



## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE

The City of Fircrest ("City"), Washington, is requesting proposals from well-qualified attorneys interested in serving as the Presiding Judge for the City of Fircrest Municipal Court.

### DESCRIPTION

The Municipal Court Judge is the Presiding Judge of the City of Fircrest Municipal Court and presides over and adjudicates a variety of hearings and trials related to civil infraction and parking cases, criminal misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor cases in accordance with established legal procedures as prescribed in Washington State law; imposes appropriate sentences and penalties as prescribed by law; communicates with other city, county and state criminal justice agencies.

The person selected must take an oath of office, be bondable, and be willing to be contacted nights and weekends for review and signing of search warrants. The Presiding Judge must comply with the Code of Judicial Conduct and be subject to ethics laws applicable to this office. The person appointed as Presiding Judge shall be a citizen of the United States of America and of the State of Washington and a resident of Pierce County at the time of appointment.

The Fircrest Municipal Court is located within the municipal building at 115 Ramsdell Street, Fircrest, WA 98466, and provides court services to the City of Ruston under an interlocal agreement. Current staffing consists of a Court Administrator, two full-time Court Clerks, and one part-time Court Clerk who perform court and administrative support functions. The Court operates in the state's new case management system for Courts of Limited Jurisdiction, Enterprise Justice.

The Judge is appointed by the City Manager, subject to confirmation by the City Council. The first judicial appointment to this position will be effective at 5:01 PM on December 31, 2025, and will expire on December 31, 2029.

In 2024, the caseload totaled 4,131 in Fircrest and 1,194 cases in Ruston. The Judge is anticipated to provide an average of twenty (20) hours per week for court dockets and administrative responsibilities. Court dockets are scheduled weekly, with Fircrest matters heard on Wednesdays and Ruston matters on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Thursdays. Monday mornings are reserved for in-custody arraignments, and the 2nd and 4th Thursdays are designated for jury trials; these dockets

occur only as needed and are not held on a regular weekly basis. Caseload levels may change during the term, particularly as Fircrest and Ruston evaluate potential photo enforcement programs.

The City recognizes the need for judicial independence. Consistent with General Rule 29, the Presiding Judge has independence from the executive and legislative branches in carrying out the Court's purely judicial responsibilities. The expectation is that the Court and the City Administration will have a positive working relationship.

## QUALIFICATIONS

**Education and Experience:** Minimum qualifications include a Juris Doctor (JD) degree from an accredited law school, an active license to practice law in the State of Washington, membership in good standing with the Washington State Bar Association, and at least five (5) years of experience as a practicing attorney or judge. Experience serving as a pro tem judge for the Fircrest Municipal Court will be considered favorably in the selection process. The Presiding Judge must also meet the mandatory continuing judicial education requirements of GR 26, including completion of the Washington Judicial College within twelve (12) months of appointment.

**Necessary Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:** Considerable knowledge of the standards for Municipal Court Administration in the State of Washington; considerable knowledge of proper courtroom procedure and the rules of evidence; working knowledge of criminal law; working knowledge of local ordinances, laws and procedures; skill in basic supervisory principles and practices; ability to grasp complex factual data, draw appropriate conclusions and formulate sound legal decisions; ability to communicate complex legal ideas and/or decisions to a variety of audiences in clear, comprehensive and professional manner; hear and weigh testimony and evidence; ability to impose appropriate sentences and penalties in accordance with the laws of the State of Washington; ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing; ability to read, interpret, apply and explain codes, rules, regulations, policies and procedures; ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with the City Administration, City Council, City Prosecutor, Police Department, Public Defender, Court staff, and the general public.

