



alaska judicial council

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Press Release

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For immediate release
May 22, 2025

Announcing Nominees *Anchorage Superior and Bethel District Courts*

The Alaska Judicial Council met in Anchorage on May 20, and in Bethel on May 21, 2025, to interview applicants for vacancies on the Anchorage Superior and Bethel District courts. Following its meeting, the Alaska Judicial Council announced that **Kate Demarest, Kari McCrea, Danée Pontious, and William Taylor** were nominated as the most qualified applicants to fill the Anchorage Superior Court vacancy. The governor has 45 days in which to appoint from among these nominees to fill the position.

For the Bethel District Court, the Council nominated one applicant, **Joy Anderson**. Because the Council's vote did not result in at least two nominees, the Council declined to submit any names to the governor and will re-advertise the position.

The Judicial Council is required to nominate two or more of the most qualified applicants applying for a judicial vacancy. (The framers of our Constitution referred to this standard as the "best available timber.")

The Council is a citizens' commission created by the Alaska Constitution composed of three attorneys, three non-attorneys, and the Chief Justice of the Alaska Supreme Court. The Council completes an extensive investigation and evaluation of judicial applicants. The Council reviews each applicant's education, experience, bar discipline and credit records, participation in community activities, and other records. It asks members of the Alaska Bar to evaluate the applicants, encourages the public to submit comments, and interviews the applicants.

Nominees for the Anchorage Superior Court vacancy are:

Kate Demarest: Ms. Demarest has been an Alaska resident for 14½ years and has been practicing law for 16 years. She graduated from University of Minnesota Law School in 2008 and is currently an assistant attorney general in Anchorage.

Kari Lyn McCrea: Judge McCrea has been an Alaska resident for 18½ years and has been practicing law for 23½ years. She graduated from Mitchell Hamline School of Law in 2001 and is currently a district court judge in Anchorage.

Danée Lynn Pontious: Ms. Pontious has been an Alaska resident for 20½ years and has been practicing law for 20 years. She graduated from University of Denver College of Law in 2004 and is currently in private practice in Anchorage.

William A. Taylor: Mr. Taylor has been an Alaska resident for 13½ years and has been practicing law for 13½ years. He graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in 2011 and is currently an assistant United States attorney in Anchorage.

The Nominee for the Bethel District Court vacancy is:

Joy Anderson: Ms. Anderson has been an Alaska resident for 11 years and has been practicing law for 12 years. She graduated from Vanderbilt University Law School in 2011 and is currently a co-director of the community justice worker resource center at Alaska Legal Services in Bethel.

Attached are records of the Council members' votes.

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**Alaska Judicial Council
Vote Tally Sheet
Anchorage Superior Court
May 20, 2025**

Candidates	Council Members						
	Babcock	Collins	DeWitt	Fletcher	Katcher	Parker	Carney*
Kate Demarest	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Kari McCrea	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Danée Pontious	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Will Taylor	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	

**The Chief Justice votes only when to do so would change the result.*



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**Alaska Judicial Council
Vote Tally Sheet
Bethel District Court
May 21, 2025**

Candidates	Council Members						
	Babcock	Collins	DeWitt	Fletcher	Katcher	Parker	Carney*
Joy K. Anderson	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Matthew W. Faulks	No	No	No	No	No	No	

**The Chief Justice votes only when to do so would change the result.*