

# **Judicial Mentor Program**

## **PROGRAM PURPOSE**

The purpose of the program is to assist in the recruitment and development of a qualified, inclusive and diverse judicial applicant pool. The program is designed to identify, encourage, and provide mentors for attorneys considering a judicial career. One of the chief goals is to communicate to all sectors of the legal community the Governor's commitment to appointing a capable bench reflective of California's rich diversity.

## **PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

This two-part program consists of a Mentor Committee and a Community Outreach/Recruitment committee.

### **Mentor Committee**

Historically judges have devoted time to the important work of mentoring persons interested in applying to the bench and the Mentor Committee will encourage them to continue their efforts. The Mentor Committee will formalize and expand this process. The Court will maintain a panel of judges interested in providing this mentorship. The mentor judges will be available to those seeking guidance in applying to the bench. The role of the mentor judge is not to select or recommend candidates but rather to demystify the application and vetting process. The goal of the Mentor Committee is to provide one-on-one mentoring to all those interested in applying to the bench.

Participation in the mentor program is not a guarantee or requirement of judicial appointment.

Participants will be placed with a mentor judge who will discuss the prospective applicant's career objectives, answer questions regarding the application and vetting process, and be available to assist in providing input as the applicant completes the judicial application.

### **Outreach Committee**

The Outreach Committee will work with all sectors of the legal community, including bar associations, public interest organizations, government attorneys, private law firms and solo practitioners. The goals of this outreach effort are to:

- Inform members of the legal community of the Mentor Program;
- Disseminate consistent information regarding the Governor's judicial criteria; and
- Identify and encourage individuals in a position to assist in recruiting possible candidates for the bench.

The Outreach Committee will work with local bar groups, including affinity bar associations, to formalize a recruitment process that results in one-on-one mentoring with judges.

The program is not intended to supplant existing bar programs but to complement these efforts by providing bar associations with current insight into the Governor's judicial qualifications and priorities.

If you need additional information, please contact the Fresno Judicial Mentor Program at [JudicialMentorshipProgram@FRESNO.COURTS.CA.GOV](mailto:JudicialMentorshipProgram@FRESNO.COURTS.CA.GOV)

# Judicial Mentor Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why has the Judicial Mentor Program been created?

The Governor's Office wants to expand the pool of qualified judicial applicants from diverse legal backgrounds and diverse communities. It believes that this program may help encourage prospective applicants to complete the application process, particularly those who may self-select out of the application process.

### How does the Mentoring program work?

The Court will pair the mentee with a mentor judge. The mentor judge will help demystify the judicial appointment process, answer questions about the judicial application and vetting process, and suggest new skills and experiences to improve the mentee's suitability for appointment.

### How do I become a mentee?

You must apply. Please see the application attached or at:  
[JudicialMentorshipProgram@FRESNO.COURTS.CA.GOV](mailto:JudicialMentorshipProgram@FRESNO.COURTS.CA.GOV)

### Is there a deadline to apply to be a mentor?

No. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

### What are the qualifications for a mentee?

A mentee must: (1) have at least **10 years** of experience as a lawyer in California and be licensed in California for at least **10 years**; (2) be in good standing with the Bar and the community; and (3) be committed to public service. Those from legal backgrounds and communities underrepresented in the judiciary are particularly encouraged to apply.

### How are mentees paired with mentors?

Pairings will be based on common areas of legal practice, affinity bar memberships, and other factors. **There is no guarantee that a particular mentee will be assigned a mentor judge whose interests closely align with theirs.**

### Will all mentee applicants get a mentor?

Not necessarily. Mentees will be evaluated for their suitability for the program and assigned based on the availability of judicial mentors.

**If I have already applied for judicial appointment, may I still apply to be a mentee?**

Yes.

**What if I am already working with a bar association or judge on my judicial application?**

The program is not intended to supplant any existing program or previous relationship but, instead, should complement those efforts.

**When will I find out if I've been selected as a mentee in the program?**

You will receive an email from the Fresno Judicial Mentor Committee.

**Are mentees who participate in the Judicial Mentor Program given preference in judicial appointments?**

No. The program is designed to help you in your career development and in preparing an application. It is not designed to give certain applicants an inside track. Applicants who do not participate in this program are not disadvantaged.

**Are there any judges who will not participate as a judicial mentor?**

Yes. Members of the Governor's Judicial Selection Advisory Committee (JSAC) will not serve as mentors.

**Whom should I contact if I have a question?**

Email the [JudicialMentorshipProgram@FRESNO.COURTS.CA.GOV](mailto:JudicialMentorshipProgram@FRESNO.COURTS.CA.GOV)