## COMPENSATION/HOURS OF WORK

The City and Presiding Judge will enter into a judicial services agreement, which will address compensation. Interested parties are asked to submit their proposed rate for the first year of service (2026), with the preferred compensation structure being a monthly flat fee. Annual rate adjustments will be determined annually during the budget process, using the same cost-of-living adjustment afforded to City employees, which is based on the June-to-June Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-W) for the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue region.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

The City Manager and/or designees will review and screen all proposals. Finalists will be invited for interviews. The selected candidate shall be appointed by the City Manager. The judicial appointment is subject to confirmation by the City Council.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

The selected attorney will be required to undergo a reference check prior to appointment, and to provide the City proof of insurance as required (including professional liability insurance).

## **INSTRUCTIONS TO REPLY TO THIS REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

To reply to the RFQ, please submit the following: (1) resume; (2) cover letter and statement of qualifications, which must include Washington State Bar Numbers for all attorneys responding to this RFQ; (3) a release allowing the City of Fircrest access to all WSBA disciplinary investigations and/or actions, and (4) answers to the Governor's Uniform Judicial Evaluation Questionnaire attached hereto and also found at <https://governor.wa.gov/official-actions/judicial-appointments> .

All materials shall be submitted in one packet and provided to the City Clerk, Arlette Burkhart, at the City of Fircrest, 115 Ramsdell Street, Fircrest, WA 98466. ALL APPLICATION MATERIALS SHALL BE SUBMITTED BY 4:00 PM ON OCTOBER 20, 2025.

If selected, interviews will be held in early November 2025.

Upon the City's discretion, proposals submitted after the due date and time may be considered. Proponents accept all risks of late delivery of mailed proposals regardless of fault. The Proponent bears all responsibility for ensuring the mailing address is correct.

# JUDICIAL EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

*Adopted from the Washington State Governor's Office Uniform Judicial Evaluation Questionnaire*

<b>I. Judicial Position</b>	
Position Sought	Court, Division, or District

<b>II. Personal Information</b>	
Name (Surname(s) followed by Given Name(s))	Email (Personal and Work)
Home Mailing Address	City, State, ZIP
Work Mailing Address	City, State, ZIP
Phone Number(s) (Personal and Work)	Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)
WSBA Bar Number and Year of Admission	

<b>III. Prior Evaluation and Application History</b>
Please list all prior judicial positions sought. Please list evaluations you received as part of that process, including dates.

<b>IV. Education</b>		
Please list all law school, graduate, and undergraduate colleges and universities attended.		
College/University	Month and Year Attended (From and To)	Degree Awarded
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College/University	Month and Year Attended (From and To)	Degree Awarded
If you did not complete your degree at any of these schools, please explain why.		

<b>V. Professional History</b>	
Please list all of your employment in the legal field, and any other employment that is relevant to your application for a judicial appointment.	
1. Present or Last Employer	Dates of Employment From To
Your Title	Employer's Phone
Employer's Address	Supervisor's Name
Nature of Practice (including frequency of court appearances and areas of special emphasis)	
Reason for Leaving	

<b>2. Previous Employer</b>	<b>Dates of Employment</b> <b>From                  To</b>
<b>Your Title</b>	<b>Employer's Phone</b>
<b>Employer's Address</b>	<b>Supervisor's Name</b>
<b>Nature of Practice (including frequency of court appearances and areas of special emphasis)</b>	
<b>Reason for Leaving</b>	

<b>3. Previous Employer</b>	<b>Dates of Employment</b> <b>From                  To</b>
<b>Your Title</b>	<b>Employer's Phone</b>
<b>Employer's Address</b>	<b>Supervisor's Name</b>
<b>Nature of Practice (including frequency of court appearances and areas of special emphasis)</b>	
<b>Reason for Leaving</b>	

<b>4. Previous Employer</b>	<b>Dates of Employment</b> <b>From                  To</b>
<b>Your Title</b>	<b>Employer's Phone</b>
<b>Employer's Address</b>	<b>Supervisor's Name</b>
<b>Nature of Practice (including frequency of court appearances and areas of special emphasis)</b>	
<b>Reason for Leaving</b>	

<b>5. Previous Employer</b>	<b>Dates of Employment</b> <b>From                  To</b>
<b>Your Title</b>	<b>Employer's Phone</b>
<b>Employer's Address</b>	<b>Supervisor's Name</b>
<b>Nature of Practice (including frequency of court appearances and areas of special emphasis)</b>	
<b>Reason for Leaving</b>	

Please list any additional employment in the legal field, and any other employment that is relevant to your application for a judicial appointment, and include the same information sought in previous Section V questions.

