



alaska judicial council

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December 27, 2017

Re: Vacancies on the Superior and District Courts

Dear Member of the Alaska Bar Association:

The Alaska Judicial Council is seeking applicants for vacancies on the following courts:

Anchorage Superior Court (2 positions)
Bethel District Court
Bethel Superior Court
Fairbanks Superior Court
Juneau Superior Court
Kenai Superior Court

This letter provides essential information about the positions and the application deadline. For more information, please contact the Judicial Council at 279-2526, or by e-mail at sdipietro@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.

A **district court judge** must meet the qualifications set out at AS 22.15.160. He or she must: be a citizen of the United States and of the State of Alaska; be at least 21 years of age, be a resident of Alaska for at least five years immediately preceding appointment; and either (1) have engaged in the active practice of law, as defined in AS 22.05.070, for not less than three years immediately preceding appointment; and be licensed to practice law in Alaska at the time of appointment, or (2) have served for at least seven years as a magistrate in the state. In addition, Administrative Rule 19.1 requires that a magistrate who seeks appointment as a district court judge 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.

The annual salaries of judges on these courts are listed in the position descriptions. 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 these positions 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. If applicants wish to apply for more than one position, only one application is needed; indicate the positions on the application. **Completed applications for these positions must be received by the Alaska Judicial Council no later than 3:00 p.m. on February 2, 2018.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susanne DiPietro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Susanne DiPietro
Executive Director

(Attached: Position descriptions)

Judicial Position Description

To be successful, a 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.

Superior Court Judge

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.

District Court Judge

District court judges must meet the qualifications set out at AS 22.15.160. District court judges stand for retention at the first general election held more than two years after their initial appointment, and every four years thereafter. Further information regarding the jurisdiction, authority and duties of district court judges may be found at AS 22.15.

Juneau Superior Court, First Judicial District

A superior court position is open in Juneau due to the forthcoming retirement of Judge Louis James Menendez. Juneau has two superior court judges who preside over a general jurisdiction trial court in the First Judicial District. According to the Alaska Court System's fiscal year 2016 annual report, 1,093 cases were filed in the Juneau Superior Court, including 159 felony cases, 103 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 66 delinquency cases, 175 domestic relations cases, 125 general civil cases, and 465 probate matters. The annual salary of a Juneau Superior Court judge is \$194,724.

Anchorage Superior Court, Third Judicial District

Two superior court positions are open in Anchorage due to the forthcoming retirements of Judge Frank A. Pfiffner and Judge Mark Rindner. Anchorage has seventeen superior court judges who preside over a general jurisdiction trial court in the Third Judicial District. According to the Alaska Court System's fiscal year 2016 annual report, 11,182 cases were filed in the Anchorage

Superior Court, including 2,940 felony cases, 1,104 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 339 delinquency matters, 2,325 domestic relations matters, 1,318 general civil matters, and 3,156 probate matters. Anchorage Superior Court judges hear both criminal and civil matters but are assigned to, and rotate between, a primarily criminal or civil calendar. They are expected to travel to rural communities as needed. The annual salary of an Anchorage Superior Court judge is \$189,720.

Kenai Superior Court, Third Judicial District

A superior court position is open in Kenai due to the forthcoming retirement of Judge Anna M. Moran. Kenai has three superior court judges who preside over a general jurisdiction trial court in the Third Judicial District. In the 2016 fiscal year, Alaska Court System data indicate that 1,334 cases were filed in the Kenai Superior Court, including 497 felony cases, 114 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 74 delinquency matters, 278 domestic relations matters, 116 general civil matters, and 265 probate matters. Kenai Superior Court judges hear both criminal and civil matters. They are expected to travel to rural communities as needed. The annual salary of a Kenai Superior Court judge is \$189,720.

Bethel Superior Court, Fourth Judicial District

A superior court position is open in Bethel due to the forthcoming retirement of Judge Dwayne W. McConnell. Bethel has two superior court judges who preside over a general jurisdiction trial court in the Fourth Judicial District. In the 2016 fiscal year, Alaska Court System data indicate that 672 cases were filed in the Bethel Superior Court, including 208 felony cases, 71 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 43 delinquency cases, 98 domestic relations cases, 56 general civil matters, and 196 probate matters. Bethel Superior Court judges hear both criminal and civil matters. The annual salary of a Bethel Superior Court judge is \$239,724.

Fairbanks Superior Court, Fourth Judicial District

A superior court position is open in Fairbanks due to the forthcoming retirement of Judge Jane Kauvar. Fairbanks has six superior court judges who preside over a general jurisdiction trial court in the Fourth Judicial District. In the 2016 fiscal year, Alaska Court System data indicate that 2,793 cases were filed in the Fairbanks Superior Court, including 651 felony cases, 386 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 40 delinquency matters, 715 domestic relations matters, 274 general civil matters, and 727 probate matters. Fairbanks Superior Court judges hear both criminal and civil matters. They are expected to preside over cases in rural communities, including Bethel, as needed. The annual salary of a Fairbanks Superior Court judge is \$192,720.

Bethel District Court, Fourth Judicial District

A district court position is open in Bethel. This position has been open since Judge Nathaniel Peters was elevated from the district to the superior court. Bethel has one district court judge who presides over a limited jurisdiction trial court in the Fourth Judicial District. According to the Alaska Court Systems fiscal year 2016 annual report, 1,385 cases were filed in the Bethel District Court, including 710 misdemeanors, 299 minor offense cases, 24 small claims, 317 civil protective order cases, and 35 general civil cases. A Bethel District Court judge hears both criminal and civil proceedings. The annual salary of a district court judge in Bethel is \$210,852.