

alaska judicial council

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Alaska Judicial Council **Trial Judge** Questionnaire

2012 Candidates for Judicial Retention

October 2011

Eric Smith

Name

Palmer Superior Court Court

1. Please estimate your workload during your present term.

- a) 50 % civil cases
 - 45 % criminal cases
- b) 9 # of jury trials/year 55 # of non-jury trials/year
 - 4 *#* of administrative appeals/year

5 % court administrative work 100 % Total

Please describe your participation on court/bar committees or other administrative activities 2. during your current term of office.

Chair, Criminal Pattern Instruction Committee Vice Chair, Fairness, Diversity, and Equality Committee Member, Fairness and Access Implementation Committee Chair, Dispute Resolution Panel Member, Judicial Wellness Committee Member, Steering Committee for Khabarovsk-Alaska Rule of Law Partnership Training Judge Mentor Judge

3. Please assess, in one or two paragraphs, your judicial performance during your present term. Appropriate areas of comment could include: satisfaction with your judicial role, specific contributions to the judiciary or the field of law, increases in legal knowledge and judicial skills, or other measures of judicial abilities that you believe to be important.

I have continued to enjoy and to find fulfillment in my work as a superior court judge. The mix of cases in Palmer provides an excellent opportunity to work in a wide variety of fields of law, as well as to make a significant contribution to the community.

One of the more interesting areas of work for me has been in criminal sentencing. I have consistently looked for ways in which to make sentences more effective in meeting the sentencing goals. One of the most important new sentencing approaches which I have explored is that of circle sentencing, which features community participation in the process of defining the relevant sentence. I conducted such a sentencing procedure in Glenallen in a case involving two young men who had stolen and destroyed a community fire truck. The entire community participated in an open discussion of the impact of that crime on the community itself and on the families of the defendants, a process which I believe had a positive impact on the two defendants (they both burst into tears) and should lead to a better chance at rehabilitation.

I have done a lot of work in locations other than Palmer. Together with another judge, I cover the entire calendar for the Cordova court. I also am assigned to hear all cases in the Glenallen and Valdez courts which involve Class A and Unclassified felonies or felonies in which domestic violence or sexual assault or abuse is charged; I also hear on all cases from which the judge sitting in Valdez is preempted. In addition, I have worked as a Training Judge for magistrates in Glenallen, Naknek, Dutch Harbor, and Seward -- this entails both travel to those locations for an on-site review as well as ongoing availability to assist those magistrates with any issues that may arise. Finally, I recently completed a five-week civil trial in Bethel at the request of the Fourth Judicial District. This work has provided substantial benefits to the court system. It also has broadened my understanding through exposure to different communities and different cultures.

Finally, I was recently appointed to be the Chairman of the Criminal Pattern Instruction Committee, which is charged with developing pattern instructions for use in criminal cases. This has been a fascinating experience, as we spend a great deal of time debating the substantive criminal law so as best to develop an accurate instruction for judges to use. We also have set out to write the instructions in much plainer English, a process which cannot but help me explain my own rulings in a more understandable way.

- 4. During your most recent term as a judge, have you:
 - a) had a tax lien filed or other collection procedure instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? □ Yes ☑ No
 - b) been involved in a non-judicial capacity in any legal proceeding whether as a party or otherwise? □ Yes ☑ No
 - c) engaged in the practice of law (other than as a judge)? \Box Yes \checkmark No
 - d) held office in any political party? \Box Yes \checkmark No
 - e) held any other local, state or federal office? \Box Yes \checkmark No
- 5. If your answer to any of the questions above is "yes," please give full details, including dates, facts, case numbers and outcomes.

6. Please provide any other information which you believe would assist the Council in conducting its evaluations and in preparing its recommendations for the 2012 retention elections.

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For questions 7 through 10 please do not list any cases that have pending issues in your court.

