



**HRD** | HUMAN  
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DEPARTMENT



# Municipal Court Judge Appointments

Presentation to Public Safety Committee | February 2022

# Purpose



- Conduct recruitment for Substitute Judges
  - Primarily overnights and weekends
- Presentation outlines the steps in recruitment and appointing additional Substitute Municipal Court Judges

# Qualifications



- Judges must:
  - Live in the city limits the two (2) years prior to application
  - Have two (2) years' experience in the practice of law in the State of Texas
  - Be in good standing with the state bar
  - Be a U.S. Citizen

# Process



- Human Resources Department works with Presiding Judge on posting positions for Substitute Judges with specific needs for overnights and weekends highlighted
- HRD advertises and works with SMEs on places to advertise the positions
- Convenes the Judicial Review Panel to review applicants
- Judicial Review Panel recommends substitute judges to the Public Safety Committee
- Public Safety Committee recommends substitute judges to the City Council
- City Council appoints substitute judges for a term that ends on December 31, 2025



# Judicial Review Panel (JRP)

- Will seek to convene the same members of the JRP from 2021
- 2021 JRP Members:
  - Betty Blackwell, Criminal Law Attorney
  - Lucio A. Del Toro, First Assistant, Travis County Attorney's Office
  - Karly Jo Dixon, Managing Attorney, Texas Fair Defense Project
  - Leah Downey-Gallatin, Staff Attorney, Travis County Courts at Law
  - Joshua Griggers, Sergeant – Robbery Unit, APD
  - Aaron Mueller, Criminal Law Attorney
  - Margaret Chen Kercher, Criminal Law Attorney
  - Amber Vasquez, Criminal Law Attorney
  - Sidney Williams, Criminal Law Attorney
  - Dana Weis, Solo-practice Criminal Law Attorney



# Timeline 2021



Week/Date	Task
February 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Municipal Court/Human Resources Department (HRD) updates Public Safety Committee (PSC) on the Judicial appointment process</li><li>• Reviews the Judicial Review Panel with the PSC</li></ul>
February 9 – March 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HRD begins formal advertisement</li><li>• Positions posted on niche websites, social media, and with local bar and criminal defense organizations</li></ul>
March 14 - 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HRD screens applications</li><li>• Meeting with JRP is scheduled to review applications and letters of intent</li></ul>

# Timeline 2021 Continued



Week/Date	Task
Week of March 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HRD recommends the applicants to meet with the JRP</li><li>• JRP conducts interviews and recommends top candidates for Public Safety Committee approval</li></ul>
March 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PSC reviews hiring recommendation from JRP</li><li>• Select JRP members are available to discuss recommendations with PSC</li><li>• PSC recommends candidates to the City Council for approval</li></ul>
April 7 or 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• City Council approves judges for new term</li><li>• Law drafts ordinance</li></ul>



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# Applicant Screening



- HRD will review candidates to ensure applicants meet qualifications of the position
- HRD will compile a candidate packet
- The JRP will interview qualified candidates
- Public Safety Committee will receive copies of applications and comments from the Judicial Review Panel



# Interview Panel



- Judicial Review Panel will serve as the interview panel
- Interview panel will use a matrix to rank candidates based on:
  - Legal Knowledge
  - Fairness
  - Preparation, attentiveness, and potential judicial temperament
- The panel will rank the candidates and provide comments and recommendations to the Public Safety Committee

# Public Safety Committee Recommendation



- Public Safety Committee will review the recommendation from the Judicial Review Panel
- The Public Safety Committee may accept the recommendation or conduct additional interviews



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# Questions?

