



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

Timeline 2021 Continued



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

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?