7. Please list your three most recent jury trials including case names and numbers. Please list the names, current addresses, including zip codes and suite numbers where applicable, of each attorney involved in these trials. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

	Ca	ase Number 1	
Case Name:	State of Alaska	Case Number:	3PA-09-2864 CR
<i>v</i> .	Gary McCormick		
	Att	orneys Involved:	
Name:	Kerry Corliss	Name:	Pamela Dale
Address:	515 E. Dahlia Ste 150	Address:	135 Christensen Drive
City, State, Zip:	Palmer, AK 99645	City, State, Zip:	Anchorage, AK 99501
Name:		Name:	
Address:			
City, State, Zip:		City, State, Zip:	
	<u> </u>	ase Number 2	
<i>a b i</i>			
	State of Alaska	Case Number:	3CO-10-175 CR
ν.	Michael Roberts		
	Att	orneys Involved:	
Name:	Alfred A. Petersen	Name:	Chad McGrady
Address:	310 K Street Ste 520	Address:	550 S. Alaska St. Ste 202
City, State, Zip:	Anchorage, AK 99501	City, State, Zip:	Palmer, AK 99645
		Ň	
Name:			
Address:			
City, State, Zip:		<i>Chy, suite, zip.</i>	
	Ca	se Number 3	
Case Name:	State of Alaska	Case Number:	3PA-10-1771 CR
-	Vladimir Bochovsky		
-		orneys Involved:	
Name:	Kerry Corliss	Name:	Nate Peters
Address:	515 E. Dahlia, Ste. 15		515 E. Dahlia, Ste. 100
-	Palmer, AK 99645	- City, State, Zip:	Palmer, AK 99645
Name:		Name:	
Address:		Address:	
City, State, Zip:	······	City, State, Zip:	

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8. Please list your three most recent non-jury trials including case names and numbers. Please list the names, current addresses, including zip codes and suite numbers where applicable, of each attorney involved in these trials. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

	Ca	se Number 1								
Case Name:	Connie Cosby	Case Number:	3PA-03-772 CI							
v.	James Mark Cosby									
-	Atto	rneys Involved:								
Name:	David Golter	Name:	Susan Carse							
- Address:	348 S. Denali St.		211 H Street							
City, State, Zip:	Palmer, AK 99645	City, State, Zip:	Anchorage, AK 99501							
-										
Name:		Name:								
Address:		Address:								
City, State, Zip:		City, State, Zip:								
	_									
	Ca	se Number 2								
Case Name:	Lizzie Robertson	Case Number:	3PA-10-823 CI							
ν.	Jeffrey Honig									
Attorneys Involved:										
Name:	Chelsea Hicks	Name:	Melinda Miles							
Address:	415 S. Bailey, Ste. B	Address:	624 S. Bailey, Ste. 105							
City, State, Zip:	Palmer, AK 99645	City, State, Zip:	Palmer, AK 99645							
-										
Name:										
Address:										
City, State, Zip:		City, State, Zip:								
		N								
		se Number 3								
Case Name:	Thomas Saddler	Case Number:	3PA-09-1779 CI							
ν.	State of Alaska									
	Atto	orneys Involved:								
Name:	David Allen	Name:	Mike Perry							
Address:	P.O. Box 523	Address:	515 E. Dahlia, Ste. 150							
City, State, Zip:	Sechelt, BC Canada V0N	3AD City, State, Zip:	Palmer, AK 99645							
_										
Name:		Name:								
Address:		Address:								
City, State, Zip:		City, State, Zip:								

Please list your three most recent cases, including case names and numbers, which did not 9. go to trial, but on which you did significant work (such as settlement conference, hearings, motion work, etc.). Please list the names, current addresses, including zip codes and suite numbers where applicable, of each attorney involved in these cases. (Attach additional pages *if necessary.)*

