

2018 Proposed Process for Appointment of New Municipal Court Judges

This is intended only for evaluation of those applicants who have not previously served as a judge or those who are part-time judges applying for full-time positions to serve under the 10-1 Council and comply with the objectives of Council Resolution 20171214-060.

I. Posting

City of Austin HRD will post the openings and job descriptions on the City's website. To ensure diverse recruitment, the posting will be provided to the State Bar of Texas, Austin Bar Association, Hispanic Bar Association, Austin Black Lawyers Association, Travis County Women Lawyers Association, Asian-American Bar Association, Austin LGBT Bar Association, and Calvert and Lochridge Inns of Court. Upon closing of the application period, HR will screen all applicants for the basic requirements:

- 1) Residence in City Limits
- 2) Must be licensed in good standing with the State Bar of Texas
- 3) At least 5 years' experience in the practice of law
- 4) Knowledge of criminal law

II. Applicant Screening Panel

The Presiding Judge will assemble an Applicant Screening Panel of 5 criminal defense attorneys including attorneys from local criminal justice lawyer associations and attorneys representing indigent defendants. Applicants who meet the basic requirements, and those who are currently serving as part-time judges requesting to become full-time judges, will be evaluated by the Applicant Screening Panel by reviewing application materials. The Applicant Screening Panel will designate the candidates into one of three categories:

- 1) not qualified
- 2) qualified
- 3) highly qualified

Applicants who meet the basic requirements, and have been ranked by the Applicant Screening Panel as "highly qualified" or "qualified" to be interviewed by the Interview Panel (see below), **so long as there are more candidates put forward than vacancies.** The

Applicant Screening Panel may forward any other comments or suggestions to the Judicial Committee.

III. Interview Panel (All New Applicants for Full-Time)

The presiding judge will assemble an Interview Panel including but not limited to:

- Criminal defense attorneys
- Attorneys who represent indigent defendants
- Members of various minority bar associations
- Experts in recent developments and research in criminal justice reform
- Attorneys who represent the County Attorney's and District Attorney's Office
- City prosecutors

The Interview Panel should develop a matrix and evaluate and rank judicial candidates based on the following evaluation criteria:

Evaluation Criteria for Applicants:

- Legal Knowledge (35 points)
 - Understanding substantive law and rules of procedure and evidence
 - Awareness and attentiveness to factual and legal issues before the court
 - Knowledge and experience in criminal law
 - Understanding of court processes
- Fairness (35 points)
 - Avoids impropriety, the appearance of impropriety, and ex parte communications
 - Commitment to displaying fairness and impartiality towards all parties
 - Commitment to use of alternative sentencing options whenever appropriate under the law, including effective alternatives to jail commitments for non-payment of fines
 - Commitment to use of alternatives to issuance of warrants whenever alternatives are available
 - Commitment to performing timely magistrations and setting the amount of bail in accordance with state law with consideration to individual's economic status and considering use of personal bonds.
 - Commitment to the role of the judiciary in ensuring equitable outcomes for those entering the judicial system.
- Preparation, attentiveness, and potential judicial temperament (30 points)
 - Strong work ethic and organizational skills
 - Track record of being well-prepared for work and legal proceedings, professional communication, and professionalism in maintaining work schedule
 - Commitment to respectful treatment of defendants, staff, prosecutors, defense attorneys and the public
 - Commitment to partnering with presiding judge and other MC judges to maintain effective administration of the Austin Municipal Court

The Panel should rank the candidates and provide their comments and recommendations for appointment to the Judicial Committee.

IV. Review by Judicial Committee

A. The applicants' resumes along with the comments and recommendations of the Applicant Screening Panel and the Interview Panel will be forwarded to the Judicial Committee.

B. After considering all information, the Judicial Committee may accept the recommendations of the Panel or conduct additional interviews.

V. Presentation to Council

Once the Judicial Committee agrees upon a slate of nominees, the list will be presented for approval to the full Council via an appointment ordinance.

Timeframe	Task – New Judges
Week 1 : Dec 11, 2018	
Week 2: Dec 18, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment begins.• HRD begins formal advertisement with job posting (30 days).• HRD launches recruitment ads on niche websites, social media, and direct mail flyers to targeted individuals nationwide.• Presiding Judge identifies and contacts Applicant Screening, Review and Interview Panel participants.• HRD coordinates Panel scheduling.
Week 3 – 4: Jan 8-Jan 22, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HRD screens applications.• HRD provides periodic updates to the Judicial Committee on number of qualified applicants.• HRD provides copies of qualified applications to Applicant Screening Panel.
Week 5: Jan 29, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant Screening Panel will meet and identify the highest ranked qualified candidates to receive panel interviews
Week 6: Feb 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant Screening Panel will submit recommendations for candidates to be interviewed to the City Council Judicial Committee for approval. (2/5/18 meeting)• HRD will coordinate scheduling candidates for Interview Panel interviews.
Week 7-8: Feb 12-Feb 19, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interview Panel conducts interviews and determines recommendations of top candidates to Judicial Committee

Timeframe	Task – New Judges
February 22, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview Panel presents recommended top candidates to City Council Judicial Committee (2/22/18 meeting) • City Council Judicial Committee reviews/approves top candidates. (2/22/18 meeting) • HRD initiates and finalizes references and background checks for top candidate(s). • HRD will coordinate top candidates' contingent job and salary offers. • <i>Optional: If further interviews of new applicants are required by the Judicial Committee, HRD coordinates scheduling</i>
No later than Feb 28, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRD coordinates with the Law Department to draft ordinance and place on City Council agenda.
March 8, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council meets and appoints the new Presiding Judge, Community Court Judge, Associate and Substitute Associate Judges no later than the March 22, 2018 Council Meeting.
TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRD Facilitates on-boarding for new Presiding Judge, Community Court Judge, Associate and Substitute Associate Judges.