

Tennessee Trial Court Vacancy Commission
Application for Nomination to Judicial Office

1/17/23

Name: _____ Jessica Holly Parrish _____

Office Address: _____ 32 Public Sq. _____
(including county) _____ Lawrenceburg, TN 38464, Lawrence Co. _____

Office Phone: _____ (931) 766-1453 _____ Facsimile: _____ (931) 766-1454 _____

Email Address: _____ [REDACTED] _____

Home Address: _____ [REDACTED] _____
(including county) _____ [REDACTED] Lawrence County _____

Home Phone: _____ [REDACTED] _____ Cellular Phone: _____ [REDACTED] _____

INTRODUCTION

Tennessee Code Annotated section 17-4-301 et seq. charges the Trial Court Vacancy Commission with assisting the Governor and the People of Tennessee in finding and appointing the best qualified candidates for judicial offices in this State. Please consider the Commission's responsibility in answering the questions in this application questionnaire. For example, when a question asks you to "describe" certain things, please provide a description that contains relevant information about the subject of the question and, especially, that contains detailed information that demonstrates that you are qualified for the judicial office you seek. In order to properly evaluate your application, the Commission needs information about the range of your experience, the depth and breadth of your legal knowledge, and your personal traits such as integrity, fairness, and work habits.

This document is available in Microsoft Word format from the Administrative Office of the Courts (telephone 800-448-7970 or 615-741-2687; website www.tncourts.gov). The Commission requests that applicants obtain the Microsoft Word form and respond directly on the form. Respond in the box provided below each question. (The box will expand as you type in the document.) Review the separate instruction sheet prior to completing this document. Your complete application, including both the original and digital copies, must be received by the Administrative Office of the Courts on or before the deadline prescribed in the Notice of Vacancy. See section 1(g) of the application instructions for additional information related to hand-delivery of application packages.

THIS APPLICATION IS OPEN TO PUBLIC INSPECTION AFTER YOU SUBMIT IT.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND AND WORK EXPERIENCE

1. State your present employment.

Assistant District Attorney for the 22nd Judicial District. I am currently assigned primarily to Lawrence County.

2. State the year you were licensed to practice law in Tennessee and give your Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility number.

Licensed: 2013.

BPR No.: 32031.

3. List all states in which you have been licensed to practice law and include your bar number or identifying number for each state of admission. Indicate the date of licensure and whether the license is currently active. If not active, explain.

Tennessee – BPR No.: 32031 – Licensed: 2013 – Status: Active

4. Have you ever been denied admission to, suspended or placed on inactive status by the Bar of any State? If so, explain. (This applies even if the denial was temporary).

No.

5. List your professional or business employment/experience since the completion of your legal education. Also include here a description of any occupation, business, or profession other than the practice of law in which you have ever been engaged (excluding military service, which is covered by a separate question).

22nd Judicial District Attorney's Office – *Assistant District Attorney* Oct. 2018 – present

Pentecost, Glenn, Mauldin, and York – *Associate* July 2017 – Oct. 2018

Tennessee Supreme Court – *Law Clerk for Roger A. Page* Feb. 2016 – July 2017

Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals- *Law Clerk for Roger A. Page* Aug. 2013 – Feb. 2016

Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law- *Scholarship Research Assistant* Aug. 2012 – May 2013
Assisted Professor Ernest Lidge in completing labor and employment research projects.

22nd Judicial District Attorney's Office- *Summer Legal Intern* May 2012 – Aug. 2012
May 2011 – Aug. 2011

Tennessee Supreme Court- *Extern for Justice Janice Holder* Jan. 2012 – May 2012
Assisted in editing opinions for clarity, grammar, and proper citation format.

First Farmers and Merchants Bank- *Vault Teller/Bank Teller* May 2012 – Aug. 2012
Addressed security issues and customers' daily banking needs. May 2011 – Aug. 2011
May 2006 – Apr. 2009

Tennessee General Assembly- *Intern for Senator Tim Barnes* Jan. 2010 – May 2010
Managed daily office tasks during senate session. Assisted constituents in resolving various issues.

Charlotte Fleming Law Firm - *Intern* Aug. 2008 – Dec. 2008
Assisted attorneys and addressed client needs in divorce matters.

6. Describe the nature of your present law practice, listing the major areas of law in which you practice and the percentage each constitutes of your total practice.

I am an Assistant District Attorney for the 22nd Judicial District. I was hired for this position in 2018. At that time, I was assigned to Giles County, Tennessee. In Giles County, I worked in Circuit Court, General Sessions Court, and Juvenile Court. In 2022, I moved from Giles County to Lawrence County, my home county. While I primarily work in one county, I cover court for other prosecutors when they are off work or need a *pro tem* prosecutor.