		Case Number 1	
Case Name:	Christopher Johnson	Case Number:	3PA-10-2931 CI
ν.	Sierra Cosby		
-		Attorneys Involved:	
Name:	Jon Marc Petersen	Name:	Tara Lachinski
Address:	360 N. Main Street	Address:	348 S. Denali Street
City, State, Zip:	Wasilla, AK 99654	City, State, Zip:	Palmer, AK 99645
Name:			
Address:		City State Time	
City, State, Zip:		Cuy, Suite, Zip.	
		Case Number 2	
Case Name:	In re Francis Banish	Case Number:	3PA-10-144 PR
v.			
	······································	Attorneys Involved:	
N7	Patricia Hefferen	Auorneys involveu. Name:	Scott Sterling
Name: 	1451 W. Spruce Ave.		-
-	Wasilla, AK 99654		Anchorage, AK 99501
Cuy, Suit, 24.	Masilia, AR 55054		- menorage, me sosor
Name:		Name:	
Address:		Addross	
City, State, Zip:		City State Tin-	
		Case Number 3	
Case Name:	Linda Moffitt	Case Number:	3PA-06-1070 CI
<i>v</i> .	Tracy and Katherine	Moffitt	
-		Attorneys Involved:	
Name:	Peter Gamache	Name:	Chris Gronning
Address:	405 W. 36th Ave. Ste	e. 201 Address:	601 W. 5th Ave. Ste. 900
City, State, Zip:	Anchorage, AK 99503	City, State, Zip:	Anchorage, AK 99501
Name:	Trigg Davis	Name:	
Address:	405 W. 36th Ave. Ste		
City, State, Zip:	Anchorage, AK 99503	City, State, Zip:	

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10. Optional: If you deem it helpful to the Council, please list up to three other cases during your past term in which you believe your work was particularly noteworthy. Please list the names, current addresses, including zip codes and suite numbers where applicable, of each attorney involved in these cases. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

	Case Ni	umber 1								
Case Name:	Michael Smith	Case Number:	3PA-11-1596 CI							
v.	David Smith, et al									
-	Attorneys	 Involved:								
Name:	Robert Johnson	Name:	Patricia Hefferan							
Address:	900 W. 5th Ave. Ste. 600	Address:	351 W. Swanson Ave. #3							
City, State, Zip:	Anchorage, AK 99501	City, State, Zip:	Wasilla, AK 99654							
Name:	Charles Kasner	Name:								
Address:	300 Minnesota Ave. #310	Address:								
City, State, Zip:	Anchorage, AK 99503	City, State, Zip:								
	Case No	umber 2								
Case Name:	Welton	_Case Number:	3PA-05-836 CI							
v.	State of Alaska									
	Attorneys Involved:									
Name:	Michael Smith	Name:	Roman Kalytiak							
Address:	592 Skamania Landing Rd	Address:	515 E. Dahlia Ste. 150							
City, State, Zip:	Stevenson, MA 98648	City, State, Zip:	Palmer, AK 99645							
Name:		Name:								
Address:		Address:								
City, State, Zip:		City, State, Zip:								
	Case Nu	umbor 3								
C N			3GL-08-114, 115 CR							
-	State of Alaska	_ Case Number:	561-00 114, 115 CK							
<i>v</i>	Hicks, Gibbons									
	Attorneys	Involved:								
Name:	Jarom Bangerter	Name:	Lyle Stohler							
Address:	515 E. Dahlia, Ste. 150	Address:	1517 Industrial Way #1							
City, State, Zip:	Palmer, AK 99645	City, State, Zip:	Palmer, AK 99645							
N 7	Josh Fannon	N/								
-										
Address:	808 S. Bailey									
Cuy, state, Zip?	Palmer, AK 99645	_ Cuy, Sime, Zup:								

Alaska Judicial Council Recommendation Judge Eric Smith, Superior Court, Palmer

Judicial Council Recommendation 2012

The Alaska Judicial Council is a non-partisan citizens' commission established by the Alaska constitution. Alaskan law requires the Council to evaluate judges' performance and authorizes the Council to recommend to voters whether judges should be retained in office. The Judicial Council reviews judges' integrity, diligence, legal ability, fairness, demeanor, ability to manage their caseloads, and overall performance of their judicial responsibilities in and out of the courtroom. The Judicial Council finds Judge Smith to be **Qualified** and recommends unanimously that the public vote "**YES**" to retain him as a superior court judge.

