

Tennessee Trial Court Vacancy Commission
Application for Nomination to Judicial Office

9/16/22

Name: Audrey Lee Anderson

Office Address: 107 Music City Circle
(including county) Suite 101
Nashville, Tennessee 37214
Davidson County

Office Phone: 615-244-3000 Facsimile: 615-988-2080

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Home Address: [REDACTED]
(including county) Nashville, Tennessee 37216
Davidson County

Home Phone: [REDACTED]

Cellular Phone: [REDACTED]

INTRODUCTION

Tennessee Code Annotated section 17-4-301 et seq. charges the Trial Court Vacancy Commission with assisting the Governor and the People of Tennessee in finding and appointing the best qualified candidates for judicial offices in this State. Please consider the Commission's responsibility in answering the questions in this application questionnaire. For example, when a question asks you to "describe" certain things, please provide a description that contains relevant information about the subject of the question and, especially, that contains detailed information that demonstrates that you are qualified for the judicial office you seek. In order to properly evaluate your application, the Commission needs information about the range of your experience, the depth and breadth of your legal knowledge, and your personal traits such as integrity, fairness, and work habits.

This document is available in Microsoft Word format from the Administrative Office of the Courts (telephone 800-448-7970 or 615-741-2687; website www.tncourts.gov). The Commission requests that applicants obtain the Microsoft Word form and respond directly on the form. Respond in the box provided below each question. (The box will expand as you type in the document.) Review the separate instruction sheet prior to completing this document. Your complete application, including both the original and digital copies, must be received by the Administrative Office of the Courts on or before the deadline prescribed in the Notice of Vacancy. See section 1(g) of the application instructions for additional information related to hand-delivery of application packages.

THIS APPLICATION IS OPEN TO PUBLIC INSPECTION AFTER YOU SUBMIT IT.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND AND WORK EXPERIENCE

1. State your present employment.

I am a self-employed attorney practicing in the Middle Tennessee area.

2. State the year you were licensed to practice law in Tennessee and give your Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility number.

On October 22, 1998, I received my license to practice law in Tennessee. My Board of Professional Responsibility number is 019278.

3. List all states in which you have been licensed to practice law and include your bar number or identifying number for each state of admission. Indicate the date of licensure and whether the license is currently active. If not active, explain.

I have had a license to practice law in Tennessee since October 22, 1998, my bar number is 019278. I also have had a license to practice law in the state of Illinois since November 5, 1998. My bar number in Illinois is 6255554. My law license in the state of Illinois is on Inactive Status.

4. Have you ever been denied admission to, suspended or placed on inactive status by the Bar of any State? If so, explain. (This applies even if the denial was temporary).

I placed my Illinois license on inactive status in 2004 due to the fact that I no longer lived in the state of Illinois and I did not have any active cases in Illinois.

5. List your professional or business employment/experience since the completion of your legal education. Also include here a description of any occupation, business, or profession other than the practice of law in which you have ever been engaged (excluding military service, which is covered by a separate question).

8/1998 – 5/1999 – Illinois Appellate Court Clerk, Cook County, Chicago, Illinois. I was a judicial appellate law clerk to Justice Anne Burke.

8/1999 – 7/2000 - Attorney, self-employed, working at Roberts & Associates, Nashville, Tennessee.

7/2000 – 10/2005 – Blackburn & McCune, associate attorney, Nashville, Tennessee.

10/2005 – 12/2013 – Of Counsel, self-employed attorney, Helen Rogers & Associates, Nashville, Tennessee.

1/2014 to present – self-employed attorney, Nashville, Tennessee.

6. Describe the nature of your present law practice, listing the major areas of law in which you practice and the percentage each constitutes of your total practice.

I am a sole practitioner. My present law practice has been focused exclusively to family law cases in the Circuit, Chancery, General Sessions and Juvenile Courts in the counties that make up the Middle Tennessee area. I believe my first family law case that I handled in Middle Tennessee was in 1999, shortly after starting my first job here in Nashville. I have experience in the area of divorce and family law litigation for over twenty (20) years.