<b>VI. Jurisdictions, Associations, and Awards</b>
List all courts and jurisdictions in which you have been admitted to practice law and the dates of admission. Include administrative bodies.

Please list all bar associations and professional societies of which you are a member and provide the titles and dates of any offices that you have held in such groups.

Are you in good standing in every bar association of which you are a member? If you answered "no", please explain.

If you have been a judge, please identify court committees on which you served or administrative positions you have held. Include dates of services for each.

Please list any honors, prizes, awards, or other forms of recognition that you have received.

## VII. Professional Practice Experience

How many of your appearances, either as counsel or as a judicial officer, in the last fifteen years were in:

### WA Appellate Courts

- ☐ 0 cases  
☐ 1-10 cases  
☐ 11-50 cases  
☐ 50-100 cases  
☐ > 100 cases

### WA Trial Courts

- ☐ 0 cases  
☐ 1-10 cases  
☐ 11-50 cases  
☐ 50-100 cases  
☐ > 100 cases

### WA District Courts

- ☐ 0 cases  
☐ 1-10 cases  
☐ 11-50 cases  
☐ 50-100 cases  
☐ > 100 cases

### WA Municipal Courts

- ☐ 0 cases  
☐ 1-10 cases  
☐ 11-50 cases  
☐ 50-100 cases  
☐ > 100 cases

### WA Administrative Tribunals

- ☐ 0 cases  
☐ 1-10 cases  
☐ 11-50 cases  
☐ 50-100 cases  
☐ > 100 cases

### Federal Appellate Courts

- ☐ 0 cases  
☐ 1-10 cases  
☐ 11-50 cases  
☐ 50-100 cases  
☐ > 100 cases

### Federal Trial Courts

- ☐ 0 cases  
☐ 1-10 cases  
☐ 11-50 cases  
☐ 50-100 cases  
☐ > 100 cases

### Federal Administrative Tribunals

- ☐ 0 cases  
☐ 1-10 cases  
☐ 11-50 cases  
☐ 50-100 cases  
☐ > 100 cases

### Tribal Trial Courts

- ☐ 0 cases  
☐ 1-10 cases  
☐ 11-50 cases  
☐ 50-100 cases  
☐ > 100 cases

### Tribal Appellate Courts

- ☐ 0 cases  
☐ 1-10 cases  
☐ 11-50 cases  
☐ 50-100 cases  
☐ > 100 cases

### Other (please specify):

- ☐ 0 cases  
☐ 1-10 cases  
☐ 11-50 cases  
☐ 50-100 cases  
☐ > 100 cases

What percentage of your practice in the last fifteen years was in:

Civil Litigation (excl. family law) %

Criminal Litigation %

Family Law Litigation %

Non-Litigation %

What percentage of your trials in the last fifteen years were:

Jury Trials %

Non-Jury Trials %

**TRIAL EXPERIENCE:** Indicate the total number of cases during your career that you have tried to verdict or judgment (rather than settled) in the following courts, and indicate the following percentages: trials in which you were the sole counsel or chief counsel, jury trials, and trials where you were the arbiter/decision maker.

Court	Number	% as sole/Chief Counsel	% Jury	% as the Arbiter
WA Superior Court				
WA District Court				
WA Municipal Court				
WA Administrative Tribunals				
Federal District Court				
Federal Administrative Tribunals				
Tribal Court				
Other (please describe)				

**APPELLATE EXPERIENCE:** Indicate the total number of appellate cases during your career where you appeared as counsel of record in the following courts, and indicate for each court the following percentages: cases where you were sole counsel or chief counsel, and cases where you were the arbiter/decision maker (if applicable).

