Alaska Judicial Council

Judicial Applicant Biographical Statement



Name: Renee McFarland

Position(s): Alaska Public Defender

Date: October 29, 2026

I came to Alaska my first summer during law school. I interned in the environmental section of the Attorney General's Office in Anchorage, and upon returning to school, immediately applied to the Public Defender Agency. I interned with the agency's Juneau office the following summer and returned to Juneau after graduation to clerk for Justice Walter (Bud) Carpeneti and Judge Patricia Collins.

After clerking, I moved to Fairbanks, where I worked at Alaska Legal Services, and later to Anchorage, where I worked at the ACLU of Alaska on prisoners' rights issues. In 2006, I joined the agency. For the past 20 years, I have represented indigent Alaskans in criminal, postconviction, juvenile, child-in-need-of-aid, and civil commitment appeals, and since 2020, I have served as deputy director of the agency's postconviction unit.

I am proud to be a part of this agency, and I would be honored to serve as its director.