Judicial Council Evaluation

The Judicial Council surveyed thousands of Alaskans including peace and probation officers, court employees, attorneys, jurors, social workers and guardians ad litem about the judges on the ballot. Respondents were asked to rate judicial performance and to submit comments. The Council also reviewed the ratings and observations of the Alaska Judicial Observers, independent community-based volunteers. The Council reviewed the judge's peremptory challenge, recusals, and appellate affirmance and reversal rates; any civil or criminal litigation involving the judge; APOC and court system conflict-of-interest statements; any disciplinary files involving the judge's pay was withheld for an untimely decision. The Council reviewed other court records and investigated judicial conduct in specific cases. The Council interviewed some judges, attorneys, and court staff, and held a statewide public hearing to obtain comments about judges.

	Attorney Survey	Peace Officer Survey	Juror Survey	Court Employee Survey	Social Workers Guardians ad Litem
Legal Ability	4.4				
Impartiality	4.2	4.7	4.8	4.5	4.0
Integrity	4.5	4.7		4.7	4.0
Temperament	4.3	4.5	4.9	4.5	3.6
Diligence	4.2	4.7		4.6	3.8
Overall	4.3	4.6	4.8	4.6	3.8



<u>Rating Scale</u> 5.0 = Excellent

- 4.0 = Good
- 3.0 = Acceptable
- 2.0 = Deficient
- 1.0 = Poor

Summary of Survey Information

Survey respondents rated Judge Smith on the categories summarized in the table above, using 5 as the highest rating possible. The attorney rating for Judge Smith on overall performance was 4.3. Peace and probation officers gave Judge Smith a rating of 4.6. Jurors rated him 4.8 overall, court employees gave him 4.6, and social workers and guardians ad litem rated him at 3.8. The Alaska Judicial Observers rated him 3.28.

Recommendation: Vote "YES" to retain Judge Eric Smith

	Leg Abi	lity	Impart Fair	ness	Integ		Judi Temper	rament	Dilig		Ove Evalu	ation
	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N
Basis for Evaluation		_				10		0				-
No Response		5		6		10		9		17		5
Direct Professional	4.4	199	4.2	199	4.5	195	4.3	197	4.2	191	4.3	199
Experience in last 5 yrs	4.4	177	4.2	177	4.5	175	4.3	176	4.3	172	4.3	177
Experience not in last 5 yrs	4.3	20	4.0	20	4.4	18	4.3	19	4.2	17	4.3	19
Professional Reputation	4.2	44	3.9	44	4.2	43	4.0	43	4.1	41	4.1	44
Other Personal Contacts	4.8	8	4.7	7	4.8	8	4.6	7	4.7	7	4.6	8
Type of Practice		-				_		_				_
No Response		3		3		7		5		10		3
Private, Solo	4.4	53	4.1	53	4.4	50	4.2	53	4.3	51	4.2	54
Private, 2-5 Attorneys	4.0	37	4.0	37	4.2	36	4.1	37	3.7	37	3.9	36
Private, 6+ Attorneys	4.4	17	4.3	17	4.5	17	4.2	17	4.1	17	4.2	17
Private, Corporate Employee	4.7	3	4.3	3	4.7	3	4.0	3	4.7	3	4.3	3
Judge or Judicial Officer	4.7	38	4.5	37	4.7	38	4.4	38	4.7	34	4.6	38
Government	4.3	38	4.1	39	4.4	39	4.3	37	4.3	38	4.3	38
Public Service Agency/Org	4.3	3	3.7	3	4.5	2	4.5	2	4.5	2	4.0	3
Other	4.8	5	5.0	5	5.0	5	4.8	5	4.4	5	4.8	5
Years of Practice in Alaska												
No Response		3		3		7		5		11		3
5 Years or fewer	4.4	5	4.4	5	4.3	4	4.4	5	4.4	5	4.4	5
6 to 10 years	4.1	15	3.8	16	4.1	16	4.1	15	4.0	16	3.9	15
11 to 15 years	4.3	18	4.2	17	4.4	18	4.3	18	4.2	16	4.2	18
16 to 20 years	4.2	18	3.9	18	4.3	18	4.4	18	4.3	18	4.1	18
21 years or more	4.4	131	4.3	131	4.5	127	4.3	129	4.2	124	4.3	131
Gender												
No Response		3		3		7		5		10		3
Male	4.4	137	4.2	136	4.5	133	4.3	135	4.3	130	4.3	137
Female	4.4	58	4.3	59	4.4	58	4.4	58	4.2	58	4.3	58
Cases Handled												
No Response		3		3		7		5		11		3
Prosecution	4.7	6	4.4	7	4.9	7	4.7	7	4.9	7	4.9	7
Mainly Criminal	4.2	16	3.9	16	4.1	16	4.0	15	4.0	14	4.1	15
Mixed Criminal & Civil	4.5	66	4.3	65	4.5	64	4.3	66	4.3	61	4.3	66
Mainly Civil	4.3	97	4.1	97	4.5	94	4.3	95	4.1	95	4.2	97
Other	4.7	6	4.7	6	4.5	6	4.7	6	4.8	6	4.5	6
Location of Practice												
No Response		3		3		7		5		11		3
First District	4.7	9	4.6	9	4.7	9	4.6	9	4.7	9	4.6	9
Second District	5.0	1	5.0	1	5.0	1	5.0	1	5.0	1	5.0	1
Third District	4.3	171	4.1	171	4.4	168	4.2	169	4.2	163	4.2	171
Fourth District	4.2	10	4.3	10	4.4	10	4.2	10	4.1	10	4.2	10
Outside of Alaska	5.0	10	5.0	10		0	5.0	10	5.0	10	5.0	10

