

# INROADS INTO THE JUDICIARY



Pulling Back the Curtain

Offering Insight & Advice on the Judicial Nomination Process





# Tips on the JNC Application

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# The Judicial Selection Process Pursuant to Executive Order 558

Blind Review of Applications

JNC Interview

Due Diligence

Governor's Legal Counsel Review

Governor's Nomination

Governor's  
Council Hearing

Confirmation

← JBC Review →

Applicants recommended to the Governor by the JNC remain eligible for nomination by the Governor for 18 months.



# Minimum Qualifications for Applicants

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## Judicial Applicant

- ▶ Possess degrees from accredited undergraduate and law schools
- ▶ Be a resident of Massachusetts
- ▶ Be a U.S. citizen
- ▶ Be a member in good standing of Massachusetts Bar
- ▶ Have practiced law for  $\geq 10$  years for Trial Courts or  $\geq 13$  years for the Appeals Court

## Clerk-Magistrate Applicant

- ▶ Be a resident of Massachusetts
- ▶ Be a U.S. citizen
- ▶ If you are an Attorney, must be member of the Massachusetts Bar for  $\geq 3$  years

OR

- ▶ If you are not a member of the Bar, but do have an undergraduate degree must have at least 5 years of relevant experience

OR

- ▶ If no undergraduate degree, must have at least 15 years experience in the court applying to

## What does the JNC look for in candidates?

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- ▶ Diverse backgrounds
- ▶ Diverse geographies
- ▶ Strong legal abilities and work ethic
- ▶ Familiarity with law and courtroom procedures
- ▶ Reputation of integrity and excellent character
- ▶ Judicial temperament
- ▶ Administrative ability
- ▶ Sound judgment
- ▶ Financial responsibility
- ▶ Community involvement and pro bono work
- ▶ Commitment to the bar and the courts



# JNC Application

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## Part I

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Personal Information

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References – Personal and Professional

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Overview of most significant and recent cases

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## Part II

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General applicant information

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Qualifications

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“Tell your story questions”

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Recent writing sample

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**Take a personal approach:**

**Question 73:**

Three proudest accomplishments

**Question 74:**

Why do you want to be a judge?

**Question 75:**

Four greatest attributes/qualities – and self assessment against those

**Question 76:**

Describe something about your personal background/experience that would contribute to your personal perspective as a judge

**Question 77 and 78:**

What do you see as the greatest strengths and challenges of the court to which you are applying and how you would improve or address them?

# Tips Before Submitting your Application

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## ▶ **Be honest**

- Explain any mitigating details or circumstances (tax issues, lawsuits, BBO complaints etc.)

## ▶ **Proofread your application before submitting**

- Spell check is your friend
- Have a good friend review and give honest input
- Ask at least one lawyer and one non-lawyer to review your application

## ▶ **Be sure to captivate the audience**

- Commissioners have read hundreds of applications, so make them want to meet you

## ▶ **Cases**

- When describing a case in your application, remember it is not about winning or losing, it is about what you have learned

## ▶ **References**

- They should be able to speak on behalf of your character and/or professional abilities

## ▶ **Executive Order 558**

- Read and re-read the Executive Order and instructions – Really! They are full of helpful information.





JNC Website

▶ [www.mass.gov/jnc](http://www.mass.gov/jnc)

- ▶ For information on vacancies, applications and instructions, or contact information please visit the JNC website at [www.mass.gov/jnc](http://www.mass.gov/jnc)