I am currently assigned to Circuit Court and General Sessions Court. I am responsible for prosecuting Circuit Court cases, which includes primarily felonies and some misdemeanors, from indictment through plea or trial. I also handle all types of criminal cases in General Sessions Court. On any given day, I could handle anything from a speeding ticket to a first degree murder. My responsibilities include meeting with victims to determine their wants and needs and to explain the legal process and potential outcomes for their case. I also meet with *pro se* defendants to convey offers, explain their rights to them, and if they choose, hear their side of the case. In each situation, I analyze the facts of the case and determine whether they fit the applicable statute and how the sentencing statutes will apply.

I am also a member of the Child Protective Investigation Team and the Vulnerable Adult Protective Investigation Team. I also regularly meet with law enforcement to discuss investigations and to review search warrants to determine whether probable cause has been established.

The vast majority of my current practice is criminal; however, there are civil issues that affect my practice such as orders of protection, HMVO, implied consent, and restitution.

7. Describe generally your experience (over your entire time as a licensed attorney) in trial courts, appellate courts, administrative bodies, legislative or regulatory bodies, other forums, and/or transactional matters.

During law school, I was an extern for Justice Janice Holder. During that time, I was responsible for reviewing, editing, and bluebooking opinions of the Tennessee Supreme Court, including worker's compensation cases. I also received permission for supervised practice in the summer of 2012 as a 3L. That summer I interned at the 22nd Judicial District Attorney's Office. I worked primarily in General Sessions Court handling misdemeanors.

Upon graduating from law school in 2013, I clerked for Justice Roger A. Page. At that time, Justice Page was on the Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals. I was responsible for drafting opinions, editing other clerk's opinions, and checking for bluebooking accuracy. I also attended numerous appellate arguments. While I was clerking for Justice Page, he moved from the Court of Criminal Appeals to the Tennessee Supreme Court. At the Supreme Court level, I drafted opinions, edited opinions, drafted bluebooking memorandums, and organized Rule 11 petitions

and memorandums. I also assisted Justice Page in preparing for public speaking engagements.

In 2017, I went into private practice at Pentecost, Glenn, Mauldin, and York. In private practice, I worked predominately in Federal Court in the Middle and Western Districts doing civil rights defense pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and in State Court in numerous counties in West Tennessee doing tort law defense under the Government Tort Liability Act, *see* Tennessee Code Annotated section 29-20-101 *et. seq.* I also represented businesses in eviction proceedings and individuals in land disputes. In addition, I did research and document review for a Federal criminal defense case and drafted an *amicus curiae* brief to the United States Supreme Court. I also represented an individual in the Tennessee Claims Commission and filed responses to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in response to charges against clients.

Since becoming a prosecutor in 2018, I have tried multiple jury trials; argued numerous motions, including motions to dismiss and motions to suppress; participated in an abundant number of preliminary hearings; and handled several juvenile transfer hearings, detention hearings, and a juvenile appeal.

8. Describe any matters of special note involving your practice in trial courts, appellate courts, and administrative bodies.

State v. Kilburn, No. 50CC1-2020-CR-36288 (2023). I was one of two prosecutors on this first-degree murder case. The Defendant was convicted as charged at trial and sentenced to life in prison.

State v. Wise, No. 50CC1-2022-CR-37106 (2023). I was one of two prosecutors on this second-degree murder case. The Defendant was convicted as charged at trial and sentenced to eighteen years to serve at a sentencing hearing.

Brief Amicus Curiae on Behalf of C. Ferguson, W.D. Massey and J. Ozment in Support of Petitioner, *John R. Turner v. United States*, 2018 WL 4043315 (2018) (No. 18-106). Jon York and I drafted this amicus curiae brief to the United States Supreme Court while I was in private practice at Pentecost, Glenn, Mauldin, and York.

9. Describe any other legal experience, not stated above, that you would like to bring to the attention of the Commission.

I have been admitted to practice in the Western District of Tennessee, the Middle District of Tennessee, and the United States Supreme Court.

10. List and describe all prior occasions on which you have submitted an application for any

state or federal judicial position.

Not Applicable.

EDUCATION

11. List each college, law school, and other graduate school which you have attended, including dates of attendance, degree awarded, major, any form of recognition or other aspects of your education you believe are relevant, and your reason for leaving each school if no degree was awarded.

University of Memphis, Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law, Memphis, TN

Juris Doctor

Attended from 2010 to 2013

Graduated *Magna Cum Laude* GPA: 3.67 Class Rank: 5 out of 122

- Law Review, *Member*
- Moot Court Board, *Associate Justice of the Freshman Competition and Member*
 - 2nd place in Advanced Competition, *named Best Oral Advocate and Second Best Appellate Brief*
 - 3rd place in Freshman Competition
- Dean's List
- Association of Women Attorneys, *Vice President and Member*
- Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, *Member*
- Writing Center Assistant
- Orientation Leader for Incoming Students
- Cali Awards (highest grade in class) for Trial Advocacy, Mediation, and Civil Rights.

Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, TN

Bachelor of Science in Political Science

Attended from 2006 to 2010

Graduated *Magna Cum Laude* GPA: 3.80

- Scholarship Recipient and Dean's List
- Who's Who Among American Colleges and Universities
- Alpha Sigma Alpha, *President, Vice President of Public Relations and Recruitment, Standards Chairman, Housing Chairman, and Member*
- Order of Omega Honor Society, Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society, Gamma Beta Phi Society, and Rho Lambda National Sorority Leadership Recognition Society

PERSONAL INFORMATION

12. State your date of birth.

██████████ 1987

13. How long have you lived continuously in the State of Tennessee?

36 years (since birth)

14. How long have you lived continuously in the county where you are now living?

I lived in Lawrence County from birth to 18 years old, then I moved back to Lawrence County in 2018 until present.

15. State the county in which you are registered to vote.

Lawrence County

16. Describe your military service, if applicable, including branch of service, dates of active duty, rank at separation, and decorations, honors, or achievements. Please also state whether you received an honorable discharge and, if not, describe why not.

Not Applicable.

17. Have you ever pled guilty or been convicted or are now on diversion for violation of any law, regulation or ordinance other than minor traffic offenses? If so, state the approximate date, charge and disposition of the case.

No.

18. To your knowledge, are you now under federal, state or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute or disciplinary rule? If so, give details.

No.

19. Please identify the number of formal complaints you have responded to that were filed against you with any supervisory authority, including but not limited to a court, a board of professional responsibility, or a board of judicial conduct, alleging any breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct by you. Please provide any relevant details on any such complaint if the complaint was not dismissed by the court or board receiving the complaint. You may wish to request a report from the appropriate supervisory authority (or authorities) for a complete history.

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20. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities or creditors within the last five (5) years? If so, give details.

No.

21. Have you ever filed bankruptcy (including personally or as part of any partnership, LLC, corporation, or other business organization)?

No.

22. Have you ever been a party in any legal proceedings (including divorces, domestic proceedings, and other types of proceedings)? If so, give details including the date, court and docket number and disposition. Provide a brief description of the case. This question does not seek, and you may exclude from your response, any matter where you were involved only as a nominal party, such as if you were the trustee under a deed of trust in a foreclosure proceeding.

No.

23. List all organizations other than professional associations to which you have belonged within the last five (5) years, including civic, charitable, religious, educational, social and fraternal organizations. Give the titles and dates of any offices which you have held in such organizations.

I have been a member at Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church my entire life.

- 2020- Administrative Council Chair and Member of the Finance Committee
- 2021- Administrative Council Chair and Member of the Finance Committee
- 2022- Director of the Christmas Program
- 2023- Member of the Trustee Committee and Director of the Christmas Program

- 2024- Member of the Trustee Committee and Director of the Christmas Program

I also attend Loretto Church of Christ and Pulaski Street Church of Christ.

24. Have you ever belonged to any organization, association, club or society which limits its membership to those of any particular race, religion, or gender? Do not include in your answer those organizations specifically formed for a religious purpose, such as churches or synagogues.
- a. If so, list such organizations and describe the basis of the membership limitation.
 - b. If it is not your intention to resign from such organization(s) and withdraw from any participation in their activities should you be nominated and selected for the position for which you are applying, state your reasons.

In college, I was a member of Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority and Rho Lambda National Sorority Leadership Recognition Society, both of which limited its membership to women. In law school, I was a member of Cecil C. Humphrey's School of Law's Association of Women Attorneys, which also limited its membership to women.

ACHIEVEMENTS

25. List all bar associations and professional societies of which you have been a member within the last ten years, including dates. Give the titles and dates of any offices which you have held in such groups. List memberships and responsibilities on any committee of professional associations which you consider significant.

The Howell Edmunds Jackson American Inn of Court, 2014 - 2017

Tennessee Bar Association, 2022 – 2023. I was a member of the Tennessee Bar Association Leadership Law Program.

26. List honors, prizes, awards or other forms of recognition which you have received since your graduation from law school which are directly related to professional accomplishments.

Not Applicable.

27. List any public office you have held or for which you have been candidate or applicant. Include the date, the position, and whether the position was elective or appointive.

Not Applicable.

ESSAYS/PERSONAL STATEMENTS

28. What are your reasons for seeking this position? *(150 words or less)*

The traits of knowledge, fairness, stability, hard work, and kindness are things that I have found very important as a lawyer. These are things that I try to portray in my daily practice as a prosecutor. These same traits are important in our judiciary. I love to learn and research the law. My duty as a prosecutor is to look at the law and the facts and make my choices fairly based on those two things. I also try to be even tempered and kind as I interact with victims, defendants, other lawyers, and judges. I believe that the love of knowledge, the ability to decide things fairly and impartially, and a calm disposition would assist me if I were selected to serve our district as a Circuit Court Judge.