Nearly ninety (90) percent of the cases I have handled have been focused in the area of divorce and post-divorce modifications involving the issues of custody, child support, visitation, alimony, grandparent visitation, parental relocation, division of the marital estate, and alimony. I have also handled cases involving paternity, and contempt. I have been involved in cases with the Department of Children's Services alleging Dependency and Neglect. I have also handled Petitions to terminate parental rights, a few adoption cases, cases involving orders of protection, and prenuptial agreements. I have handled cases in Davidson County and all of the contiguous counties during the entirety of my legal career. I have personally handled well over a thousand (1,000) family law files.

In 2019, I began working with an immigration law firm in Memphis, Tennessee to appear in the Davidson County Juvenile Court for the hearing on the Petition for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) with the United States and Immigration Services to appoint a permanent guardian of a minor under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). I have only appeared on approximately twenty (20) cases in the last three (3) years and this is a small percentage of my practice, but one that I really enjoy.

My practice has also involved a total of six (6) cases in my career at the Appellate Court level that were appealed from the trial court. I just received the opinion in the last appellate court case I handled in May of this year where my client was the appellee. The first appellate court case I ever handled was in 2001 and I was the appellee. The second and third cases were in 2003, one I was the appellant and in the other the appellee. In 2006 I had an appellate court case as the appellant. In 2008, the appellate case I was involved in I was the appellee. This part of my practice is a very small percentage of my total practice, though I enjoy researching and writing appellate court briefs.

7. Describe generally your experience (over your entire time as a licensed attorney) in trial courts, appellate courts, administrative bodies, legislative or regulatory bodies, other

forums, and/or transactional matters.

In the beginning of my practice, I worked for a sole practitioner who had a general practice handling a variety of different types of legal matters in a variety of different courts. I was able to work on a jury trial, handle a forfeiture hearing, represent litigants in criminal cases, work on personal injury files, be involved in medical malpractice cases and spent time working on workers compensation cases. This experience was invaluable in transitioning into my next job working at a large law firm.

I spent the next five (5) years working at a large law firm where I was eventually handling all of the family law litigation at the firm. During this time in my career, I was a young attorney learning how to litigate in the courts throughout middle Tennessee. I had a very large caseload for which I was responsible that required me to work long hours and weekends. Eventually my time at that firm ended and I transitioned into an of counsel position with one of the top domestic attorneys in Nashville and began running my own business.

I have had over twenty years' experience in the Circuit, Chancery, General Sessions and Juvenile Courts in Davidson County and the contiguous counties representing litigants in family law cases. Not every single case necessitated the court to have an actual trial to decide the matter because most cases settled either before or after mediation. However, the motion practice in most of the cases was significant. I have attended hundred of mediations with my clients over my legal career.

The majority of the cases I have litigated have been in the trial courts. However, I have handled six (6) appellate court cases in my career. I have also represented approximately thirty (30) cases at the Administrative Agency level in the area of Social Security Administration disability law.

8. Describe any matters of special note involving your practice in trial courts, appellate courts, and administrative bodies.

Somewhere around the year 2004, I began handling Social Security disability cases at the appeals level in the administrative courts for an administrative hearing. I believe I handled around thirty (30) cases. The last year that I had a Social Security Disability case, it ended in approximately 2017. I thoroughly enjoyed helping the people that I represented in obtaining their Social Security Disability benefits. I learned an incredible amount of information about the area of Social Security Disability law that uniquely tied into the large family law practice that I represented.

9. Describe any other legal experience, not stated above, that you would like to bring to the attention of the Commission.

In June 2014, I attended the Institute for Conflict Management at Lipscomb University

completing the Rule 31 Family Mediation Training. In January 2015, I became a Rule 31 Listed Mediator in the field of Family Mediation by the Tennessee Supreme Court Alternative Dispute Resolution Commission. I have conducted over sixty (60) mediations.

In 2019 Supreme Court Rule 53 was passed and I began to get training on handling Collaborative Divorces. I have been involved in two (2) Collaborative cases pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 53 since that rules passage in 2019.

10. List and describe all prior occasions on which you have submitted an application for any state or federal judicial position.

None.

