



# 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](mailto:postmaster@ajc.state.ak.us)

December 23, 2011

Re: Alaska Supreme Court

Dear Member of the Alaska Bar Association:


The Alaska Judicial Council is seeking applicants for a position on the **Alaska Supreme Court** that will be created by the impending appointment of Justice Morgan Christen to the United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit. This letter provides essential information about the position and the application deadline. For more information, please contact the Judicial Council at 279-2526, or by e-mail at [lcohn@ajc.state.ak.us](mailto: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 supreme court justice must meet the qualifications set out at AS 22.05.070. 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 eight years immediately preceding appointment; and must be licensed to practice law in Alaska at the time of appointment.

The annual salary of a supreme court justice is \$192,372. Justices 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](http://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 January 30, 2012.**

Sincerely,

  
Larry Cohn  
Executive Director

(Over: Alaska Supreme Court position description)

## **Judicial Position Description Alaska Supreme Court**

Five justices sit on the Alaska Supreme Court. The Alaska Supreme Court has final appellate jurisdiction in all Alaska state court proceedings. The supreme court hears civil appeals, including administrative appeals from the superior court, as a matter of right and criminal appeals from the Alaska Court of Appeals upon grant of petition. The court hears judicial discipline appeals from the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct and attorney application and discipline cases from the Alaska Bar Association. The court may, upon its discretion, decide questions of state law certified from the federal courts. The court also promulgates the Alaska Rules of Court and administers the Alaska Court System. According to the Alaska Court System's fiscal year 2010 annual report, 355 cases were filed in the Alaska Supreme Court, including 186 civil appeals, 85 petitions for hearing, 59 petitions for review, and 25 other cases.

Each supreme court justice is assisted by and is responsible for the supervision of three law clerks and a judicial assistant. The supreme court hears cases monthly in Anchorage and Fairbanks, semi-annually in Juneau, and as needed in other Alaskan communities.

The principal office of the supreme court is in Anchorage. Under Administrative Rule 17(b), a supreme court justice may maintain an office at a place other than the principal office as designated by order of the court or of the chief justice. In the past, Fairbanks and Juneau have been approved. Justices residing in a location other than Anchorage must be prepared to travel frequently to Anchorage for oral arguments and court meetings. Justices residing in Anchorage periodically travel to hear cases in Juneau and Fairbanks. Justices may travel to hear cases in other locations.

Supreme court justices must be capable of a very high level of analytical reasoning. They must have excellent communication skills, both written and oral. 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. Justices must treat colleagues, parties, attorneys, employees, and the public with fairness, courtesy, and respect. They must work effectively under pressure. Justices must be familiar with Alaska law, procedure, and precedent. Justices must conform their conduct to the Code of Judicial Conduct and to the laws of the State of Alaska and the United States. Justices often must sit (or stand) at a desk or bench for prolonged periods of time.

Supreme court justices stand for retention at the first general election more than three years after initial appointment and every ten years thereafter. The annual salary of a supreme court justice is \$192,372.