Judge Eric Smith Detailed Information Responses Alaska Bar Association Members

Note: Ratings for only those respondents who reported direct professional experience with the judge.

Judge Eric Smith Peace and Probation Officers

	Imparti		Judicial Integrity Temperament				Dilla		Over	
	Fairn Mean	ess N	Mean	rity N	Mean	ament	Dilige Mean	ence N	Evalua Mean	ation N
Basis for Evaluation										
No Response		1		1		2		1		1
Direct Professional	4.7	31	4.7	31	4.5	30	4.7	31	4.6	31
Experience in last 5 yrs	4.7	31	4.7	31	4.5	30	4.7	31	4.6	31
Experience not in last 5 yrs		0		0		0		0		0
Professional Reputation	3.8	4	3.8	4	3.8	4	3.8	4	3.8	4
Other Personal Contacts		0		0		0		0		0
Type of Work										
No Response		0		0		1		0		0
State Law Enforcement Officer	4.9	11	4.8	11	4.4	11	4.8	11	4.7	11
Municipal/Borough Law Enforcement Officer	4.5	6	4.7	6	4.8	6	4.8	6	4.7	6
Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO)		0		0		0		0		0
Probation/Parole Officer	4.5	14	4.5	14	4.5	13	4.5	14	4.5	14
Other		0		0		0		0		0
Length of Experience										
No Response		0		0		1		0		0
5 Years or fewer	4.3	4	4.3	4	3.7	3	4.3	4	4.3	4
6 to 10 years	4.9	9	4.9	9	4.8	9	4.9	9	4.9	9
11 to 15 years	4.6	9	4.7	9	4.8	9	4.7	9	4.6	9
16 to 20 years	4.8	4	4.5	4	4.3	4	4.8	4	4.5	4
21 years or more	4.6	5	4.6	5	4.2	5	4.6	5	4.6	5
Gender										
No Response		0		0		1		0		0
Male	4.7	20	4.7	20	4.6	19	4.8	20	4.7	20
Female	4.6	11	4.6	11	4.4	11	4.5	11	4.5	11
Location of Work										
No Response		0		0		1		0		0
First District		0		0		0		0		0
Second District		0		0		0		0		0
Third District	4.7	31	4.7	31	4.5	30	4.7	31	4.6	31
Fourth District		0		0		0		0		0
Community Population										
No Response		0		0		1		0		0
Under 2,000	5.0	1	5.0	1	5.0	1	5.0	1	5.0	1
Between 2,000 and 35,000	4.5	13	4.5	13	4.5	13	4.6	13	4.5	13
Over 35,000	4.7	17	4.8	17	4.5	16	4.7	17	4.7	17

Note: Ratings for only those respondents who reported direct professional experience with the judge.

