



For Immediate Release:
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Judicial Panel Accepting Applications to Fill the Franklin County Probate Court Vacancy

Columbus, Ohio – The Ohio Judicial Appointments Recommendation Panel is currently accepting applications to fill the vacant seat on the Franklin County Probate Court.

The seat will become vacant on May 3, 2010, due to the appointment of Judge Eric Brown as Ohio Supreme Court chief justice.

Applicants for the Franklin County Probate Court position must be a resident and registered elector of Franklin County and not yet 70 years old on the day they begin their duties, as dictated by Ohio law. In addition, they must be admitted to practice law in Ohio and have engaged in the practice of law for six years prior to assuming the judicial post or served as a judge of a court of record in any jurisdiction in the United States.

To continue service in the position, the appointee must run in the November 2010 general election.

In the case of all judicial vacancies, applicants must follow the guidelines set forth by the Ohio Judicial Appointments Recommendation Panel to ensure their eligibility for appointment.

Applications must be submitted directly to the judicial panel and will then be distributed to the at-large and regional panel members. Additional details about OJARP and the application process can be found on the OJARP Web site at www.ojarp.org.

All materials submitted by applicants for a judicial vacancy will be considered public record under Ohio law. Applicant communication with panel members must be directed to the entire panel; all attempts to contact or influence a panel member are prohibited. Applicant questions and concerns should be addressed to Kent Markus or Jeff Ruppert in the Governor's Office at (614) 466-3555.

Applications for the Franklin County Probate Court appointment must be received by 5 p.m. on May 3. OJARP is operating under an accelerated schedule for this vacancy because the Franklin County Probate Court is a single judge court.

Candidates must be available to interview in person on May 10 in Columbus. Individual candidate times and interview locations will be determined at a later date.

Governor Strickland has selected the following individuals to serve on the regional panel for the current Franklin County vacancy:

Mark Froehlich, consulting director for courts & public projects, The Pizutti Companies; retired Franklin County Municipal Court judge and former chief magistrate, Franklin County Probate Court

Denise St. Clair, executive director, The National Center for Adoption Law & Policy

James Hudson, member, Laborers Local 423

Mellissia Fuhrmann, legal clinic director, Justice League of Ohio

John Hurst, sergeant, Columbus Division of Police, Special Victims Bureau

Mark Rutkus, legislative aide, Office of Columbus City Council President Michael Mentel

At-large panel members:

Janet E. Jackson (panel chair) - president and CEO of United Way of Central Ohio

John Kulewicz, attorney, Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease, LLP

Isabel Framer, interpreter, former chair of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Judicial Interpreters and Translators

Mike Miller, of counsel, Kegler, Brown, Hill and Ritter; former prosecuting attorney and municipal court judge for Franklin County

Gary Leppla, founder, Leppla Associates and Counselors at Law; past president, Ohio State Bar Association