



alaska judicial council

510 L Street, Suite 450, Anchorage, Alaska 99501-1295 (907) 279-2526 FAX (907) 276-5046
http://www.ajc.state.ak.us E-Mail: postmaster@ajc.state.ak.us

June 25, 2018

Dear Member of the Alaska Bar Association:

The Alaska Judicial Council is seeking applicants for vacancies on the following courts: **Bethel Superior Court (re-announcement); Utqiagvik Superior Court; Juneau Superior Court; Kenai Superior Court; and Court of Appeals.** 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 **court of appeals judge** must meet the qualifications set out at AS 22.07.040. 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 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. 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 July 27, 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@gemailserv.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.

Juneau Superior Court, First Judicial District

A superior court position is open in Juneau due to the creation of a new superior court seat by the Alaska Legislature. Juneau will have three 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 2017 annual report, 1,150 cases were filed in the Juneau Superior Court, including 135 felony cases, 129 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 50 delinquency cases, 196 domestic relations cases, 130 general civil cases, and 510 probate matters. Juneau 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 Juneau Superior Court judge is \$194,724.

Utqiagvik Superior Court, Second Judicial District

A superior court position will be open in Utqiagvik (formerly Barrow) due to Judge Greene's decision not to stand for retention. 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.

Kenai Superior Court, Third Judicial District

A superior court position is open in Kenai due to the forthcoming retirement of Judge Charles T. Huguelet. Kenai has three superior court judges who preside over a general jurisdiction trial court in the Third Judicial District. In the 2017 fiscal year, Alaska Court System data indicate that 1,147 cases were filed in the Kenai Superior Court, including 348 felony cases, 134 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 55 delinquency matters, 235 domestic relations matters, 107 general civil matters, and 268 probate matters. Kenai Superior Court judges hear both criminal and civil matters. 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 2017 fiscal year, Alaska Court System data indicate that 788 cases were filed in the Bethel Superior Court, including 257 felony cases, 167 child-in-need-of-aid matters, 38 delinquency cases, 107 domestic relations cases, 54 general civil matters, and 165 probate matters. Bethel Superior Court judges hear both criminal and civil matters. The annual salary of a Bethel Superior Court judge is \$239,724.

Judicial Position Description Alaska Court of Appeals

Three judges sit on the Alaska Court of Appeals, an intermediate appellate court. It 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 2017 annual report, 353 cases were filed in the Alaska Court of Appeals including 183 merit appeals, 32 sentence appeals, 34 petitions for review or hearing, and four original applications.

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 office of the Alaska Court of Appeals is located in Anchorage, as established by Administrative Rule 17.5. **The Alaska Supreme Court has amended Rule 17.5 (b) to permit court of appeals judges to reside and work in Anchorage, Fairbanks, or Juneau.** The rule also states that 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 \$193,836. A judge who maintains an office in Juneau or Fairbanks is eligible for the geographic differential for those areas.