

**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.

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.



Linda Dixon Bullock

**KY District Court  
District 53, Division 1**



J.R. RoBards

[bullockforjudge.com](http://bullockforjudge.com)

<b>Education</b>	BA in Mass Communications, Eastern Kentucky University, 1999 JD University of Louisville, Brandeis School of Law, 2005	<b>CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE</b>
<b>Current Occupation</b>	Of Counsel Riggs, Prather, Ratliff, & Bullock in Shelbyville.	
<b>Family</b>	I am married to Dave Bullock, partner at Riggs, Prather, Ratliff, & Bullock. I have two children, Lilly, 11 and Keith, 6. One dog, Nicky.	
<b>Legal Background / Experience</b>	Extensive experience practicing at every level of the Kentucky Court System, primarily in the area of criminal law with a smaller practice in family law, contracts, and civil litigation. I have practiced in over 20 KY counties and I am licensed in the United States Supreme Court.	
<b>What do you consider the greatest accomplishment of your legal career? Why?</b> (50 words or less)	Giving voice to those who are often not heard or seen, and who are far too often trampled by the judicial system because they lack money or the ability to fight for themselves. Because you should not get only as much justice as you can afford.	
<b>To what extent have you practiced in the area of criminal law? Family law? Complex civil litigation?</b> (50 words or less)	90% criminal 8% family law 2 % complex civil litigation	
<b>What forms of voluntary professional and community service have you been involved with in the past?</b> (50 words or less)	I have volunteered with the Girl Scouts and worked on the PTO and Site Based Decision Making Council. Additionally, I have done dog rescue and fostering.	

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

The example of public service set by my parents. My father is a retired first responder and has always been active in various civic organizations working to better the community. My mother has always been a leader in our church, leading children's activities and various committees.

**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)  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

**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)

I do not believe a judge should be an activist from the bench. However, I do believe that judges should use their judicial discretion and common sense, and not blindly inflict harmful unintended consequences in the name of the law.

**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)

I think a judge must walk a fine line between both. Again, using some common sense. Interpretations of the Constitution are always changing. Otherwise, no case would ever go to the Supreme Court. Plessy v. Ferguson and Brown v. Board of Education are perfect examples of reinterpretations by the Courts.

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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 is the foundation upon which our basic principles of government rest. However, the framers could not have anticipated advances in technology and the issues they raise. Judges must uphold the Constitution while adapting to an ever-changing world.

**CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE**

**What is your general judicial philosophy?**

(75 words or less)

Everyone who comes before the bench must be treated with equal dignity and respect regardless of race, education, or socio-economic status.

**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)

Ruth Bader Ginsburg most closely reflects my judicial philosophy. She too believes that the law must be interpreted based on the times. Justice Thomas least reflects my judicial philosophy as he is a textualist.

**What do you see as the most important issue facing Kentucky's judiciary?**

(50 words or less)

I believe dealing with the opioid epidemic is the most important issue facing Kentucky's judiciary. The judiciary is on the front lines of this fight and must partner with law enforcement, local agencies, and the legislature to collaborate to find a solution.

**What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to justice, if any?**

(50 words or less)

Equal access to the Courts.

**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)

I will listen to everyone who comes before me with compassion and hear their case with an open mind.

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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><b>KY District Court District 53, Division 1</b></p> <p>Linda Dixon Bullock      J.R. RoBards</p> <p><a href="http://bullockforjudge.com">bullockforjudge.com</a></p>	
<p><b>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?</b> (50 words or less)</p>	<p>Yes, I believe judges, especially in District Court, are on the front lines of the most difficult issues facing our society, such as the drug epidemic. It is vital that the judiciary plays a role in helping to solve significant issues facing our communities.</p>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>CANDIDATE CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE</b></p> </div>
<p><b>What makes you the best qualified candidate for this position?</b> (50 words or less)</p>	<p>I have practiced extensively at every level of the Kentucky Court system. I have represented homeless people and I have represented successful businesses. I have fought for my clients all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. I will be fair, independent from outside influence, and serve with integrity.</p>		
<p><b>Is there anything else you would like the voter to know?</b> (50 words or less)</p>	<p>It would be an honor to serve as a District Court Judge in the 53rd Judicial District. I will do everything I can to ensure that the people I serve have equal access to the courts without regard for race, gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.</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.