



alaska judicial council

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Alaska Judicial Council

Retention Questionnaire

2026 Candidates for Judicial Retention

Full Name: Katherine Hill Lybrand

Court: Ketchikan Superior Court

1a. Please estimate your workload during your present term:

- **Case work:** 90%
- **Administrative work, outreach, continuing education, etc:** 10%

1b. Superior Court Judges:

- **Criminal:** 35%
- **Delinquency:** 5%
- **Domestic Relations:** 30%
- **Child in Need of Aid:** 10%
- **Probate:** 10%
- **General Civil (Including Appeals):** 10%

1c. Number of jury trials/year: 3

1d. Number of non-jury trials/year: 15

1e. Any additional information you would like to provide about your workload?

In addition to my Ketchikan caseload, I also handle Petersburg cases and regularly travel to Petersburg for hearings. The rate of trials in Ketchikan and Petersburg ebbs and flows depending on a variety of factors. I have had as many as 10 jury trials (including one civil jury trial) and 24 non jury trials in a year and as few as 2 jury trials and about a dozen non jury trials.

For non jury trials, I only included substantive evidentiary hearings that lasted four or more hours. I frequently have shorter evidentiary hearings in criminal and civil cases but did not include those in the overall picture.

I am also the designated judge who handles misdemeanor cases when our district court judge needs to recuse due to past involvement with the case as district attorney. These recusals have significantly decreased over the years, but were rather substantial during my first year. I still maintain a handful of district court cases.

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

I am a member of the Child Support Guidelines Committee.

I am a training judge for magistrate judges who are located in Ketchikan, Juneau, and Haines.

I was a member of a committee addressing the court's registration process for foreign protective orders. That committee has since concluded its work.

I have also participated in several stakeholder meetings regarding the development of an ICWA court in Juneau.

3. Please describe any judicial or legal education you have undertaken or provided during your current term in office.

I attended the two week general jurisdiction course at the National Judicial College.

I attended three years of the Newer Judge Conference and have attended the annual Judicial Conference each year. I presented at the 2025 Judicial Conference.

I also attend the Magistrate Judges' Conference.

4. Please describe any public outreach activities.

I participated in a panel at the Alaska Native Justice Center's training for new ICWA workers.

I participated in a judges' panel with Facing Foster Care in Alaska and answered questions from current and former foster youth about the court system and child welfare cases.

I participated in a court system sponsored panel geared towards explaining the court process for journalists.

I've participated in panels regarding judicial clerkship opportunities for my alma mater, Maine Law, and also talk with current students 1:1 about clerkship opportunities and jobs in Alaska.

5. 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 greatly enjoy serving as a judge in my home community of Ketchikan and my newfound community of Petersburg. The work is challenging, dynamic, and humbling. Because I handle superior court matters for Ketchikan and Petersburg and district court matters in Petersburg (when those are not otherwise handled by our magistrate judge), my caseload involves almost every type of case that comes before the court. The breadth of cases has required me to gain knowledge about a variety of areas I had little familiarity with before and keeps me on my toes. I work hard to learn about these new areas and to be prepared for every case that's before me.

I've found the most demanding part of the work to be explaining the law and my decisions to court staff and litigants in a way that is clear and understandable. To improve those skills, I frequently re-listen to my own hearings and hearings handled by other judges so I can modify my delivery and explanations. I have also noticed an increase in the community's interest in court activities. When appropriate for the hearing, I try to explain the court process more generally so the community can better understand the court's role and the roles of other court participants. This role provides many opportunities for self-reflection and improvement and I look forward to continuing to work on my judicial abilities moving forward.

I hope to continue to serve the community and to continue to work to maintain the community's trust in the court.

5a. This question pertains to Superior Court judges only.

State Law requires the Council to conduct an evaluation of judges standing for retention, and to provide information to the public about the judges. Under a provision added in 2013, the information the Council provides to the public "shall include the judge's consideration of victims when imposing sentence on persons convicted of felony offenses where the offenses involve victims" (see AS 22.10.150).

Please submit a short statement about how you consider victims when imposing sentences in felony offenses.

When preparing for a sentencing hearing, I review any victim impact statements contained in the presentence report. If I do not have a presentence report available, I review the case to refresh my memory on any statements the victim made during prior bail hearings or other proceedings.

At the hearing, I ask the state to confirm that it has provided victim notice. If the victim is present, I try and explain the hearing process at the start, so they know when they will have an opportunity to speak and can otherwise focus on the proceeding. When it is their time for comments, I invite them to be heard. I also let victims know they do not need to speak if they do not feel comfortable.

I prepare an outline of the sentencing factors prior to the hearing and add notes to the outline based on comments from the parties and victim. This helps ensure I address all sentencing factors, including impact on the victim.

In considering the impact on the victim, I try to consider not only the acute impacts from the event itself, but also any longer term impacts the crime has had on the victim and his/her life. I recognize that a victim may decline to participate for a number of reasons. I still consider the victim and try and emphasize the impact of the defendant's actions on the victim based upon the circumstances and nature of the crime.

Unless it is expressly waived, I give the state 90 days to file a proposed restitution judgment after sentencing and hold restitution hearings as necessary.

6. 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?

No

b) been involved in a non-judicial capacity in any legal proceeding whether as a party or otherwise?

Yes

c) engaged in the practice of law (other than as a judge)?

No

d) held office in any political party?