Court	Number	% as sole/Chief Counsel	% as the Arbiter
WA Supreme Court			
WA Division I COA			
WA Division II COA			
WA Division III COA			
WA Superior Court			
U.S. Supreme Court			
Federal Courts of Appeal			

Briefly describe five significant matters that you directly handled as counsel, and include the reason that each is significant to you. For each, please provide the name of the judge or other judicial officer, and the case citation, if applicable.

State in detail your experience in adversary proceedings before administrative boards or commissions during the last ten years.

Describe any experience you have in Tribal courts and/or addressing Tribal law or Indian law issues in your practice.

Please briefly describe any legal non-litigation experience that you feel enhances your qualifications to serve as a judge.

*Optional:* Please list leadership positions you've held in bar associations and professional societies that you believe to be of particular significance.

*Optional:* Have you published any books or articles in the field of law? If so, please list them, giving the citations and dates. Also, please give the dates, topics, and forums of any presentations you have given on legal topics (e.g., Continuing Legal Education).

## **VIII. Judicial Interest and Experience**

In 75 words or less, please describe why you are seeking a judicial position.

In 75 words or less, please describe the type of judge you aspire to be.

Have you ever held a judicial office? If you answered “yes”, please provide details, including the courts involved, whether elected or appointed, and periods of your service.

Have you ever held public office other than a judicial office? If you answered “yes”, please provide details, including the offices involved, whether elected or appointed, and periods of your service.

Please briefly identify all of your experience as a neutral decision-maker (e.g. permanent or pro tem judge in any jurisdiction, administrative law judge, arbitrator, hearing officer, etc.). List the courts/jurisdictions and provide approximate dates.

If you seek an appellate court position, please describe how your previous judicial experience prepared you to serve as an appellate court judge.

## **IX. Community and Civic Activities**

Please list community and civic activities, including dates and leadership roles you have held, over the last fifteen years.

## **X. Access to Justice and Diversity in the Legal Profession**

Please describe any activities that you have engaged in to eliminate bias or improve access to the judicial system.

What are the most significant barriers to access to justice today? In what ways have you seen these barriers in your practice? How have you worked to increase access to justice?

As a member of the bench, what role, if any, do you believe that a judge has to enhance equal access to justice?

What experiences, training, or knowledge do you have in addressing diversity in the legal profession?

What can a judge, or court, do to improve diversity in the legal profession?

## **XI. Discipline, Disputes, and Conflicts**

Have you ever been held, arrested, charged, or convicted by federal, state, or other law enforcement authorities for violation of any federal law, state law, county or municipal law, regulation, or ordinance?

If you answered “yes”, please provide details, including case numbers. (Do not include traffic violations for which a fine of less than \$300.00 was imposed.) Please feel free to provide your view of how it bears on your present fitness for judicial office.

Has a client ever made a claim or suit against you for malpractice? If you answered “yes”, please provide details and the current status of the claim and/or suit.

Have you ever been a party, witness, or consultant in any legal proceeding? If you answered “yes”, please provide details, including the case number. Do not list proceedings in which you were merely a guardian ad litem or stakeholder.



Have you ever been the subject of a complaint to any bar association, disciplinary committee, court, administrative agency, or other professional group? If you answered “yes”, please provide details.
Have you ever been disciplined or cited for breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct? If you answered “yes”, please provide details.
Have you ever been subject to employment discipline (such as a warning, reprimand, suspension, demotion, or termination for cause) or to any form of employee improvement plan? If you answered “yes”, please provide details.
If you have ever served as a judge, commissioner, or in any judicial capacity, has a complaint for misconduct in that capacity ever been made against you? If you answered “yes”, please provide details.
If you are now a board member of any non-profit organization, an officer or director of any business organization, or otherwise engaged in the management of any business enterprises, please provide the following: the name of the enterprise/non-profit organization, where it is incorporated (if applicable), the nature of the business/non-profit organization, the title of your position, the nature of your duties, and the term of your service. If you are appointed and do not intend to resign such position(s), please state this below along with your reasons for not resigning.
Are you aware of anything that may affect your ability to perform the duties of a judge? If you answered “yes”, please provide details.

