



# alaska judicial council

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September 5, 2018

Dear Member of the Alaska Bar Association:

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

**Palmer Superior Court (two positions); Kodiak Superior Court; Utqiagvik Superior Court (re-announcement) and Anchorage District 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](mailto: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 attached 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](http://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., October 12, 2018.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susanne DiPietro".

Susanne DiPietro  
Executive Director

**To ensure receipt of the survey on applicants for these positions, be sure that the email address you have on file with the Alaska Bar Association is current. To prevent survey emails from being diverted as spam, add [ajc@gemailserver.com](mailto:ajc@gemailserver.com) as a safe sender in your email account.**

## **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.

***Palmer Superior Court, Third Judicial District***

Two superior court positions are/will be open in Palmer due to the retirements of Judge Vanessa H. White and Judge Gregory L. Heath. Palmer has four 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 2017 annual report, 2,234 cases were filed in the Palmer Superior Court, including 483 felony cases, 399 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 76 delinquency cases, 633 domestic relations cases, 213 general civil cases, and 439 probate matters. Palmer Superior Court judges hear both criminal and civil matters. The superior court judges also will assist with district court matters. The annual salary of a Palmer Superior Court judge is \$189,720.

***Kodiak Superior Court, Third Judicial District***

A superior court position is open in Kodiak due to the retirement of Steve W. Cole. Kodiak has one superior court judge who presides over a general jurisdiction trial court in the Third Judicial District. According to the Alaska Court System's fiscal year 2017 annual report, 276 cases were filed in the Kodiak Superior Court, including 108 felony cases, 25 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 4 delinquency cases, 56 domestic relations cases, 21 general civil cases, and 62 probate matters. The Kodiak Superior Court judge hears both criminal and civil matters. The annual salary of a Kodiak Superior Court judge is \$200,724.

***Utqiagvik Superior Court, Second Judicial District***

A superior court position is open in Utqiagvik (formerly Barrow). This position was previously announced but has been reopened for applications. Utqiagvik has one superior court judge who presides over a general jurisdiction trial court in the Second Judicial District. According to the Alaska Court System's fiscal year 2017 annual report, 343 cases were filed in the Utqiagvik Superior Court, including 88 felony cases, 63 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 25 delinquency cases, 37 domestic relations cases, 79 general civil cases, and 51 probate matters. The Utqiagvik Superior Court judge hears both criminal and civil matters. The annual salary of an Utqiagvik Superior Court judge is \$239,724, which includes a geographic cost-of-living adjustment.

***Anchorage District Court, Third Judicial District***

A district court position is open in Anchorage due to the retirement of Judge Gregory J. Motyka. Anchorage has ten district court judges who preside over a limited jurisdiction trial court serving Anchorage in the Third Judicial District. According to data available from the Alaska Court System for FY 2017, 38,381 cases were filed in the Anchorage District Court, including 6,779 misdemeanors, 19,676 traffic/minor offense cases, 4,185 small claims, 3,756 civil protective orders, and 3,985 general civil cases. An Anchorage District Court judge hears both criminal and civil proceedings. The annual salary of a district court judge in Anchorage is \$160,848.