

**Tennessee Trial Court Vacancy Commission**  
***Application for Nomination to Judicial Office***

1/17/23

Name: Brandon Scott Griffin

Office Address: 621 North Spring Street, Sparta, TN 38583, White County  
(including county)

Office Phone: 931-837-2050 Facsimile: 931-837-2051

Email Address:

Home Address: Sparta, TN 38583, White County  
(including county)

Home Phone: 931-492-3410

Cellular Phone: 931-492-3410

**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](http://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.

I am currently in the private practice of law as the Owner of Griffin Law Group, PLLC.

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

I was licensed to practice law in TN on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013. My BPR number is 032138.

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.

I have only been admitted to practice law in the State of Tennessee. I am admitted to federal practice in the Middle District of Tennessee and was admitted on December 1<sup>st</sup> of 2014.

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).

I began private practice as a solo practitioner in October of 2013. I entered into a space sharing agreement with attorney Michael Rocco in January of 2014. We became law partners and founded Rocco & Griffin PLLC, in January of 2015. We continued to run a small law firm together until July of 2017 when Michael Rocco decided to sell his portion of the firm to attorney Tyler Davis. In July of 2020 Tyler Davis and I decided to part ways thus splitting the firm into two new entities. Mr. Davis took the Kingston office and I received the Sparta office. The firm was renamed as Griffin Law Group, PLLC which I still own and operate to this day. I

currently have three associate attorneys working for me along with 4 staff members.

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.

My current practice includes most of the areas of law that arise in a small-town including estate planning, probate, criminal defense, juvenile, real estate, civil litigation, collections, contracts, bankruptcy, and family law. My associate attorneys handle the bulk of the family law cases and the civil litigation. I personally handle the real estate closings, estate planning, probate administration, civil collections, and a large number of criminal defense cases. My current practice including those cases held by associates working for me is approximately fifteen percent (15%) real estate, thirty percent (30%) criminal defense, five percent (5%) collections, fifteen percent (15%) juvenile law, fifteen percent (15%) family law, two percent (2%) bankruptcy, three percent (3%) contract drafting, five percent (5%) estate planning, five percent (5%) probate administration, and five percent (5%) civil litigation.

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.

I have had the pleasure to handle a wide variety of cases. I have conducted multiple criminal jury trials to verdict and numerous bench trials on Civil, Family, and Juvenile cases. I have handled several class A felonies including cases that involved wire taps and extensive discovery. I have also been blessed to have a large enough client base that I have been able to practice law in every county in the 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial District along with the 31<sup>st</sup> Judicial District. I have appealed cases to the Court of Appeals. I have also handled administrative issues such as who was qualified to run as a Board Member of a local Utility Cooperative. Lastly, I have had the pleasure of helping some of our local veterans plan their estates. I believe in giving back to our community by serving our veterans and first responders by planning their estates, free of charge.

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

In 2015 I appealed a termination of parental rights case for the Putnam County Juvenile Court to the Court of Appeals. The Case is *IN RE William B.*, 2015 WL 3647928. This was a difficult case, and I am proud of the quality of the legal writing I did on behalf of the client in this matter despite the matter ultimately being affirmed.

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

I was a student attorney the last semester of my 3L year at Cecil C. Humphrey's School of Law in the Elder Law Clinic.

10. List and describe all prior occasions on which you have submitted an application for any state or federal judicial position.

I have not submitted any prior applications for a judicial position. The only other time I have sought judicial office was when I ran for the office of General Sessions Judge of White and Van Buren Counties in 2022 ultimately coming in second place in a five candidate race for the Republican Primary.

### 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.

I attended Tennessee Technological University from August of 2006 until May of 2010. I graduated *Magna Cum Laude* on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010 with a Bachelor of Science having majored in Political Science. I then attended law school at the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law from August of 2010 until May of 2013. I received my Juris Doctor Degree from Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013. I was in the top quarter of my class and during my time at Cecil C. Humphreys I received CALI awards in two classes. Those two classes were Decedent's Estates and Admiralty Law.

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

12. State your date of birth.

My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1988.

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

I have lived in the State of Tennessee for my entire life.

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

I have lived in White County my entire life except for the time I lived in Shelby County to attend Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law from August of 2010 until May of 2013.

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

White County TN

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.

I have not served in the military.

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.