**XII. References – In the evaluation process it is useful for evaluators to speak with attorneys and non-attorneys who are familiar with you. Evaluators may contact each of your references. If a reference is unreachable, your evaluation may be delayed.**

Please list the names, email addresses, phone numbers, and job titles/employers of up to 5 professional references.
Please list the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of up to 10 opposing counsel who know you best, including at least three opposing counsel on cases that went to trial.
If you have been a judge or otherwise have served as a neutral decision-maker within the last 10 years, please list the names and phone numbers of the last 10 attorneys who have appeared before you.
For the last five trials in which you participated (whether as a trial lawyer or decision-maker), please list as appropriate the following for each: case name, subject matter, court, judge (with phone numbers), and opposing counsel or counsel appearing before you (with phone numbers).
Please list the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of 5 additional attorneys familiar with your professional qualifications, skills, experience, and attributes.
Please list the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of up to three non-attorneys who have either been represented by you or who have worked for you.
Please provide a writing sample of your work (between five and 10 pages long), written and edited by you, within the last five years.

**XIII. Rating and Evaluations – The Governor’s Office requires individuals seeking judicial appointment to utilize, to the fullest**

extent possible and as early as possible, the ratings processes from state, county, and affinity bar organizations. To facilitate the process, many of these organizations accept this questionnaire as the principal application in their evaluation process and may also require completion of a supplemental questionnaire.

- Candidates are encouraged to seek ratings from multiple bar associations as early as possible so that your ratings are received by the application deadline or shortly thereafter. You may seek a rating before a notice of vacancy is posted; contact the relevant bar association for its policies and availability.
- Contact affinity bar associations to determine whether an evaluation process will be conducted. Contact information can be found on the Washington State Bar Association's website at <https://www.wsba.org/connect-serve/other-bars/affinity-bar-associations>. This webpage contains a link to the list of Judicial Evaluation Committee Representatives for those associations who participate in standing judicial evaluation committees. Note that some of the affinity bar associations may conduct judicial evaluations when judicial vacancies occur, even if committee representatives are not listed on the webpage.
- Contact the relevant county bar associations to determine whether an evaluation process will be conducted. Contact information for county bar associations can be found on the WSBA website at <http://www.wsba.org/Legal-Community/County-Bar-Associations>
- If you are applying for a state Court of Appeals or Supreme Court position, contact the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) Judicial Recommendation Committee to request an interview. The Committee screens and interviews candidates and provides a rating that is reviewed by the WSBA Board of Governors and referred to the Governor for consideration. Committee information can be found on the WSBA website at <http://www.wsba.org/jrc>.

List all ratings you have received from any bar association at any time. Please provide the name of the organization, the rating it gave you, and the year in which the rating was given.

To the extent not covered above, list the organizations you have contacted for an evaluation.

**XIV. Attestation – All information provided in this questionnaire is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the Governor's Office may verify this information, and that untruthful or misleading answers are cause for rejection of my application or for dismissal if appointed.**

Date

Signature

Judicial Evaluation Questionnaire  
City of Fircrest Municipal Court

**RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

I hereby give the City of Fircrest the right to investigate my past employment, education and activities. I release from all liability all persons, companies and corporations who supply such information. I understand that any omission of facts, misrepresentation of statements or implications I might make in this application or in any other required documents shall be considered sufficient cause to deny appointment.

I also understand that nothing contained in this application or in the granting of an interview is intended to imply an appointment by the City of Fircrest. I have received no promises regarding appointment, and I understand that no such promise or guarantee is binding on the City of Fircrest unless made in writing.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_