The State Bar of California

APPLICANT EVALUATION AND NOMINATION COMMITTEE

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STATE BAR COURT RECRUITMENT FOR ONE REVIEW DEPARTMENT JUDGE AND ONE HEARING DEPARTMENT JUDGE

The California Supreme Court's Applicant Evaluation and Nomination Committee (AENC) seeks qualified candidates to serve as judges for the State Bar Court. The AENC is seeking applications for two positions:

- One judge who will serve in the Review Department and serve as Presiding Judge. This position may be based in either Los Angeles or San Francisco. The incumbent is not applying for reappointment to this position.
- One judge who will serve in the Hearing Department. This position is based in Los Angeles.

Each position may require travel to the other State Bar Court location as needed for various durations.

The two judges will serve six-year terms beginning November 1, 2026, and ending October 31, 2032.

The Presiding Judge, in the Review Department, will be appointed by the California Supreme Court. The Hearing Department judge will be appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.

The salary for the Presiding Judge is $280,052 annually. The salary for a Hearing Department judge is $244,727 annually. Salaries for State Bar Court judges are established by California Business and Professions Code sections 6079.1(d) and 6086.65(a) and are adjusted annually by the California State Department of Human Resources between July and September.

ABOUT THE STATE BAR COURT

The State Bar Court is an independent, adjudicative entity acting as an administrative arm of the California Supreme Court to hear and decide attorney disciplinary and regulatory proceedings and to make recommendations to the Supreme Court regarding those matters. The State Bar Court consists of:

- A three-member Review Department, which is the appellate level of the court; and
- A five-member Hearing Department, the trial level of the court.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

In carrying out their duties, each State Bar Court judge is subject to the administrative direction of the Presiding Judge of the State Bar Court and must cooperate with other judges and court officials in the administration of court business, including preparing administrative reports and attending periodic judicial conferences.

State Bar Court Presiding Judge: The Presiding Judge performs all of the duties of a review judge, as set out below, and additional adjudicatory and administrative duties. Some of these duties include providing overall supervision of calendar management and assignment of judges for all matters within the jurisdiction of the State Bar Court and taking reasonable measures to assure the prompt disposition of matters in the State Bar Court and the proper performance of the judges' other adjudicatory responsibilities. The Presiding Judge is the spokesperson for the State Bar Court, interacts with the State Bar Board of Trustees and its executives as needed, and represents the State Bar Court in the State Bar budgetary process. Additionally, the Presiding Judge appoints committees of the State Bar Court, including the Executive Committee, and presides over meetings of these committees, over all meetings of the combined Review and Hearing Department judges, and at all meetings of the Review Department.

The Presiding Judge also performs all of the duties of a Review Department Judge. Review Department judges serve as part of a three-member Review Department panel. The Review Department reviews case-dispositive decisions and orders by hearing judges. The Review Department also acts upon requests for emergency or interlocutory relief in pending attorney disciplinary and regulatory proceedings, and upon matters delegated to the State Bar Court pursuant to rule 9.10 of the California Rules of Court.

The duties of a review judge include:

- Reviewing and analyzing the record of proceedings of the State Bar Court Hearing Department;
- Participating in recurring Review Department conferences and oral arguments; and
- Authoring both published and unpublished opinions detailing all material findings of fact, conclusions of law, and a decision or recommendation for discipline or other appropriate disposition of the proceeding.

A review judge must also manage the preparation and decision of the individual cases to which they are primarily assigned expeditiously and efficiently, and must cooperate with the other Review Department judges in the consideration and disposition of the Review Department's caseload.

Hearing Department Judge: Hearing Department judges hear and decide attorney disciplinary and regulatory cases, make recommendations to the Supreme Court regarding the imposition of discipline or other appropriate disposition in those matters which require Supreme Court action, and perform related judicial duties. A hearing judge is expected to work independently,

handle multiple tasks in a timely and efficient manner, and successfully manage a caseload in compliance with established court performance standards.

The duties of a hearing judge include:

- Scheduling and holding early neutral evaluation, status, settlement, and pretrial conferences;
- Ruling on motions;
- Scheduling and holding trials;
- Writing decisions and orders detailing all material findings of fact and conclusions of law; and
- Issuing other orders as necessary.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

A State Bar Court judge:

- Shall have been a licensee of the State Bar of California for at least five years;
- Shall be an accomplished writer, with the ability to perform legal analysis;
- Shall have practical knowledge of or experience in areas such as supervising a law office, managing client trust funds, professional ethics, courtroom procedures and demeanor, and client interaction;
- Shall have the ability to work independently and to maintain a professional demeanor while resolving conflicts and making decisions;
- Shall not have any record of discipline as an attorney in California or any other jurisdiction; and
- Shall meet the requirements established by rule 9.11 of the California Rules of Court and Government Code section 12011.5 [industry, legal and judicial experience (including prior service as a judge of the State Bar Court), judicial temperament, honesty, objectivity, community respect, integrity, and ability].

Preferred Experience

- More than 10 years of practice as an attorney;
- Courtroom or equivalent experience;
- Management responsibilities in a legal office setting; and
- Background in professional ethics and responsibilities.

APPOINTMENTS AND TERMS

The terms for both positions commence November 1, 2026, and end October 31, 2032.

- The Presiding Judge will be appointed by the Supreme Court.
- The Hearing Department judge will be appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.

State Bar Court judges have the same immunity that attaches to judges of California courts of record. They are also subject, during their terms, to admonition, censure, removal, or retirement on the same grounds as provided for judges of courts of record under Business and Professions Code section 6079.1(a) and California Rules of Court, rule 9.11(d).

REVIEW AND RATING OF APPLICANTS FOR APPOINTMENT

Pursuant to rule 9.11 of the California Rules of Court, the Supreme Court has created the AENC to solicit, receive, screen, and evaluate all applications for appointment or reappointment to any appointive position of judge of the State Bar Court. Only applicants recommended by the AENC or by the Supreme Court may be appointed.

An extensive professional and personal history, check of personal and professional references, background investigation, disclosure of any actual or potential conflicts of interest, and personal interview may be required. Early applications are highly encouraged.

Please apply online here.

The deadline for receipt of applications is Thursday, January 8, 2026, 5:00 p.m.

For further information, please email aenc@calbar.ca.gov.