



## THE TRIAL COURT VACANCY COMMISSION

### Summary of the Nomination Process and Instructions for Application Questionnaire

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#### 1. INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING APPLICATION FORM

a. 2016 Tenn. Pub. Acts Chapter 528, §17 establishes and gives the Trial Court Vacancy Commission jurisdiction to assist the Governor and the people of Tennessee in finding and appointing the best and most qualified candidates for trial court vacancies in this State. Please consider the Commission's responsibility in answering the questions in this application questionnaire.

b. Read the introduction and instructions on the first page of the application questionnaire.

c. Type all answers. The application is available in word processing format on the Administrative Office of the Courts' website: [www.tncourts.gov](http://www.tncourts.gov)

d. Answer all application questions completely. If a question does not apply, type "Not applicable" in the space provided. If information is not available, type "Not available" and state your reason(s) for the unavailability.

e. The original application form should be unbound and printed only on one side of the paper. Any attachments should be copied front and back. You must also submit one (1) digital copy with electronic or scanned signature via email to [debra.hayes@tncourts.gov](mailto:debra.hayes@tncourts.gov), or via another digital storage device such as flash drive or CD.

f. Applications and questions must be submitted to:

**Trial Court Vacancy Commission  
c/o Administrative Office of the Courts  
ATTN: Debbie Hayes  
Suite 600, Nashville City Center  
511 Union Street  
Nashville, TN 37219  
(615) 741-2687**

g. Application packages are public record once they are filed with the Administrative Office of the Courts.

### **3. TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (TBI) LEVEL II SECURITY CLEARANCE APPLICATION**

a. The applicant also must complete a Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) Level II Security Clearance Application. The application is available online from the TBI's website at <https://www.tn.gov/tbi/article/tbi-security-clearance-applications>. The TBI security clearance is not to be turned in with the Applicant Questionnaire, but should be brought to the interviews.

b. If you are one of the three nominees selected by the Commission and forwarded to the Governor for his consideration, you will be required to submit your Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Level II Security Clearance Application immediately following the announcement of the nominees at the conclusion of the meeting.

### **4. SUMMARY OF THE NOMINATION PROCESS**

a. 2016 Tenn. Pub. Acts Chapter 528, §17 requires at least one public meeting/hearing at which the Trial Court Vacancy Commission considers the applicants for judicial nomination to the Governor. The date, time, and location of the public meeting of the Commission will normally be given in the notice of the vacancy, but may be given in a separate notice. You may visit the website of the Administrative Office of the Courts or call Debbie Hayes at the Administrative Office of the Courts to check the time and location of the public meeting. The hearings, interviews and voting of the Commission are open to the public and the public may arrange through the Administrative Office of the Courts to submit oral or written statements concerning individual applicants.

b. Applicants and those supporting the applicants may contact the Trial Court Vacancy Commission members personally. The contact information for the members of the Trial Court Vacancy Commission may be found [here](#).

c. Applicants are notified of the date, time, location, and format of the interview by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

d. Applicants are evaluated in order to fulfill the purposes set forth in the 2016 Tenn. Pub. Acts Chapter 528, §17. The Commission has determined that an integral part of fulfilling its duties includes consideration of at least the following criteria: integrity, impartiality, industry, legal knowledge and ability, legal experience, temperament, and public service. This list is not exhaustive. Each applicant should take care to inform the Commission of the individual items that applicant feels best demonstrate the applicant's qualification for the judicial position sought.

e. Applicants eliminated from consideration for nomination are notified as soon as possible after that decision is made.

f. Typically, the names of three (3) nominees are submitted to the Governor for each vacancy. The nominees are listed in alphabetical order without any indication of preference by the Commission.

g. The names of nominees forwarded to the Governor are made public by the Administrative Office of the Courts. The application packages of those nominees are also forwarded to the Governor for review by the Governor and the Governor's staff.