I have not had any formal complaints filed against me with any agency, court, or board that I am aware of. In full disclosure I did receive a letter once several years ago from the Consumer Assistance Program with the Board of Professional Responsibility for an individual who alleged I did not inform him that he could post-convict his counsel for his third violation of probation case in which he was found in violation and revoked to serve his sentence. I responded to the letter and sent the individual the case law in Tennessee clearly stating that defendants do not have the right to post-convict violation of probation counsel. I never heard anything else back from either the defendant client or the CAP program after my response letter.

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 am an active member of the White County Republican party.

I am a member of the Southern States Police Benevolent Association as Panel Counsel.

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.
- If so, list such organizations and describe the basis of the membership limitation.
  - 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.

No

### 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.

I have been a member of the Upper Cumberland Young Lawyers Association since 2013 and held the office of Secretary for the group in 2015. I have been a member of the White County Bar since 2013 and was elected as President of the White County Bar on October 26<sup>th</sup> of 2022. I have been a member of the Tennessee Bar Association since 2014. I was a member of the American Bar Association in 2019.

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.

I have received the Tennessee Supreme Court Certificate of Recognition as a 2019 Attorney for Justice for providing over fifty hours of pro bono service.

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.

I was a candidate for the elected position of General Sessions Judge of White and Van Buren Counties in the May of 2022 Republican Primary.

**ESSAYS/PERSONAL STATEMENTS**

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

It is my desire to put the legal expertise and skill I have gained in my extensive career as an attorney operating a firm to work assisting the citizens of 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial District. I have handled numerous criminal cases and I know that I have a deep understanding of the Criminal Law and Constitution of our great State of Tennessee and the United States of America. I strive to be an asset for my community and a defender of the Constitution. I hope that citizens from all walks of life will feel confident that those appearing before my Court if I am fortunate enough to be appointed will be treated professionally because they know that I will uphold the laws by making sure those who are convicted of crimes are sentenced appropriately.

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 the position of Criminal Court Judge in the 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial District which contains seven counties, Putnam, Cumberland, White, Overton, Dekalb, Clay, and Pickett, all of which are rural areas. The Judge's main duties would be to impanel jurors, decide motion hearings, decide probation violation hearings, arraign defendants, appoint counsel to indigent defendants, preside over criminal jury trials, and accept plea agreements. There are two other Criminal Court Judges, two Circuit Judges, and one Chancellor in the district. I would be able to help add court dates to the smaller counties who have a limited number of days due to how stretched our two current Judges are despite their diligent efforts. Having practiced in every single county in this district I am familiar with the needs of each county and will get to work immediately to improve access to our court system.

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 assisted a pair of clients in ejecting an elderly man from a home and property that they had bought at a foreclosure sale. I felt empathy for the elderly man, but I had been hired by my clients to get this individual off of their property so that they could proceed with repairs on the home and ultimately put it up for sale. My clients were legally in the right and had lawfully purchased the property. I moved forward with the case professionally and was as civil with the elderly man as the situation would allow. I was ultimately successful in ejecting the man from



the property. While I had done everything ethically, correctly, and successfully for my clients I did not enjoy the victory. In regard to a Criminal Court Judge position, I would uphold the Constitution above all else. I would suppress any evidence that was gathered in violation of the Constitutional rights of our citizens. I would do this even though I detest the idea of a criminal getting to walk free when they are otherwise clearly guilty. Benjamin Franklin once stated "The law holds that it is better that 10 guilty persons escape, than that one innocent suffer" and this quote has always been foundational for myself during the practice of law.

**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. Steve Page, White County Sheriff, office number [REDACTED] address [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Sparta, TN 38583
B. Chris Stanford, District Attorney for the 31 <sup>st</sup> Judicial District, office number [REDACTED] address [REDACTED] McMinnville, TN 37110.
C. John Partin, Public Defender for the 31 <sup>st</sup> Judicial District, office number [REDACTED] address [REDACTED] McMinnville, TN 37110
D. Paul Sherrell, Tennessee State Representative for District 43, office number [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Nashville, TN 37243
E. Beverly Jolley, White County Circuit Court Clerk, office number [REDACTED] address [REDACTED] Sparta, TN 38583.

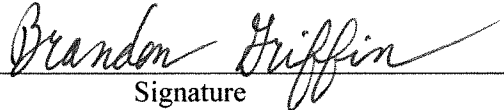
**AFFIRMATION CONCERNING APPLICATION**

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 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Criminal Court Part III 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: June 9th, 2023.

  
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.

Brandon S. Griffin  
Type or Print Name

Brandon Griffin  
Signature

06/09/2023  
Date

032138  
BPR #

<p>Please identify other licensing boards that have issued you a license, including the state issuing the license and the license number.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
---