EDUCATION

11. List each college, law school, and other graduate school which you have attended, including dates of attendance, degree awarded, major, any form of recognition or other aspects of your education you believe are relevant, and your reason for leaving each school if no degree was awarded.

St. Charles Community College, summer 1987 through fall 1989, transferred to a four-year university.

Washington University, spring 1990 until graduated in May 1994, bachelors of Science Degree double major in Economics and Political Science.

Chicago-Kent College of Law, fall 1995 and graduated May 1998, Juris doctorate.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

12. State your date of birth.

I was born on [REDACTED] 1967.

13. How long have you lived continuously in the State of Tennessee?

I have lived in the state of Tennessee for 23 years.

14. How long have you lived continuously in the county where you are now living?

I have lived in Davidson County for 23 years.

15. State the county in which you are registered to vote.

I am registered to vote in Davidson County, Tennessee.

16. Describe your military service, if applicable, including branch of service, dates of active duty, rank at separation, and decorations, honors, or achievements. Please also state whether you received an honorable discharge and, if not, describe why not.

Not Applicable.

17. Have you ever pled guilty or been convicted or are now on diversion for violation of any law, regulation or ordinance other than minor traffic offenses? If so, state the approximate date, charge and disposition of the case.

No.

18. To your knowledge, are you now under federal, state or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute or disciplinary rule? If so, give details.

No.

19. Please identify the number of formal complaints you have responded to that were filed against you with any supervisory authority, including but not limited to a court, a board of professional responsibility, or a board of judicial conduct, alleging any breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct by you. Please provide any relevant details on any such complaint if the complaint was not dismissed by the court or board receiving the complaint. You may wish to request a report from the appropriate supervisory authority (or authorities) for a complete history.

In 2015 I filed suit against a previous client that owed an outstanding balance after I finished her case. It was filed in the Davidson County General Sessions court using Worrick Robinson's law firm of Robinson, Reagan and Young to represent me to collect the debt. The defendant in that case filed a *pro se* counter-claim against me after she was served with the civil warrant alleging that I committed malpractice. The case was dismissed. The docket number is

15GC7030CC.

20. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities or creditors within the last five (5) years? If so, give details.

No.

21. Have you ever filed bankruptcy (including personally or as part of any partnership, LLC, corporation, or other business organization)?

No.

22. Have you ever been a party in any legal proceedings (including divorces, domestic proceedings, and other types of proceedings)? If so, give details including the date, court and docket number and disposition. Provide a brief description of the case. This question does not seek, and you may exclude from your response, any matter where you were involved only as a nominal party, such as if you were the trustee under a deed of trust in a foreclosure proceeding.

I was awarded a divorce in April 1988, docket 11V018801408 in Circuit Court 11 of St. Charles County Missouri.

I filed suit in 2000 in the Davidson County General Sessions court a case where I believe it was a collection action. I cannot view the original document online because the case is too old. I believe this may have been for Roberts & Associates, a law firm where I was working at the time.

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Docket</u> | <u>Court</u> | <u>Disposition</u> | <u>Description</u> |
|-------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 02/28/2000 | 00GC3147 | Davidson County General Sessions | Judgment/Garnishment Closed | Collection case |

I filed suit on these two cases in the Davidson County General Sessions for balances owed to me by former clients.

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Docket</u> | <u>Court</u> | <u>Disposition</u> | <u>Description</u> |
|-------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 08/13/2007 | 07GC17816 | General Sessions | Judgment/Closed | Collection case |
| 06/25/2010 | 10GC13209 | General Sessions | Judgment/Closed | Collection case |

In 2010 I owed money to Vanderbilt and they filed suit in Davidson County General Sessions Court docket 10GCC2286, its been paid and closed.

