



alaska judicial council

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Press Release

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Judicial Nominees *Anchorage Superior Court*

The Alaska Judicial Council met in Anchorage on May 11, 2022, to interview applicants for a position on the Anchorage Superior Court. Following its meeting, the Alaska Judicial Council announced that **Kate Demarest, Laura Hartz, Margaret Paton Walsh, Christina Rankin, and Ian Wheelles** were nominated as the most qualified applicants to fill the judicial vacancy. The governor now has 45 days in which to make the appointment from among these nominees.

The Judicial Council is required to nominate the most qualified applicants applying for a judicial vacancy. (The framers of our Constitution referred to this standard as the "best available timber.")

The Council is a citizens' commission created by the Alaska Constitution composed of three attorneys, three non-attorneys, and the Chief Justice of the Alaska Supreme Court. The Council completes an extensive investigation and evaluation of judicial applicants. The Council reviews each applicant's education, experience, bar discipline and credit records, participation in community activities, and other records. It asks members of the Alaska Bar to evaluate the applicants, encourages the public to submit comments, and interviews the applicants.

Nominees for the Anchorage Superior Court are:

Kate Demarest: Ms. Demarest has been an Alaska resident for 11½ years and has practiced law for 13½ 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 13½ 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 18 years and has practiced law for 16½ 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.

Ian Wheelles: Mr. Wheelles has been an Alaska resident for 39½ years and has practiced law for 14 years. He graduated from the University of Idaho College of Law in 2007 and is currently in private practice in Anchorage.

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