29. Describe the judgeship you seek (i.e. geographic area, types of cases, number of judges, etc. and explain how your selection would impact the court. *(150 words or less)*

I am seeking appointment to a judicial vacancy in the 22nd Judicial District. It is comprised of Maury, Lawrence, Giles, and Wayne Counties. This district currently has five circuit court judges. In this district, I have practiced in front of Hon. David Allen, Hon. Caleb Bayless, Hon. Stella L. Hargrove, Hon. Julie C. Heffington, Hon. Robert L. Jones, Hon. J. Russell Parkes, and Hon. Christopher V. Sockwell. Because there is not a designated Chancellor, the Circuit Court Judges in this district decide both civil and criminal matters. However, the majority of their case load is criminal. If I am selected, I would impact the court by having a strong criminal background from my experience at the Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals and at the District Attorney's Office. I also have experience in many varied civil areas from working at the Tennessee Supreme Court and at Pentecost, Glenn, Mauldin, and York.

30. Will you uphold the law even if you disagree with the substance of the law (e.g., statute or rule) at issue? Give an example from your experience as a licensed attorney that supports your response to this question. *(250 words or less)*

Yes. I believe that this is one of the most fundamental roles of a Judge. As an Assistant District Attorney, I am often called upon to analyze the law and facts and make charging decisions. Frequently I am required to tell officers or victims that I cannot proceed with charges or cannot give them what they are asking for regarding sentencing. For example, a couple of times while I have been a prosecutor, I have been faced with traffic accidents in which there were catastrophic injuries to an innocent party. While I personally felt like there should be charges that would allow for harsher punishment in those circumstances, an analysis of the law did not support more than misdemeanor traffic charges. These are the types of decisions that I am

required to make daily as a prosecutor.

REFERENCES

31. List five (5) persons, and their current positions and contact information, who would recommend you for the judicial position for which you are applying. Please list at least two persons who are not lawyers. Please note that the Commission or someone on its behalf may contact these persons regarding your application.

A. Roger A. Page, Tennessee Supreme Court Justice, [REDACTED]
Jackson, TN 38301

B. Jon York, Federal Magistrate Judge, [REDACTED] Jackson, TN
38301

C. Brent Cooper, District Attorney General, [REDACTED] Summertown, TN
38483

D. David Crowell, [REDACTED] Lawrenceburg, TN 38464

E. Donna McGee, [REDACTED] Ethridge, TN 38456

AFFIRMATION CONCERNING APPLICATION

Read, and if you agree to the provisions, sign the following:

I have read the foregoing questions and have answered them in good faith and as completely as my records and recollections permit. I hereby agree to be considered for nomination to the Governor for the office of Judge of the Circuit Court of the 22nd Judicial District of Tennessee, and if appointed by the Governor, agree to serve that office. In the event any changes occur between the time this application is filed and the public hearing, I hereby agree to file an amended questionnaire with the Administrative Office of the Courts for distribution to the Commission members.

I understand that the information provided in this questionnaire shall be open to public inspection upon filing with the Administrative Office of the Courts and that the Commission may publicize the names of persons who apply for nomination and the names of those persons the Commission nominates to the Governor for the judicial vacancy in question.

Dated: April 5, 2024.


Signature

When completed, return this questionnaire to John Jefferson at the Administrative Office of the Courts, 511 Union Street, Suite 600, Nashville, TN 37219.



TENNESSEE TRIAL COURT VACANCY COMMISSION
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
511 UNION STREET, SUITE 600
NASHVILLE CITY CENTER
NASHVILLE, TN 37219

TENNESSEE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
TENNESSEE BOARD OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT
AND OTHER LICENSING BOARDS

WAIVER OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I hereby waive the privilege of confidentiality with respect to any information that concerns me, including public discipline, private discipline, deferred discipline agreements, diversions, dismissed complaints and any complaints erased by law, and is known to, recorded with, on file with the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, the Tennessee Board of Judicial Conduct (previously known as the Court of the Judiciary) and any other licensing board, whether within or outside the State of Tennessee, from which I have been issued a license that is currently active, inactive or other status. I hereby authorize a representative of the Trial Court Vacancy Commission to request and receive any such information and distribute it to the membership of the Commission and to the Office of the Governor.

Jessica Holly Parrish
Type or Print Name

Jessica A. Parrish
Signature

4/5/24
Date

32031
BPR #

Please identify other licensing boards that have issued you a license, including the state issuing the license and the license number.