Judge Eric Smith Social Workers and Guardians ad Litem

	Impartia		Judicial						Overa	
	Fairne		Integr Mean	-	Tempera Mean	ment N	Diligen	nce N	Evalua Mean	
Basis for Evaluation	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	IN	Mean	IN	Mean	N
No Response		0		0		0		0		0
Direct Professional	4.0		4.0		3.6		3.8		20	
		5 5		5 5		5	3.8	5	3.8 3.8	5
Experience in last 5 yrs	4.0		4.0		3.6	5		5		5
Experience not in last 5 yrs		0		0		0		0		0
Professional Reputation		0		0		0		0		0
Other Personal Contacts		0		0		0		0		C
Type of Work										
No Response		0		0		0		0		0
Social Worker	3.0	1	3.0	1	3.0	1	3.0	1	3.0	1
Guardian ad Litem	4.0	3	4.0	3	3.3	3	3.7	3	3.7	3
Length of Experience										
No Response		0		0		0		0		C
5 Years or fewer	3.7	3	3.7	3	3.3	3	3.7	3	3.7	3
6 to 10 years		0		0		0		0		0
11 to 15 years	4.0	1	4.0	1	3.0	1	3.0	1	3.0	1
16 to 20 years		0		0		0		0		0
21 years or more		0		0		0		0		C
Gender										
No Response		0		0		0		0		C
Male	4.0	1	4.0	1	4.0	1	4.0	1	4.0	1
Female	3.7	3	3.7	3	3.0	3	3.3	3	3.3	3
Location of Work										
No Response		0		0		0		0		0
First District		0		0		0		0		0
Second District		0		0		0		0		0
Third District	3.8	4	3.8	4	3.3	4	3.5	4	3.5	4
Fourth District		0		0		0		0		C
Community Population		-		-		-		-		
No Response		0		0		0		0		C
Under 2,000		0		0		0		0		(
Between 2,000 and 35,000		0		0		0		0		C
Over 35,000	3.8	4	3.8	4	3.3	4	3.5	4	3.5	4

Note: Ratings for only those respondents who reported direct professional experience with the judge.

Distribution of Court Employee Ratings* 2012 Retention Evaluation Eric Smith											
		Number of Responses									
Survey Category	Total	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Deficient	Poor	Mean				
Impartiality/Fairness	41	27	8	5	0	1	4.5				
Integrity	42	31	8	3	0	0	4.7				
Judicial Temperament	44	28	12	3	0	1	4.5				
Diligence	40	27	10	1	2	0	4.6				
Overall Evaluation	44	32	8	2	2	0	4.6				

* Ratings are based on direct professional experience.

Juror Survey Results 2012 Retention Evaluation Eric Smith										
Survey Category	Mean	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Deficient	Poor	Total Responses			
Impartiality/Fairness	4.8	44	7	1	0	0	52			
Respectful/Courteous	4.9	44	8	0	0	0	52			
Attentive during Proceedings	4.6	35	13	3	0	0	51			
Control over Proceedings	4.9	46	6	0	0	0	52			
Intelligence/ Skill as a Judge	4.9	46	6	0	0	0	52			
Overall Evaluation	4.8	43	9	0	0	0	52			

Current and Prior Retention Scores

Eric Smith

Appointed	Name of Court
4/18/1996	Palmer Superior Ct

Retention Attorney Bar Scores

Year	Legal Ability	Impartiality	Integrity	Temperament	Dilligence	Special Skills	Overall Performance
2000	4	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2	4
2006	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.1	4.2		4.1
2012	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.2		4.3

Peace and Probation Officer Survey Scores

_	Year	Impartiality	Integrity	Temperament	Diligence	Special Skills	Overall Performance	
	2000	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.3	
	2006	3.9	4.2	3.9	4		3.9	
	2012	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.7		4.6	_