I have utilized the Nashville law firm of Robinson, Reagan and Young to file suit in the General Sessions Court of Davidson County to collect outstanding fees owed to me by former clients. These suits are all closed and include:

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Docket</u> | <u>Court</u> | <u>Disposition</u> | <u>Description</u> |
|-------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 05/06/2015 | 15GC7029 | General Sessions | Judgment/Closed | Collection case |
| 05/06/2015 | 15GC7030 | General Sessions | Judgment/Closed | Collection case |
| 07/16/2015 | 15GC7030.CC | General Session | Closed/Dismissed | Counter Claim |
| 08/03/2015 | 15C2919 | General Sessions | Judgment/Appealed | Collection case |
| 12/22/2015 | 15GC20421 | General Sessions | Judgment/Closed | Collection case |
| 12/23/2015 | 15GC20546 | General Sessions | Judgment/Closed | Collection case |

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Docket</u> | <u>Court</u> | <u>Disposition</u> | <u>Description</u> |
|-------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 01/13/2016 | 16GC547 | General Sessions | Judgment/Closed | Collection case |
| 06/17/2016 | 15GC10236 | General Sessions | Judgment/Closed | Collection case |
| 07/14/2016 | 16GC11891 | General Sessions | Judgment/Closed | Collection case |

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Docket</u> | <u>Court</u> | <u>Disposition</u> | <u>Description</u> |
|-------------|---------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 12/17/2021 | 21D2012 | Circuit Court Davidson County | Pending | Divorce |

23. List all organizations other than professional associations to which you have belonged within the last five (5) years, including civic, charitable, religious, educational, social and fraternal organizations. Give the titles and dates of any offices which you have held in such organizations.

I have been a member of First Lutheran Church located at 113 8th Ave. South Nashville, Tennessee 37203.

I had been a member of the LPGA Amateurs golf association, Nashville chapter from 2010 until 2021. I was a board member working on Events for two years from 2019 through 2020.

24. Have you ever belonged to any organization, association, club or society which limits its membership to those of any particular race, religion, or gender? Do not include in your answer those organizations specifically formed for a religious purpose, such as churches or synagogues.
- a. If so, list such organizations and describe the basis of the membership limitation.
 - b. If it is not your intention to resign from such organization(s) and withdraw from any participation in their activities should you be nominated and selected for the position for which you are applying, state your reasons.

No.

ACHIEVEMENTS

25. List all bar associations and professional societies of which you have been a member within the last ten years, including dates. Give the titles and dates of any offices which you have held in such groups. List memberships and responsibilities on any committee of professional associations which you consider significant.

Nashville Bar Association, member since 2000. I was a member of the Memorial Service Committee for about two (2) years beginning in November 2012 through the end of 2014.

Williamson County Bar Association, member since 2008.

Sumner County Bar Association, member since 2015.

26. List honors, prizes, awards or other forms of recognition which you have received since your graduation from law school which are directly related to professional accomplishments.

None.

27. List any public office you have held or for which you have been candidate or applicant. Include the date, the position, and whether the position was elective or appointive.

None.

ESSAYS/PERSONAL STATEMENTS

28. What are your reasons for seeking this position? *(150 words or less)*

I have a wide range of experience in the area of family law practicing in the trial courts throughout Middle Tennessee representing parties with family law issues for over twenty years. The length of time that I have focused on and litigated cases in this area of the law makes me the best qualified candidate for this position. I also have over seven years of experience mediating cases in the area of family law and I have the ability to hear both sides of an issue and continue to remain fair and impartial.

The depth of knowledge that I have after the length of time I have worked in this area of the law is extensive. I have worked hard my entire career and believe that my colleagues would characterize me as a hard worker and those that know my work traits would characterize me as having integrity.

29. Describe the judgeship you seek (i.e. geographic area, types of cases, number of judges, etc. and explain how your selection would impact the court. *(150 words or less)*

I am seeking the appointment for the 20th Judicial District Judicial Vacancy which is the Fourth Circuit Court for Davidson County, Tennessee. This Circuit shares the responsibility for hearing all of the domestic relations cases in Davidson County with the Third Circuit Court. There are over one thousand new divorce filings a year. In addition, this court would be responsible for adjudicating numerous petitions for modifications, adoptions, appeals from juvenile court and orders of protection cases.

This court is very busy and my experience in this area of the law, along with the length of time that I have been practicing in this area, would be beneficial for a smooth transition into this position. I own and operate my law practice and the experience I have in owning my own business, including all of the complicated and challenging issues for a small business, would have a beneficial impact the court.