No

e) held any other local, state or federal office?

No

f) had any complaints, charges or grievances filed against you with the Alaska Commission on Judicial Conduct, the Alaska Bar Association, or with the Alaska Court System that resulted in public proceedings or sanctions?

No

7. If your answer to any of the questions above is "yes," please give full details, including dates, facts, case numbers and outcomes.

In a child-in-need-of-aid case, I denied a grandfather's placement review request. He appealed this decision and I was affirmed by the Alaska Supreme Court. The grandfather then filed a federal lawsuit against me and the child's tribe (Case No. 3:25-cv-00178-SLG). I have not been properly served with this lawsuit and court system attorneys are monitoring the case for me.

8. Please provide any other information which you believe would assist the Council in conducting its evaluations and in preparing its recommendations for the 2020 retention elections.

Ketchikan was fortunate enough to have two superior court judges and one district court who held their positions for many years. In large part due to their tenure, I think the community respects the court. These are large shoes to fill, but I strive to be fully present at all hearings, cultivate a courtroom where mutual respect is the expectation, and provide clear and thorough explanations for my decisions. I am committed to continuing to work on these goals if I maintain this position.

Trial Judges: Questions 9a-9d please do not list any cases that have pending issues in your court.

9a. 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. (If there are additional pages, please email these to sdipietro@ajc.state.ak.us)

Jury Trial Cases

Case 1: IMTO: CM

(Case No: 1PE-23-4DL)

Total Attorneys: 2

Atty 1: Alexander Kramarczuk 415 Main Street, Room 304 Ketchikan, Alaska 99901	Atty 2: John Phillips 2110 Second Avenue Ketchikan, Alaska 99901
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Case 2: State of Alaska v. Marcus Sams-McKoy

(Case No: 1KE-23-742CR)

Total Attorneys: 2

Atty 1: Jackson Willard 415 Main Street, Room 304 Ketchikan, Alaska 99901	Atty 2: John Phillips 2110 Second Avenue Ketchikan, Alaska 99901
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Case 3: State of Alaska v. Lars Christensen

(Case No: 1PE-23-26CR)

Total Attorneys: 2

Atty 1: Emma Johnson PO Box 110216 Juneau, Alaska 99811	Atty 2: Dylan Krueger 123 4th Street Juneau, Alaska 99801
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Trial Judges: Questions 9a-9d please do not list any cases that have pending issues in your court.

9b. 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. (If there are additional pages, please email these to sdipietro@ajc.state.ak.us)

Non-Jury Trial Cases

Case 1: Rebecca Johnson v. James Martin

(Case No: 1KE-21-0002CI)

Total Attorneys: 1

Atty 1: Bryan Schulz 1920 Tongass Ave Ketchikan, Alaska 99901
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Case 2: Rachel Hudson v. Lyman Hudson

(Case No: 1PE-19-41CI)

Total Attorneys: 2

Atty 1: Andy Miller andy@andymillerlaw.com	Atty 2: E. Hunter England 550 W. 8th Ave Anchorage, Alaska 99501
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Case 3: Aaron Marohl v. Brandi Thynes

(Case No: 1PE-20-1CI)

Total Attorneys: 1

Atty 1: Robert Dwyer 471 W. 36th Ave, Suite 202 Anchorage, Alaska 99503
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Trial Judges: Questions 9a-9d please do not list any cases that have pending issues in your court.

9c. Please list your three most recent cases, including case names and numbers, which did not 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. (If there are additional pages, please email these to sdipietro@ajc.state.ak.us)

Cases that Did Not Go to Trial

Case 1: Bryan Perez v. Cape Fox Corporation et al

(Case No: 1KE-24-305CI)

Total Attorneys: 2

Atty 1: Laura Fisher 1227 W 9th Ave, Ste 200 Anchorage, Alaska 99501	Atty 2: Matthew Findley 1227 W 9th Ave, Ste 200 Anchorage, Alaska 99501
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Case 2: State of Alaska v. Michael Olson

(Case No: 1PE-24-12CR)

Total Attorneys: 2

Atty 1: Emma Johnson PO Box 110216 Juneau, Alaska 99811	Atty 2: Whitney-Marie Bostick PO Box 110300 Juneau, Alaska 99811
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Case 3: Victor Klose v. Donald Lawler

(Case No: 1KE-24-00133CI)

Total Attorneys: 2

Atty 1: H. Clay Keene 540 Water Street, Ste 302 Ketchikan, Alaska 99901	Atty 2: Michael Heiser 300 Mill St #20 Ketchikan, Alaska 99901
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Trial Judges: Questions 9a-9d please do not list any cases that have pending issues in your court.

9d. 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. (If there are additional pages, please email these to sdipietro@ajc.state.ak.us)

Optional Cases

Case 1: State of Alaska v. Jeffrey Walls

(Case No: 1KE-22-820CR)

Total Attorneys: 2

Atty 1: Jay Hochberg 92-123 Leipapa Way Kapolei, Hawaii 96707	Atty 2: Krystyn Tendy 210 K Street, Suite 701 Anchorage, Alaska 99501
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Case 2: Louis Waechter v. Julie Ruhle & James Vick

(Case No: 1PE-22-28CI)

Total Attorneys: 2

Atty 1: Michael Heiser 300 Mill St, #20 Ketchikan, Alaska 99901	Atty 2: Eric Derleth 386 Heath Pl Soldotna, Alaska 99669
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