

**Kentucky  
Candidate  
Information  
Survey**



**JUDICIAL SURVEY 2020**

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

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.



**KY Circuit Court  
Dist. 11, Div. 2**

**Kaelin Reed**

*keepjudgereed.com*

**CHOSE NOT TO  
PARTICIPATE:  
  
Steven Call**

<b>Education</b>	I received a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Political Science from Transylvania University and a Juris Doctorate (JD) from the University of Kentucky.
<b>Current Occupation</b>	I currently serve as the Circuit Judge for the 11th Judicial Circuit, Division II (Washington, Marion, Taylor and Green Counties)
<b>Family</b>	I am married to my childhood sweetheart, Amanda (Cook) Reed, a lifelong resident of Marion County. We have two children, Tanner (9) and Kylie (6)
<b>Legal Background / Experience</b>	Before becoming Judge, I practiced law for fourteen years throughout the Commonwealth. My experience includes service as Asst. County Attorney, prosecuting crimes, and working on virtually all aspects of civil law, from complex personal injury tort cases, to estate planning and probate matters, to real estate.
<b>What do you consider the greatest accomplishment of your legal career? Why? (50 words or less)</b>	Several years ago, I was rated as "AV Preeminent" by the nation's most respected lawyer rating service -Martindale Hubbell. This is a testament to the fact that my peers rank me at the highest level of professional excellence. I am the only candidate in this race with an AV rating.
<b>To what extent have you practiced in the area of criminal law? Family law? Complex civil litigation? (50 words or less)</b>	I have never represented criminal defendants, but I was a prosecutor for four years prior to becoming Judge. In private practice, I handled a fair number of family law cases, ranging from divorce and custody matter, to adoptions. The vast majority of my private legal experience was with civil litigation.
<b>What forms of voluntary professional and community service have you been involved with in the past? (50 words or less)</b>	I am active in my church, United Presbyterian Church in Lebanon. I am also a former member of the Marion County Board of Education. I volunteer my time coaching my children in various youth sports leagues. In the past, I have also volunteered with the Kentucky Bar Foundation.

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)

I am the child of a school teacher and a police officer. My major influences come from my life experiences growing-up in a working class family that valued education, discipline, hard-work and respect. My family has also been afflicted with drug abuse and addiction, and those experiences shape my views.

**CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE:**

Steven Call

**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. I have not found it necessary to recuse myself from any particular types of cases in my time as Circuit Judge, except, of course, those cases involving former clients.

**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?**

United Presbyterian Church of Lebanon

**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)

As a Circuit Judge, I am required to practice a philosophy of restraint and fidelity toward existing law. It is not my role as Circuit Judge to "make" new law, even if I disagree with it. That is the job of the appellate courts and, ultimately, 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)

Interpreting the US Constitution falls outside the purview of my role as a state court Circuit Judge. I am bound to apply precedent supplied to me by the appellate 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)

Interpreting the US Constitution falls outside the purview of my role as a state court Circuit Judge. I am bound to apply precedent supplied to me by the appellate courts.

**CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE:**

**What is your general judicial philosophy?**

(75 words or less)

There is a reason that Lady Justice is traditionally depicted as wearing a blindfold. The role of the Circuit Judge is to ensure that the administration of justice is guaranteed for all citizens, regardless of race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity or financial status. As the Circuit Judge, I strive every day to make sure that the courts are open and justice is fairly administered for all citizens of the 11th Circuit.

Steven Call

**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)

The issues that the Justices of the United States Supreme Court must decide are so vastly different from the issues that I have to address as a Circuit Judge that it is hard to draw any commonality between the two roles. It really is an apples-to-oranges comparison.

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

(50 words or less)

Equity. The most important issue facing the judiciary is the constant struggle to ensure that all Kentuckians, regardless of their station in life, are treated equitably and fairly in the Court of Justice.

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

(50 words or less)

We are currently in the midst of a global pandemic, but people sometimes forget that we were already in the midst of an opioid crisis when COVID-19 struck. The judiciary has limited resources to address the problems associated with either of these issues.

**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)

In my courtroom, I insist on civility and decorum. I treat everyone, from the most high-powered lawyer to the lowliest prisoner, with the same degree of respect and dignity and I insist that others follow my lead.

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**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)

No. The role of the Circuit Judge is not one of activism. The role of the Circuit Judge is to decide the matters before him (or her) as efficiently and pragmatically as possible, on the narrowest grounds.

**CHOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE:**  
  
Steven Call

**What makes you the best qualified candidate for this position?**  
(50 words or less)

As Circuit Judge, I have had the opportunity to sit at the tall bench, wear the black robe, and make the tough decisions that the job requires. I have a track-record. You do not have to wonder what my philosophy might be - you can see the proof.

**Is there anything else you would like the voter to know?**  
(50 words or less)

It has been an honor to serve as your Circuit Judge and I will continue to strive, for as long as you will allow me, to ensure that the administration of justice in my courtroom is fair and equitable to all.

**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:** Supreme Court justices serve eight-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.