

Judicial Selection Commission

Fiscal Year 2023-2024

At a Glance

LEANDER DOLPHIN, Chairperson

Established - 1986

Statutory authority – Connecticut General Statute Sec. 51-44(a)

Office address – 165 Capitol Ave, Suite 1080, Hartford, CT 06106

Number of employees – 1 full time

Recurring operating expenses – Personnel, \$77,569.51; Other Expenses, \$11,507.92

Organizational structure – The Commission is comprised of twelve Commissioners appointed by the following appointing authorities: Six Commissioners are appointed by the Governor; 1 Commissioner is appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate; 1 Commissioner is appointed by the Senate Majority Leader; 1 Commissioner is appointed by the Senate Minority Leader; 1 Commissioner is appointed by the Speaker of the House; 1 Commissioner is appointed by the House Majority Leader; and 1 Commissioner is appointed by the House Minority Leader. 6 Commissioner positions are for attorneys; and 6 Commissioner positions are for public members. No more than 6 Commissioners may be from a single political party. No Commissioner can be an elected or appointed State official or hold a statewide political party office.

Mission

The Judicial Selection Commission’s mission is to evaluate, investigate and recommend qualified candidates for consideration by the Governor for nomination as judges of the Superior Court, the Appellate Court, and the Supreme Court.

Statutory Responsibility

The Commission’s statutory responsibility is to administer and enforce the provisions of Connecticut General Statute Section 51-44(a). Under that section, the Commission has the responsibility of seeking qualified candidates for consideration by the Governor for nomination as judges for the Superior Court, Appellate Court, and Supreme Court. All candidates seeking consideration for appointment to judicial office, including incumbent judges seeking reappointment, or appointment to a different court, are required to complete the appropriate application forms which are promulgated by the Commission. The Commission conducts an investigation and evaluation of each candidate for judicial office, including judges seeking reappointment, or appointment to a different court. The Commission contacts the Statewide Grievance Panel, judges, and attorneys concerning candidates for judicial appointment in order to conduct its investigation and evaluation. For judges, the Commission contacts The Judicial Review Council, the Governor’s Office, the Office of Chief Court Administrator, the Judiciary Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly, and the Connecticut Criminal Defense Lawyer’s Association. In addition, the Commission posts notices in the courts of Connecticut to encourage public comment before conducting its interviews of judges seeking reappointment.

Public Service

Between July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, the Commission received 39 applications from candidates for judicial office; 21 applications from judges seeking reappointment to the same court; and 8 applications from judges seeking appointment to a different court. The Commission held 10 meetings. Of the 39 candidates who applied to the Commission for judicial office, 18 candidates were recommended by the Commission to the Governor. Of the 21 judges who applied to the Commission for reappointment to the same court, 21 judges were recommended by the Commission to the Governor. Of the 8 judges who applied to the Commission for elevation to a different court, 8 judges were recommended by the Commission to the Governor.

Improvements/Achievements FY 2023-2024

New Appointees

Governor Ned Lamont appointed one new Commissioner, Daniel DeBarba. Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff appointed a new Commissioner, Brandon Hayden. Speaker of the House of Representatives Matt Ritter appointed a new Commissioner, JoAnne Jones.

DESPP Pre-Screening Background Checks

The Judicial Selection Commission (JSC) and the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding on October 5, 2023 in order for DESPP to conduct pre-screening background checks on candidates applying for new judicial appointments with the State of Connecticut. This background check includes criminal, sex offender registry, and financial/credit institutions.

Bar Association Panels

The Chairperson and Manager of Operations of the Commission have hosted and participated in panel discussions with different Bar Associations to discuss how to become a judge in the state of Connecticut. Six panel discussions took place between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024.

Information Reported as Required by State Statute

The Commission operates, and will continue to operate, in conformance with Sec. 51-44(a) inclusive of the General Statutes of Connecticut.

Membership – Leander Dolphin, Chairperson; Steven Greenspan, Vice Chairperson; Gary DeFilippo; Lawrence Sgrinari; Ashley Foreman; Aza G. Mosley; Melissa E. Ozols; Marjorie Shanksy; Daniel DeBarba; Rowena Track; JoAnne Jones; and Brandon Hayden.