

The PBA Judicial Evaluation Commission's Evaluation Procedures

Appellate Judicial Candidate Procedures

Each appellate judicial candidate requesting an evaluation by the PBA JEC is eligible to receive a rating of "Highly Recommended," "Recommended" or "Not Recommended."

The PBA JEC bases its ratings for each candidate on a two-part evaluation process. Each candidate completes a Commission questionnaire. Investigative panels conduct the first phase of the process, which includes personal interviews with the candidates and with individuals who have had professional or personal dealings with them. Upon completion of the investigative process, the panels submit confidential reports to the Commission.

Upon receipt and review of the investigative panel's report, the Commission conducts the second phase of the evaluation process. The Commission interviews each candidate in Harrisburg, discusses his or her qualifications and reaches consensus on each candidate's rating.

Ratings are made public via news releases and the PBA Web site.

Definitions of the ratings are:

Highly Recommended: The candidate possesses the highest combination of legal ability, experience, integrity and temperament, and would be capable of outstanding performance as a judge or justice of the court for which he/she is a candidate.

Recommended: Based on legal ability, experience, integrity and temperament, the candidate would be able to perform satisfactorily as a judge or justice of the court for which he/she is a candidate.

Not Recommended: Based on legal ability, experience, integrity or temperament, or any combination thereof, at the present time, the candidate is inadequate to perform satisfactorily as a judge or justice of the court for which he/she is a candidate.

A candidate for appellate judicial office in Pennsylvania who refuses to participate in the Commission's evaluation process shall receive a rating of "Not Recommended for Failure to Participate in the Evaluation Process."

Appellate Judicial Retention Candidate Procedures

The Commission rates judicial retention candidates as being either "Recommended" or "Not Recommended." The retention candidate completes a questionnaire. The candidate's questionnaire and representative writing samples are reviewed by investigative panels, which also may conduct interviews with other individuals. The panel then meets with and interviews the candidate and submits a confidential report to the Commission. The Commission reviews the questionnaire, writings and report and issues a rating of either "Recommended" or "Not Recommended" for retention.

A retention candidate for appellate judicial office in Pennsylvania who refuses to participate in the Commission's evaluation process shall receive a rating of "Not Recommended for Failure to Participate in the Evaluation Process."

Ratings are made public via news releases and the PBA Web site.

