

**Kentucky
Candidate
Information
Survey**



JUDICIAL SURVEY 2018

Each judicial candidate pledges to keep an open mind and carry out their adjudicative duties faithfully and impartially if elected.

Each candidate also recognizes their overarching obligation to apply and uphold the law, without regard to his or her personal views.

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| <p>No statement should be interpreted as a pledge, promise, or commitment in connection with any case, controversy, or issue likely to come before the court.</p> |  | <p>KY District Court District 13, Division 2</p> <p>Eric Paul Wright Janet C. Booth</p> <p>www.wrightforjudge.com</p> |  |
| <p>Education</p> | <p>I have a degree from the University of Kentucky in Journalism as well as my degree from the University of Kentucky College of Law.</p> | | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE</p> </div> |
| <p>Current Occupation</p> | <p>For the past 11 years I have been an Assistant County Attorney in Jessamine County.</p> | | |
| <p>Family</p> | <p>I have been with my wife Carla for 17 years (10 of marriage) and we have two sons aged 7 (Evan) and 4 (Ethan).</p> | | |
| <p>Legal Background / Experience</p> | <p>I have been a practicing attorney since 2006 with experience in private practice, defense work, and for the large majority of my career as a prosecutor with the Jessamine County Attorney's Office. I was named the Head of the Juvenile Justice Division in 2009.</p> | | |
| <p>What do you consider the greatest accomplishment of your legal career? Why? (50 words or less)</p> | <p>My greatest accomplishments I can discuss are in how I have conducted myself over my career with integrity and treated everyone fairly every single day. My greatest legal successes are the confidential cases of the far too many young lives I have helped on our Abused and Neglected children docket.</p> | | |
| <p>To what extent have you practiced in the area of criminal law? Family law? Complex civil litigation? (50 words or less)</p> | <p>My practice has largely been spent in District Court working on adult and juvenile criminal cases, and mental health proceedings, or in Family Court working on child support enforcement and with cases involving Abuse and Neglect of children.</p> | | |
| <p>What forms of voluntary professional and community service have you been involved with in the past? (50 words or less)</p> | <p>I have been active outside of the courtroom in all of our local schools with mentoring and lectures about the court system, a mentor for first generation college students at the University of Kentucky, a volunteer with my church, and was a founding member of the Jessamine County Drug Court.</p> | | |

By sharing how each candidate describes themselves, their qualifications, and judicial philosophy, the KCIS Judicial Survey is bringing light to the area voters are often least informed about. Thus, improving **1) voter knowledge; 2) voter participation; and 3) the quality of the democratic process.**

KCIS is a non-partisan project of the Family Trust Foundation of Kentucky.

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Eric Paul Wright



Janet C. Booth

**KY District Court
District 13, Division 2**

www.wrightforjudge.com

What are the major influences in your life? Why?
(50 words or less)

The largest influences in my life have been my parents. They are both former school teachers who taught me the values I have today: Be fair, be consistent, show grace, help others, and most importantly to always put family first in my earthly life.

CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE

Are there any specific types of cases in which you know now you would find it necessary to recuse yourself?
(50 words or less)

No.

In the last 10 years, which of the following organizations have you been a member, contributed money, volunteered time, been employed by, been endorsed by for a campaign, received money from for a campaign, or had any other affiliation?

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
Kentucky Right to Life
National Rifle Association (NRA)
National Right to Life
Southland Christian Church

Some judges practice a philosophy of restraint, believing that judges must interpret the law strictly rather than seek to make new laws. Others develop a philosophy of activism, using the bench to enact social and political change. Please explain your approach.
(50 words or less)

My overarching philosophy is one of restraint. It is not the judiciary's role to make the law or to say what a law should mean, but instead to merely interpret the laws as they are written. There must be a clear divide between the judiciary and the legislature.

Some judges believe that courts should read the Constitution expansively and should not limit themselves to what is explicitly stated. Others believe the courts should not reinterpret the Constitution. Please explain your approach.
(50 words or less)

My belief is that the Constitution should be interpreted as limited as possible while also giving due weight and deference to the rulings of previous courts as well as to higher courts both on the state and federal level.

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Some judges believe that courts should interpret the Constitution as the framers intended. Others believe that the Constitution must grow and adapt to new circumstances. Please explain your approach.
(50 words or less)

The Constitution includes a mechanism to change it and adapt with new circumstances, the amendment process. Otherwise, the Constitution should be interpreted based on the principles relied upon and spelled out at the time it was written.

CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE

What is your general judicial philosophy?
(75 words or less)

My general judicial philosophy is pretty simple...the law must be followed by judges in a predictable and reliable manner. Whether a case is criminal, civil, public, or confidential, the law must be enforced consistently and fairly for all every single time. I will treat everyone in my courtroom fairly and will conduct the proceedings of the court in a fashion of understanding the proper role of the judiciary.

Which of the current/recent Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court MOST reflects your judicial philosophy and why? Which LEAST reflects it and why?
(50 words or less)

I would say Clarence Thomas most reflects my philosophy due to his fierce belief in judicial restraint. Out of respect for the rest of the members of the court I don't feel it would be appropriate to single out a member that least reflects my philosophy.

What do you see as the most important issue facing Kentucky's judiciary?
(50 words or less)

This isn't isolated to Kentucky, but my fear is that the judiciary in general is becoming too political in how they rule on cases instead of just focusing on what the law dictates a result should be in any given case.

What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to justice, if any?
(50 words or less)

I think the greatest obstacle faced by our judges, becoming stagnant on the bench, is somewhat self-inflicted by staying in office too long. I don't think term limits alone are the answer, but it is one reason I won't stay in office as a judge for more than three terms.

What steps will you take as a judge to ensure that the rule of law is uniformly applied without passion or prejudice?
(50 words or less)

To me there are no steps that I will need to take because I have conducted myself as a prosecutor to the highest standard of fairness and reliability and I will continue to do so from the bench as the new 13th District Judge.

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| <p>While serving on the bench, do you believe you have a role in bringing important legal or judicial issues before the public or the legislature? Why or why not? What should your role be? (50 words or less)</p> | <p>If asked for ways to improve the courts in Kentucky I would be happy to give any advice or information to anyone that would ask. However, I will not actively go out looking to make waves as I feel that would be inappropriate for a judge.</p> | | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE</p> </div> |
| <p>What makes you the best qualified candidate for this position? (50 words or less)</p> | <p>I am the most well-rounded and experienced candidate seeking the office by far. I have the most experience representing the people of Kentucky in the race, and I understand what it is like to juggle a job and a home life just like most people in District Court.</p> | | |
| <p>Is there anything else you would like the voter to know? (50 words or less)</p> | <p>Voters in the 13th District have not had a new judge in 18 years. If you want things to get better and want to change how the courts deal with problems then you can't keep electing the same people to office. I would love to have your vote in November.</p> | | |

Overview of Kentucky's Court System

Supreme Court

Basic Info: The Supreme Court is the state court of last resort and the final interpreter of Kentucky law. Seven justices sit on the Supreme Court and all seven justices rule on appeals before the court.

Cases Handled: Appeals involving the death penalty, life imprisonment or imprisonment for 20 years or more go directly from Circuit Court to the Supreme Court. All other appeals must first be heard by the Court of Appeals, except those so exceptional that the Supreme Court will grant a request to bypass the Court of Appeals.

Term: District judges serve four-year terms.



Court of Appeals

Basic Info: Fourteen judges, two elected from each of the seven appellate districts, serve on the Court of Appeals and are divided into panels of three to review and decide cases, with the majority deciding the outcome.

Cases Handled: With a few exceptions, most cases appealed from Circuit Court go to the Court of Appeals. The case is not retried at the appeals level. Instead, the original trial record is reviewed, with attorneys presenting the legal issues to the court for a decision.

Term: Court of Appeals judges serve eight-year terms.



Circuit Courts

Note: Family Court is a division of Circuit Court that hears only cases involving families and children.

Cases Handled: Can hear all types of cases unless the General Assembly has given exclusive jurisdiction of particular kinds of cases to another court to handle, such as District Court. Circuit Court hears civil matters involving more than \$5,000, capital offenses and felonies, divorces, adoptions, termination of parental rights, land dispute title problems and contested probates of will. It also has the power to issue injunctions and writs of prohibition and mandamus to compel or prohibit acts, and to hear appeals from District Court and administrative agencies.

Term: Circuit judges serve eight-year terms.



District Courts

Cases Handled: Hears juvenile matters, city and county ordinances, traffic offenses, probates of will, felony preliminary hearings, civil cases involving \$5,000 or less, guardianship, conservatorship, voluntary or involuntary commitment, child abuse and neglect, and domestic violence.

Term: District judges serve four-year terms.