. Interested persons may obtain application forms from the Judicial Council offices or online at the Council's website (www.ajc.state.ak.us). The Judicial Council must have completed applications in its office by 3:00 p.m. on February 6, 2012.

A district court judge must be a citizen of the United States and the state of Alaska, at least 21 years of age, a resident for at least five years immediately preceding appointment, and (1) have been engaged in the active practice of law for not fewer than three years immediately preceding appointment and at the time of appointment licensed to practice law in Alaska; or (2) have served for at least seven years as a magistrate in the state. A magistrate who seeks an appointment as a district court judge must also be a graduate of a law school accredited or approved by the Council of Legal Education of the American Bar Association or the Association of American Law Schools.

Applications are reviewed by the Judicial Council, a seven member citizens commission with three attorneys, three non-attorneys, and the chief justice of the Supreme Court, who serves as Chair, *ex officio*. Each applicant completes a detailed questionnaire covering all aspects of the applicant's personal and professional history. Applicants also submit a legal writing sample and references.

Following the application closing date, the Council conducts a comprehensive investigation of the applicants. The Council asks the public for comments; reviews criminal and credit records; examines any litigation involving the applicant; looks at bar or judicial disciplinary records; sends out requests for more detailed information to attorneys/judges in recent cases handled by the applicant; checks references supplied by the applicants; contacts all former employers; surveys Alaska Bar Association members about legal skills, integrity and other qualities; and does any other needed investigation.

Council members meet to conduct a public hearing, and interview every applicant for the vacancy. Most meetings are in the location of the vacancy to encourage public participation.

At the end of the interviews, the Council discusses the applicants, and votes on the two or more most qualified to nominate for appointment. The Council votes on which applicants are the most qualified based upon the Council's consideration of their professional competence, integrity, fairness, temperament, judgment, legal and life experience, and demonstrated commitment to public and community service. The governor then has 45 days in which to appoint a judge from the Council's list of nominees.

Persons interested in applying for this position may obtain more information from the Judicial Council at 1029 W. Third Avenue, Suite 201, Anchorage, Alaska 99501-1969, (907) 279-2526.

CONTACT:

Larry Cohn, Executive Director
Alaska Judicial Council
1029 W. Third Avenue, Suite 201
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-1969
Tel: (907) 279-2526 x 1
Fax: (907) 276-5046