



Supreme Court of Illinois

October 9, 2024

JUSTICE LISA HOLDER WHITE ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF SCREENING COMMITTEE TO FILL SEVENTEENTH CIRCUIT VACANCY

Public invited to submit comments on 6 applicants.

Justice Lisa Holder White of the Supreme Court of Illinois has announced the formation of a judicial screening committee for the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit – Subcircuit 2.

The screening committee was formed for the purpose of assessing the qualifications of those who have applied for appointment to the office of Judge of the Circuit Court for the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit. The vacancy resulted from the appointment of the Honorable Eugene Doherty to the Appellate Court of Illinois, Fourth Judicial District, effective August 8, 2024. Under the Illinois constitution, the vacancy will be filled by Supreme Court appointment.

After the committee has received public input, gathered information, and interviewed each of the applicants, it will report its findings to the Supreme Court of Illinois who will make the appointment. The person appointed will serve as Resident Circuit Judge until the first Monday in December following the November 2026 general election.

The screening committee consists of non-lawyers and lawyers who reside in the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit. The non-lawyer members of the committee are Gloria Cardenas Cudia, Rev. William Turner, Todd Byxbe, and Mary Gesmer. The lawyer members of the committee are Judge Edward Prochaska (ret.), Attorney Azhar Minhas, and Attorney Laura Baluch.

Judge Edward Prochaska (ret.) will serve as chairperson of the committee.

Applicants being considered for appointment to the judgeship are attorneys Richard Butera, Scott Robinson, David Gill, Ali Friend, Paul Vella, and Andrew Smith. Candidates seeking appointment to this vacancy shall, at the time of appointment, reside within Subcircuit 2.

Members of the public are invited to submit written comments concerning the applicants by U.S. mail to: Seventeenth Judicial Screening Committee, Winnebago County Courthouse, 400 W. State Street, Suite 215, Rockford, IL 61101 or by email to tjakeway@17thcircuit.illinoiscourts.gov. Comments must be in writing and received no later than 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 23, 2024. Anonymous letters will not be accepted. All comments will be held in the strictest confidence by the committee and the court.

The Seventeenth Judicial Circuit encompasses Winnebago and Boone counties.

(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: James Brunner, Public Information Officer of the Illinois Supreme Court at 217.208.3354 or jbrunner@illinoiscourts.gov.)