

Tennessee Trial Court Vacancy Commission
Application for Nomination to Judicial Office

1/17/23

Name: Erin Walker Nations

Office Address: 1600 Westgate Circle, Suite 275
(including county) Brentwood, Williamson County, Tennessee 37027

Office Phone: 615-861-2304 Facsimile: 615-861-2305

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Home Address: [REDACTED]
(including county) [REDACTED] Williamson County, Tennessee 37027

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 presently a partner at Beal, Nations, & Crutcher.

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

I was licensed to practice law in Tennessee in 2009 and was assigned Board of Professional Responsibility number 026930.

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.

Tennessee, 026930, 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).

Upon completion of my legal education, I was still employed by the Williamson County Circuit Court Judges' Office, where I had worked throughout law school as a law clerk to now Chief Justice Jeffrey Bivins, now Court of Criminal Appeals Judge Timothy L. Easter, now Senior Judge R.E. Lee Davies, and Judge Robbie Beal.

After passing the bar examination, I accepted an *of counsel* position with the firm of Sidwell and Barrett, P.C. in Franklin, Tennessee. I remained in that position from 2010 until 2014, when Judge Robbie Beal left his position as Williamson County Circuit Court judge. Judge Beal and retired United States Attorney and Williamson County General Sessions Judge Ernie Williams invited me to open a new law firm with them. I accepted and the firm at which I am presently employed was formed in September of 2014 as Williams, Beal, & Nations. I have been employed continuously as a partner at that firm since then.

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.

While I began as a general practitioner, my practice has evolved over the years into primarily a family law focused practice. Divorce and child custody constitutes approximately 70% of my present practice. I also practice in the areas of criminal defense (approximately 10%), estate planning and probate (10%), and general civil litigation (10%).

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.

I have been a trial attorney since I was licensed in 2009. My courtroom experience, however, began in 2007 when I was hired as a law clerk to the Williamson County Circuit Court judges. I was in the courtroom each day with the judge to whom I was assigned. The years I spent in that position shaped my legal career. I learned from highly experienced and respected judges and lawyers during those years and that experience gave me the confidence and skills necessary to successfully practice law.

In addition to my experience as a trial attorney, I have been asked on many occasions to sit as Special Magistrate in the Juvenile Court for Williamson County, Tennessee. On those occasions, I heard and ruled upon cases on the docket, which were primarily child support matters. I interacted with litigants, attorneys, courtroom and clerk's office personnel and the Juvenile Court Judge in order to successfully complete each docket.

In 2010, I was appointed by Judge James G. Martin, III of the Williamson County Chancery Court to serve as special master in a highly contentious divorce matter. This experience provided me with additional judicial experience in a Chancery Court capacity.

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

While I do not believe that any of my appellate cases necessarily deserve special note, I have been involved in multiple appellate cases, including the drafting of briefs and appearances at oral arguments in both the Court of Appeals and the Court of Criminal Appeals.

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

While my election to the Williamson County Commission does not necessarily require a legal education, my experience as an attorney has certainly proven useful in my capacity as a legislator in that body. My knowledge of the law has been an invaluable resource on many occasions during my tenure as a commissioner. I have served on the Law Enforcement and Education Committees, and this fiscal year I was selected by the County Mayor to serve on the Budget Committee.

Additionally, while not exactly my own legal experience, I believe it is important to know that I am married to a Williamson County Sheriff's Deputy who has been a law enforcement officer in our county for twenty years. Through this marriage, I have gained insight into the challenges and issues faced by our law enforcement community each day.

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

This is my first application for any judicial 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.

Nashville School of Law: 2005-2009, Doctorate of Jurisprudence. During law school, I was employed full-time as a law clerk for the Williamson County Circuit Court Judges. I also worked as a server on the weekends for the purpose of paying for my legal education and graduating with no financial debt.

Middle Tennessee State University: 2000-2004, Bachelor of Science in Political Science with minors in Pre-Law Concentration and Criminal Justice Administration. While in college, I received the Collegiate All-American Scholar Award, I was inducted into the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, and I graduated *Magna Cum Laude*. I was employed full-time throughout my college career as a server, in addition to completing an internship in a local law office and working as a paralegal in a Nashville law firm.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

12. State your date of birth.

██████████ 1982

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

I have lived continuously in the State of Tennessee since my birth in 1982.

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

I was raised in Williamson County. My parents still reside in my childhood home in Brentwood. At 20 years old, while I was in college, I purchased my first home in Nashville, Davidson County. At the age of 25, I purchased the home in which I currently reside with my family in Brentwood, Williamson County. I have lived in Williamson County continuously since that time.

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

Williamson 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.

None.

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.

Not Applicable. I have never had a complaint of any sort filed against me.

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.

Yes. I was the plaintiff in a divorce matter in Davidson County Circuit Court in 2008, wherein I was granted an agreed irreconcilable differences divorce.

I have also been the plaintiff in collections actions against clients who have failed to comply with their contractual financial obligations. Those cases have all been filed in the General Sessions Court of Williamson County. I have provided the docket numbers and dispositions of each case below, but have utilized each defendant's initials rather than their full names in an effort to protect their privacy:

Erin Nations v. R.P.A., filed on 2/11/2013 under docket number 2013-CV-407: the client promptly paid the balance and the case was dismissed.

