

**Tennessee Trial Court Vacancy Commission**  
***Application for Nomination to Judicial Office***

1/17/23

Name: Rebecca Brady  
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(including county) Putnam County

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Putnam County

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**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](http://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.

Assistant District Attorney, Thirteenth Judicial District

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

2007, 026213

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 only been licensed in Tennessee, 026213, since 2007 - active.

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).

No.

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).

I graduated from law school in 2007 and immediately entered private practice as a solo practitioner. My practice consisted primarily of criminal defense, domestic relations, and representation of parents and children in dependency and neglect actions in Juvenile Court.

In 2013, I accepted a job as Assistant General Counsel with the Department of Children's Services and stayed in that position through 2021.

In January of 2022, I accepted my current position as Assistant District Attorney.

Prior to attending law school, I was an elementary school teacher.

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.

My current position is in the Child Support Enforcement Division of the District Attorney's office. I represent the State's interest in Child Support being set correctly and collected for the benefit of Tennessee's children. I file Petitions to set support, modify support, and determine arrearages. I file and prosecute Petitions for Criminal Contempt on obligor parents who are not paying their support. I am typically in Court 2-4 days per week negotiating cases with parents and attorneys and having hearings regarding support Petitions and Motions.

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.

During my time in private practice, I handled all phases of criminal defense including pleas in General Sessions and Criminal Court, preliminary hearings, bond hearings, motions to suppress and jury trials. In domestic relations cases, I tried divorce and custody cases on a regular basis in Chancery, Circuit, General Sessions, and Juvenile Court. I also acted as the Guardian ad Litem in several private custody/divorce matters including an appeal to the Court of Appeals. As part of my Juvenile Court practice, I participated in hearings regarding all phases of dependency and neglect cases including preliminary hearings, adjudicatory hearings, permanency hearings, guardianship hearings, appeals to Circuit Court, and trials for termination of parental rights. I also handled administrative appeals regarding unemployment and abuse indications by the Department of Children's Services. Most of my practice was in the counties of the Thirteenth Judicial District, but I also handled a few cases in the Fifteenth and Thirty-First Districts.

While working as Assistant General Counsel for the Department of Children's Services, I handled all phases of cases for the removal of children by DCS in Juvenile Court from preliminary hearings to termination hearings and everything in between. I handled hearings in Juvenile and Circuit court on a regular basis. I also covered appeals to Circuit Court and Termination of Parental Rights trials in Juvenile and Circuit Court and administrative hearings regarding indicated perpetrators. It was my responsibility to advocate for the best interests of our State's most vulnerable citizens in a region with a higher-than-average rate of alcohol and drug use, a high percentage of children living in poverty, and access to resources which were scant if not nonexistent. The Upper Cumberland office handled cases in fourteen counties including all of the Thirteenth District and seven other surrounding counties.

In my current role, I participate in hearings in Juvenile, Circuit, and Chancery Courts in all seven counties of the Thirteenth Judicial District regularly, including civil and criminal contempt matters.

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

While in private practice, I represented four convicted murderers in their post-conviction cases including trials in the Criminal Court and appeals to the Criminal Court of Appeals.

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

Not applicable.

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

In 2017, I applied for a position as a United States Magistrate in the Eastern District of Tennessee.

In 2019, I applied for a Criminal Court Judge vacancy created by the retirement of the Honorable David Patterson. I was one of the three candidates submitted to the governor for consideration for that position.

### 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.

Tennessee Technological University – May 1987 to May 1999 – Bachelor of Science

Nashville School of Law – August 2003 to May 2007 – Doctor of Jurisprudence. I was awarded a scholarship in my fourth year of law school and was a member of the Moot Court competition team that competed in a National Competition in Kansas City.

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

12. State your date of birth.

1969

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

I was born in Tennessee and have lived in Tennessee continuously since birth.

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

I have lived in Putnam County my entire life.

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

Putnam County

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.

I had two complaints filed against me with the Board of Professional Responsibility by previous clients while I was in private practice. I responded to both complaints, and both were dismissed.

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)?

