

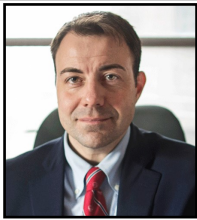

**Kentucky
Candidate
Information
Survey**



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.

<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 22, Division 5</p> <p>John Tackett</p> <p>TackettforJudge.com</p>	
<p>Education</p>	<p>Paul Laurence Dunbar High School (Lexington) with honors (1994), B.A. University of Chicago with honors (1998), J.D. University of Kentucky College of Law (2003)</p>	<p style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;">CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE</p>	
<p>Current Occupation</p>	<p>Owner and Operator of Solo General Law Practice, John L. Tackett Attorney at Law PLLC (founded 2013)</p>		
<p>Family</p>	<p>Married to Sarah Merlin, no children—we are attempting to adopt. Parents John W. Tackett—Julia Tackett (deceased), Sister: Sarah Tackett (m. John Sturgill Simpson)</p>		
<p>Legal Background / Experience</p>	<p>A former CJA panel attorney, I have 15 years of experience in both private and public service. I practice civil, criminal, probate, family, juvenile and traffic law and have practiced in 38 counties, Kentucky’s Court of Appeals and Supreme Court plus Federal Court. I own my law practice.</p>		
<p>What do you consider the greatest accomplishment of your legal career? Why? (50 words or less)</p>	<p>After beginning my solo law practice I was able to obtain a significant and confidential settlement for a disabled widow due to medical and pharmaceutical malpractice. It was an emotional case. I was very grateful to have achieved justice and helped change her and her family’s life for the better.</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>I represent clients charged with misdemeanors and felonies. I have successfully appealed criminal and civil issues to state and federal appellate courts. I represent clients in every field of our family courts. I have practiced extensively in civil court and defended Fortune 500 companies in multi-million dollar products liability cases.</p>		
<p>What forms of voluntary professional and community service have you been involved with in the past? (50 words or less)</p>	<p>For 11 years I have served LFUCG as a Code Enforcement Hearing Office for free. I have volunteered with Bluegrass Legal Aid and represented victims of Eric Conn SSI fraud. I served with: Makenna Foundation (benefitting UK Children’s Hospital), Public Library, Children’s Theater, LFHC, Foundation for Affordable Housing and more.</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.

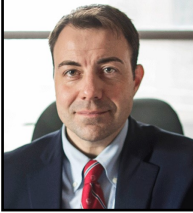

KCIS is a non-partisan project of the Family Trust Foundation of Kentucky.

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<p>What are the major influences in your life? Why? (50 words or less)</p>	<p>My mother Julia Tackett was one of the first women elected District Judge in Kentucky. She inspired me to attend law school with the goal of serving the public and pursuing a judicial career. I watched her change lives for the better and I aspire to do the same.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE</p> </div>
<p>Are there any specific types of cases in which you know now you would find it necessary to recuse yourself? (50 words or less)</p>	<p>None, other than cases that meet the criteria found in KRS 26A.015 and similar authority pertaining to the disqualification of a judge.</p>	
<p>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?</p>	<p>I belong to Commerce Lexington (Lexington's chamber of commerce). I am a Deacon at Central Christian Church and make contributions to my church.</p>	
<p>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)</p>	<p>My judicial philosophy is that judicial candidates should not express personal opinions as to how they may rule in the future due to the position sought. That said, I pledge to apply the law to the cases that come before me and to be an independent and impartial jurist.</p>	
<p>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)</p>	<p>My judicial philosophy is that judicial candidates should not express personal opinions as to how they may possibly rule. That said, our Constitution should be held in reverence. I also pledge to apply the law to the cases that come before me and to be an independent and impartial jurist.</p>	

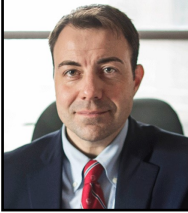

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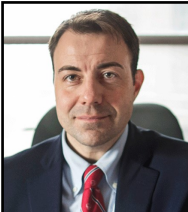

<p>No statement should be interpreted as a pledge, promise, or commitment in connection with any case, controversy, or issue likely to come before the court.</p>		<p>KY District Court District 22, Division 5</p> <p>John Tackett</p> <p>TackettforJudge.com</p>	 <p>Melissa Moore Murphy</p>
<p>Some judges 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)</p>	<p>My judicial philosophy is that judicial candidates should not express personal opinions as to how they may possibly rule. That said, our Constitution should be held in reverence. I also pledge to apply the law to the cases that come before me and to be an independent and impartial jurist.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE</p> </div>	
<p>What is your general judicial philosophy? (75 words or less)</p>	<p>My general judicial philosophy is that judicial independence is the foundation for judicial integrity. I believe fiercely in an independent judiciary safe from the biases of politics. I believe in performing judicial duties impartially and diligently. I strongly believe in old fashion hard work. I also believe that upholding the law for the benefit and safety of all citizens is sacrosanct.</p>		
<p>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)</p>	<p>I have tremendous respect for the intellect and work ethic of all the Justices that serve on the US Supreme Court. I believe we are blessed to have a Supreme Court that hosts a variety of different judicial perspectives across a wide spectrum which is reflective of our American citizenry.</p>		
<p>What do you see as the most important issue facing Kentucky's judiciary? (50 words or less)</p>	<p>I fear public confidence eroding in the judicial system because of political divisiveness and due to misunderstandings as to the courts' duties and responsibilities.</p>		
<p>What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to justice, if any? (50 words or less)</p>	<p>The financial cost to participate in our court system is too great for so many. Criminal defendants are appointed counsel if they cannot afford representation. Currently there is only one Legal Aid Lawyer for approximately 13,000 people who could qualify for civil law services in Kentucky. Many people go unrepresented.</p>		
<p>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)</p>	<p>Keeping an even temperament, possessing knowledge of the law, working diligently while maintaining objectivity and impartiality are all key, especially when facing difficult or frustrating circumstances.</p>		

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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>I would only concern myself with possibly bringing issues before the legislature which may improve the administration of justice at the District Court level. Many legislators are not lawyers. They may benefit from listening to a judicial officer as to what works and what does not.</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 have practiced in every field of the District Court; criminal, civil, probate, forcible detainer, mental health and juvenile. Because several persons are unrepresented, it is important that the judicial candidate be experienced and have practiced law in every field of the District Court. Time and money can be wasted.</p>		
<p>Is there anything else you would like the voter to know? (50 words or less)</p>	<p>I grew up around the Fayette District Court and consider it a second home. I care greatly about this court and this court's staff. I pledge to work hard to make it the best court in the state. I would be honored and humbled to serve as Fayette District Judge.</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.