Erin Nations v. J.R.Y., filed on 3/31/2014 under docket number 2014-CV-738: an agreed judgement was entered.

Erin Nations v. A.S., filed on 7/8/2022 under docket number 2022-CV-1587: a judgment was granted against defendant.

Erin Nations v. J.T., filed on 7/8/2022 under docket number 2022-CV-1588: service was never obtained on the defendant.

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 am a member of Holy Family Catholic Church in Brentwood, Tennessee. I have also participated in many civic and charitable events through my position as a County Commissioner. I am active in the Williamson County Republican Party. The organizations in which I take the most pride in my participation are the parent/teacher organizations of my children's schools, Lipscomb Elementary School and Brentwood Middle School, along with the Brentwood High School marching Band Boosters program.

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.
- If so, list such organizations and describe the basis of the membership limitation.
 - 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.

2010-Present: Member, Williamson County Bar Association.

2013-2015: Member, American Inns of Court, John Marshall Chapter

2010-2012: Executive Committee Member, Young Republicans of Williamson County

2010-2011: President, Young Attorneys of Williamson County

2010-2014: Member, Tennessee Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers

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.

2017, Attorneys for Justice Pro Bono Service Award granted by the Tennessee Supreme Court

2018, Top Ten Attorneys Under 40 Award granted by the National Academy of Family Law Attorneys

2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022, Rising Stars Award granted by Super Lawyers

2023, Selected to Mid-South Super Lawyers

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.

I have been the elected County Commissioner for the 6th District of Williamson County since 2018. I was first elected to a four-year term in August of 2018 and then re-elected in August of 2022 for another four-year term.

In 2014, I was a candidate for the position of State Executive Committeewoman for the Republican Party of Tennessee.

ESSAYS/PERSONAL STATEMENTS

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

I firmly believe that the citizens of Williamson County are entitled to continued access to equal justice under the law. I further believe that the future of that prospect is entirely dependent upon the willingness of competent, capable, and dedicated lawyers to serve their community in a judicial capacity. I have a deeply rooted commitment both to justice and to the community where I have lived my entire life and am now raising my own children. I am highly motivated to serve that community. I have served for five years as a County Commissioner and I now believe that I can most effectively serve my community in a judicial capacity.

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)*

The 21st Judicial District is now comprised solely of Williamson County. There are four judges elected to serve the 21st Judicial District. All four judges serve as both Circuit judges and Chancellors, hearing both criminal and civil matters. As Circuit judges, they hear all Circuit Criminal matters as well as civil matters. Jury trials are relatively common on the Circuit side. The judges also sit as Chancellors, in which capacity they hear matters of equity. These matters include divorces, adoptions, conservatorships, guardianships, and probate matters. Williamson County recently approved a new position for a Probate Special Master, which relieved the Clerk and Master of the duties she was performing in that capacity, which I understand was very helpful to the judiciary.

My selection to the court would have an historic impact in that, for the first time in history, the 21st Judicial District would be comprised of more female judges than male.

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 absolutely uphold and enforce the laws of the State of Tennessee, whether my personal opinions or feelings agree with the substance of that law or not. I wholeheartedly believe that my personal feelings on any subject are entirely irrelevant to my duty to apply the law equally and without prejudice.

An example of my ability to put my personal feelings and inclinations aside in furtherance of the law occurred early in my legal career. I was appointed to represent criminal defendants on more than one occasion who were charged with crimes that were reprehensible to me as a person. However, as a lawyer, my job was to uphold the law and ensure that the laws and rules of court were followed and that my client was afforded the protections to which he/she was entitled under the laws of this state. I accepted that obligation entirely and without hesitation.

Another example comes from my family law practice, wherein I often must deal with matters relating to the welfare of children. I often feel that the best interest of the child should be the prevailing authority and should dictate the outcome of the matter. However, a best interest analysis often occurs secondarily to and in conjunction with other applicable statutes and case law. It is my job in representing a client to argue the law that is most beneficial to my client, regardless of any personal feelings.

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. Senator Jack Johnson	[REDACTED]	Nashville, Tennessee 37243;	[REDACTED]
B. Mayor Rogers Anderson, County Mayor of Williamson County, Tennessee.	[REDACTED]	Franklin, Tennessee 37064;	[REDACTED]
C. Jason Hale, Vice President of Risk and General Counsel for Lee Company,	[REDACTED]	Franklin, Tennessee 37064;	[REDACTED]
D. Sheriff Robert "Dusty" Rhoades,	[REDACTED]	Franklin, Tennessee 37064;	[REDACTED]
E. Robbie Beal, former Williamson County Circuit Court Judge, current partner at Beal, Nations & Crutcher;	[REDACTED]	Brentwood, Tennessee 37027;	[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 Circuit Court for the 21st Judicial District 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: July 25, 2023.



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.

Erin Walker Nations

Type or Print Name

Erin Nations

Signature

July 25, 2023

Date

026930

BPR #

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