Yes, in 1994.

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.

In 1994 I was a party to a divorce which was granted on the grounds of irreconcilable differences – Putnam County Chancery Court #94-677

In 2012 I was sued by a creditor who was granted a judgment which I did not contest and subsequently paid – Putnam County General Sessions Court #1801C11

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 became a member of the Cookeville Freewill Baptist Church in 2003 (approximate date).

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.

Putnam County Bar, 2007 to present

Upper Cumberland Young Lawyers Association, 2007 to 2014

Upper Cumberland Lawyers Association of Women, 2017 to present

Member of the Court Improvement Committee for the Tennessee Children's Justice Task Force, 2011-2014

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.

Not Applicable.

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.

Not Applicable.

**ESSAYS/PERSONAL STATEMENTS**

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

It has always been my desire to be a judge, but I spent most of my life believing that I was meant to be a teacher. It was only after becoming disillusioned with the education system that a path

to law school opened for me. I have spent my entire legal career preparing for this position by studying the excellent judges of this District and others. I believe that judges hold the most important role in the legal system and must be held to the highest standards of morality, temperament, and professionalism.

I am seeking this position because I believe that I can be an excellent judge and because women are grossly underrepresented in the judiciary of our state. I have been in public service for ten years now and spent considerable time during my years in private practice serving the indigent and volunteering for legal causes. Becoming a judge would be a continuation of my service to the citizens of our District.

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 appointment as the third Criminal Court Judge for the Thirteenth Judicial District in a new position created by the most recent session of the State Legislature. The Thirteenth District is a large region including Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, and White Counties. I believe that my experiences handling cases in a variety of specialties and courts makes me uniquely suited to this appointment. I have experienced our judicial system from many different angles and believe that this diversity of skills has made me more knowledgeable and adaptable in my legal practice. Moreover, women are underrepresented in the judiciary at almost every level in our District and our State. Of the now 14 judgeships in our District, only two are currently held by women. Furthermore, I have worked continuously during my lifetime to overcome an exceptionally disadvantaged childhood. It would be a great honor to be an example to the youth of our community facing adversity of the rewards of resilience, perseverance and hard work.

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)*

Litigants and Defendants are entitled to expect their judge to leave their own beliefs and opinions at the door and decide a case based only on the information presented at trial and the laws as they were written, not as they might wish they were. Judges can never allow their own values to affect the outcome of a case. There has never been a point in my legal career where I agreed with all of the statutes controlling a case, but my opinions regarding the rightness of any law are irrelevant. I am only tasked with abiding by and enforcing the laws as written by others. This ability to set aside personal judgment and consider only that which is within the boundaries of the law is even more important as a Judge.

In my position as a DCS attorney, I was often called upon to return children to parents who had abused them. This was always difficult for me. But the parents' right to rehabilitate themselves and parent their children as they see fit is a fiercely protected right under the law. Despite my own misgivings, the reunification of families was the primary goal of my job and I



pursued it zealously. I also often struggled when terminating the parental rights of parents with intellectual disabilities. While the law tasked me with doing so for the best interests of the children, it was heartbreaking to strip a parent of their rights when their inability to properly care for their children – who they clearly adored – was a circumstance beyond their control.

**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. Honorable Judge John Hudson (retired) – [REDACTED]
B. Greg Bowman, Court Administrator – [REDACTED] Cookeville TN 38501, [REDACTED]
C. Honorable Judge Tiffany Gentry Gipson – [REDACTED] Gainesboro TN 38562, [REDACTED]
D. Alicia Wright, LMSW - Team Leader in the Office of Child Safety, [REDACTED] Cookeville TN 38506, [REDACTED]
E. Honorable Judge Todd Burnett – [REDACTED] Jamestown TN 38556, [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 **Thirteenth Judicial District Criminal Court** of 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: June 8, 20 23

Rebecca Brady  
Signature

When completed, return this questionnaire to John Jefferson 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.

**Rebecca Brady**

*Rebecca Brady*  
Signature

*June 8, 2023*  
Date

**026213**

BPR #

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

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