30. Will you uphold the law even if you disagree with the substance of the law (e.g., statute or rule) at issue? Give an example from your experience as a licensed attorney that supports your response to this question. *(250 words or less)*

I will always uphold the law even if I disagree with the substance of the law. When I had been an attorney for just a few years, I was representing a husband in a divorce action. At the time there was an *ex parte* order in place that did not allow him contact with his children due to the Wife's allegations of his domestic violence and abuse. During a meeting I had with him he told me that he was going to kill his children and his wife if he was not immediately allowed contact with his children. I knew that I was not allowed to reveal any information regarding representation of the husband pursuant to Rule 1.6 of the Rules of Professional Conduct. However, once the husband started making very detailed threats and upon my explanation to

him about the nature of the *ex parte* order, it became necessary for me to disclose this information in order to prevent harm to his family.

This was a very difficult time for me as a young attorney. I was working at a law firm at this time in my career. Early in my career I learned so much about how sometimes families are going through incredible crisis when they enter into the court system. Even though I want to fight for my clients, as I did in this particular case, there was a clear line that I became very aware of when dealing with domestic violence and threats of domestic violence.

REFERENCES

31. List five (5) persons, and their current positions and contact information, who would recommend you for the judicial position for which you are applying. Please list at least two persons who are not lawyers. Please note that the Commission or someone on its behalf may contact these persons regarding your application.

| |
|--|
| A. Mary Leech, Attorney, [REDACTED] Antioch, Tennessee 37013; [REDACTED] |
| B. Lisa Ewing, Attorney, [REDACTED] Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 37122 [REDACTED] |
| C. Jean Roden, retired school teacher, [REDACTED] Nashville, Tennessee 37221; [REDACTED] |
| D. Crystal Taliefero, musician, [REDACTED] Franklin, Tennessee; [REDACTED] |
| E. Russ Edwards, attorney, [REDACTED] Hendersonville, Tennessee 37075, [REDACTED] |

AFFIRMATION CONCERNING APPLICATION

Read, and if you agree to the provisions, sign the following:

I have read the foregoing questions and have answered them in good faith and as completely as my records and recollections permit. I hereby agree to be considered for nomination to the Governor for the office of Judge of the 20th Judicial District, 4th Circuit Court of Davidson County, Tennessee, and if appointed by the Governor, agree to serve that office. In the event any changes occur between the time this application is filed and the public hearing, I hereby agree to file an amended questionnaire with the Administrative Office of the Courts for distribution to the Commission members.

I understand that the information provided in this questionnaire shall be open to public inspection upon filing with the Administrative Office of the Courts and that the Commission may publicize the names of persons who apply for nomination and the names of those persons the Commission nominates to the Governor for the judicial vacancy in question.

Dated: October 3rd, 2022.

Audrey Lee Anderson
Signature

When completed, return this questionnaire to Rachel Harmon at the Administrative Office of the Courts, 511 Union Street, Suite 600, Nashville, TN 37219



TENNESSEE TRIAL COURT VACANCY COMMISSION
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
511 UNION STREET, SUITE 600
NASHVILLE CITY CENTER
NASHVILLE, TN 37219

TENNESSEE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
TENNESSEE BOARD OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT
AND OTHER LICENSING BOARDS

WAIVER OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I hereby waive the privilege of confidentiality with respect to any information that concerns me, including public discipline, private discipline, deferred discipline agreements, diversions, dismissed complaints and any complaints erased by law, and is known to, recorded with, on file with the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, the Tennessee Board of Judicial Conduct (previously known as the Court of the Judiciary) and any other licensing board, whether within or outside the State of Tennessee, from which I have been issued a license that is currently active, inactive or other status. I hereby authorize a representative of the Trial Court Vacancy Commission to request and receive any such information and distribute it to the membership of the Commission and to the Office of the Governor.

Audrey Lee Anderson
Name

Signature

10/3/2022

Date

019278

BPR

Please identify other licensing boards that have issued you a license, including the state issuing the license and the license number.

The State of Illinois, License To Practice Law, Bar

Number 6255554