

Judicial Position Description

Alaska Court of Appeals

After appointment of a new judge, four judges will sit on the Alaska Court of Appeals. Three-judge panels will consider and decide cases. An intermediate appellate court, the Alaska Court of Appeals has appellate jurisdiction in actions and proceedings commenced in the superior court involving criminal prosecution, post-conviction relief, delinquency matters, extradition, habeas corpus, probation and parole, and bail. It also hears sentence appeals. For more information about the court's jurisdiction see AS 22.07.020. According to the Alaska Court System's fiscal year 2019 annual report, 256 cases were filed in the Alaska Court of Appeals in that period including 182 merit appeals, 23 sentence appeals, 36 petitions for review or hearing, and 15 original applications/bail appeals.

Court of appeals judges must have excellent communication skills, both oral and written. They must be capable of a very high level of analytical reasoning. They must possess unimpaired judgment at all times. They must thoroughly evaluate briefs, motions and arguments and render decisions in a timely and even-handed manner. Judges must treat colleagues, parties, attorneys, employees and the public with fairness, courtesy, and respect. They must work effectively under pressure. Judges must be familiar with Alaska law, procedure, and precedent. Judges must conform their conduct to the Code of Judicial Conduct and to the laws of the State of Alaska and the United States. Judges often must sit (or stand) at a desk or bench for prolonged periods of time.

The principal office of the court of appeals is in Anchorage. One judge may maintain an office in Fairbanks, and one judge may maintain an office in Juneau.¹ Judge Harbison currently maintains an office in Fairbanks. The new judge may maintain an office in Anchorage or Juneau. Sessions of the court of appeals are held as established by the chief judge, after consultation with the court of appeals, and at locations designated by the chief judge after consultation with the court of appeals and the chief justice. Judges may travel to hear cases in other locations. Judges may be assigned to other courts as needed. Each court of appeals judge is assisted by, and is responsible for the supervision of, two law clerks and a judicial assistant.

Court of appeals judges stand for retention at the first general election more than three years after initial appointment and every eight years thereafter as provided in AS 15.35.053. The annual salary of a court of appeals judge in Anchorage is \$193,830. A judge who maintains an office in Juneau or Fairbanks is eligible for the geographic differential for those areas.

¹ Administrative Rule 17.5 as amended by Supreme Court Order No. 1960, eff. May 14, 2020.