



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

TO: PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES FOR JUDICIAL OFFICE

FROM: KRYSTLE TADESSE, CHAIRPERSON

RE: JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION APPLICATION PROCESS

The Judicial Nominating Commission (“Commission”) solicits and reviews applications from candidates for judgeships in Rhode Island. Pursuant to *R.I. Gen. Laws* § 8-16.1-2, the Commission is directed to submit to the Governor a list of three to five highly qualified candidates for each vacancy. The Governor then nominates a candidate from this list, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.

A. APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process is as follows:

- When the Governor notifies the Commission of a judicial vacancy (or prospective vacancy), we advertise the opening in the *Providence Journal*, *Rhode Island Lawyers’ Weekly*, *online for Providence En Español*, on the Commission’s LinkedIn page, and with the Rhode Island Bar Association, the Thurgood Marshall Law Society, the Rhode Island Women’s Bar Association, Rhode Island Black Women Lawyers Association, and the Rhode Island Hispanic Bar Association, to solicit inquiries from prospective candidates. The vacancy notice is also posted on the Commission’s website.
- The initial public notice directs interested candidates to the Commission website (www.jnc.ri.gov) and the link “Begin the JNC Application Process.” There a prospective candidate is advised to email the Commission Legal Assistant, Laura Jeanne Verdecchia (laura.verdecchia@troutman.com) to indicate his/her/their interest in applying. Ms. Verdecchia will provide the candidate with a secure link to upload the completed application materials.
 - *Candidates should make all efforts to email Ms. Verdecchia at least a week before the application period is scheduled to close to ensure receipt of the secure link with ample time to upload the application materials and address any technological issues.*
 - *The process to receive the secure link is not automated. Candidates will not receive the secure link immediately upon emailing Ms. Verdecchia and*

emailing outside of normal business hours or towards the end of the application period will likely result in a significant delay.

- **No late applications will be considered.** Please **do not** wait until the last day of the application period to email Ms. Verdecchia and request a secure link.
- The application materials consist of a Personal Data Questionnaire, Personal Financial Statement, Curriculum Vitae, Federal and State Income Tax Returns for the most recent three years and the MCLE Record. The Personal Data Questionnaire and form of Financial Statement are available on the Commission website.
- The application materials should be uploaded at the same time, not piecemeal. Each document should be uploaded as a PDF with the name of the applicant, title of the document, and the date in the title. For example, John Doe's Personal Data Questionnaire submitted on January 1, 2025, would be titled "John Doe Personal Data Questionnaire 1.1.2025."
 - You can either drag-and-drop your application materials or you can use the file browser to upload the application materials via the secure box link.
- **You will not have access to your application materials once they are uploaded.** Please make sure that they are complete and accurate before they are uploaded via the secure box link.
- Once a candidate has submitted all required application materials, **they must notify the Commission Legal Assistant by email** (laura.verdecchia@troutman.com). Your application is not complete and will not be considered by the Commission unless Ms. Verdecchia receives the confirmation email. **No late applications will be considered.**

NOTE: Applications must be submitted electronically. No paper application materials will be accepted. The Commission also strongly prefers submission of all Letters of Recommendation via email to the attention of the Chair (krystle.tadesse@troutman.com) and the Legal Assistant (laura.verdecchia@troutman.com).

B. SELECTION OF INTERVIEWEES

After the application period closes and the Commission members have had the opportunity to review the submissions, the Commission will meet to consider the applications and decide which candidates it will interview. A portion of this meeting is typically conducted in closed session, for any discussions of the job performance, character, or physical or mental health of the applicants. *See R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(1)*. Any candidate who prefers that all discussion about their application be held in open session must notify the Commission in writing. After the meeting, the Commission will notify the chosen interviewees of the date and time of their interviews. All interviews are conducted in open session, however, to the extent that confidential information will be discussed, the Commission may hold those portions of the interview in closed session at the

discretion of the Commission or at the request of the interviewee. *See Judicial Nominating Commission Uniform Rule of Procedures 1.3(B)*.

Once the Commission has compiled a list of interviewees, a copy of this list is forwarded to the Rhode Island State Police, the Rhode Island Ethics Commission, the Chief Disciplinary Counsel, and the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, each of which conducts a background check and reports the results of those checks to the Commission. After receiving completed background checks, the Commission may meet again in closed session, for any discussions of the job performance, character, or physical or mental health of the applicants. *See R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-46-5(a)(1)*.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT AND INTERVIEWS

Prior to the interviews, the Commission schedules a public meeting to receive comment about the applicants under consideration. This public meeting is noticed in accordance with the Rhode Island Open Meetings Law and each applicant is notified in writing of the date and time of the meeting. The Commission also welcomes the submission of written comment concerning the applicants.

After the completion of the public comment session, the Commission conducts the interviews in open session. As previously noted, pursuant to *Judicial Nominating Commission Uniform Rule of Procedures 1.3(B)*, portions of the interview where confidential information would be discussed may be held in closed session at the discretion of the Commission or at the request of the interviewee. Following the interviews, the Commission may deliberate in closed session to discuss the various candidates. Thereafter, the Commission votes in open session on the candidates under consideration. At the completion of the vote, the Commission transmits to the Governor's office a list of three to five highly qualified candidates for the vacancy.

D. DIVERSITY DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

***Rhode Island General Laws § 8-16.1-4(b)* provides in relevant part that the Commission shall report to the General Assembly and to the Governor on (i) the statistics regarding the race, ethnicity and gender of applicants considered by the Commission.**

Pursuant to the statute, the Judicial Nomination Commission must request diversity data on a voluntary basis from applicants and this data must be collected anonymously.

The relevant statute requires that the Commission produce an annual report on its efforts to encourage diversity within the judiciary in Rhode Island. This report will be sent to the Governor and the General Assembly and will be made available to the public on the Commission's website.

You will receive a link to the Voluntary Supplement to the JNC Personal Data Questionnaire and an anonymous Google Form, at the same time that you receive a secure link to upload your application materials. Your participation is voluntary, but strongly encouraged. Completion of the anonymous Google Form is preferred, but you can choose to complete the fillable PDF (which

you will receive via email with the secure link and is also available on the Commission's website) and either upload it via the secure box link that will be provided—separate from your application materials to maintain anonymity—or mail it, with no identifying information, to the Commission's Legal Assistant: Laura Jeanne Verdecchia, Troutman Pepper Locke, 2800 Financial Plaza, Providence, Rhode Island 02903. Please use only one of these options to submit your information.

If you have any additional questions about the application and selection process, please contact the Legal Assistant for the Judicial Nominating Commission, **Laura Jeanne Verdecchia** at laura.verdecchia@troutman.com or (401) 455-7611.