

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

1/17/23

Name: N. Tanner Beck

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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.

Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee & the Cumberland

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

2018; 036505

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

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).

Since I graduated law school, I have been an intern at The Law Office of Laura E. Metcalf (Knoxville) and The Odeneal Firm (Lawrenceburg). I was then an attorney at Griffin & Davis, PLLC in Sparta, Tennessee before becoming a Staff Attorney at Legal Aid of East Tennessee in Johnson City, Tennessee. After that, I began my current position in the Columbia office of Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee & the Cumberland.

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 represent underserved and underrepresented clients in housing, consumer protection, and tax matters, with a focus on advancing economic justice in rural and low-income communities. Roughly 50% of my practice involves enforcing tenants' rights under state and federal law. About 30% focuses on consumer issues, including debt defense and wrongful car repossessions. The remaining 20% involves federal tax advocacy, where I help clients navigate the IRS system, secure credits and refunds, and maintain compliance.

I practice primarily in rural regions, including all counties in Tennessee's 32nd Judicial District—Lewis, Hickman, and Perry—where legal resources are limited and systemic barriers are significant.

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 my current role, I primarily represent clients in trial courts, where I handle a wide range of direct advocacy matters. In previous positions, I have also represented clients before administrative bodies, giving me experience across both judicial and administrative forums.

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

Since joining Legal Aid of Middle Tennessee & the Cumberlands, I have practiced in all trial courts within Tennessee's 32nd Judicial District, as well as in courts across five additional counties. My current work involves a wide range of civil matters requiring frequent courtroom advocacy.

In previous roles, I represented clients before administrative bodies—including the Social Security Administration, the Department of Human Services, and many more—and practiced in numerous additional counties throughout East Tennessee and the Upper Cumberland region. This breadth of experience has strengthened my ability to navigate both judicial and administrative systems in many types of communities.

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

In 2025, I was selected as a Fellow in the Reaching Rural: Advancing Collaborative Solutions initiative, a competitive, year-long program sponsored by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Centers for Disease Control, and State Justice Institute. I was one of 100 participants chosen

nationwide, and one of only about 25 selected to participate as an individual fellow rather than as part of a cross-sector team. Fellows represented rural communities from across the country—including Hawaii, Alaska, and Maine. As part of the program, I received specialized training in cross-sector collaboration and traveled to national trainings, including a site visit to Mohave County, Arizona, where I learned directly from local judges, jail administrators, and public health leaders. I completed the fellowship in February 2025.

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

Not applicable.

### **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.

2010-2014: **University of Tennessee**, *Bachelor of Arts in Political Science*

2014-2015: **Appalachian School of Law** (transferred after the first year)

2015-2017: **University of Tennessee College of Law**, *Juris Doctor*

In law school at the University of Tennessee, I won an award naming me the top student in the Domestic Violence Legal Clinic.

### **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

12. State your date of birth.

[REDACTED]

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

10 years.

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

2 years.

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

Lewis

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.

Not applicable.

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.

Not applicable.

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.

One.

The complaint was filed in 2018, but it was promptly dismissed by the Board of Professional Responsibility with no further investigation. No other complaints have been filed. I would be happy to provide documentation of this complaint and its immediate dismissal.

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.

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

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.

Not applicable.

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.

Board Member, Columbia CARES (2021-2022)

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.

Not applicable.

### **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.

Maury County Bar Association (2023-Present); Washington County Bar Association (2018-2020); Tennessee Bar Association (2018-Present)

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.

Fellow, *Reaching Rural: Advancing Collaborative Solutions*

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)*

I became a lawyer because I believed in the law's power to uphold justice and protect the vulnerable. As a Legal Aid attorney, I saw that firsthand—a survivor of domestic abuse found safety, a rapist was held accountable, and an elderly woman reclaimed her home.

But I also saw the system fail. Abusers walked free because of who they were, judges mistreated those seeking help, and rulings were driven by bias instead of law—some even admitted to ignoring the law entirely.

That's why I'm applying to serve as Circuit Court Judge and Chancellor for the 32nd Judicial District. I will follow the law, not override it. I will treat every person with dignity and approach each case with fairness.

Justice should not depend on influence, wealth, or power—it should depend on the law.

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 32nd Judicial District is unique—three small counties with fewer than 50,000 residents combined and just one judge serving the district’s only court of record. That structure brings both challenges and opportunities. My selection would bring a needed shift. Legal Aid attorneys like me rarely reach the bench, but we should. We work closely with the most vulnerable members of our communities—those often unheard in courtrooms. That experience gives me a perspective missing from our judiciary.

I’m originally from Lawrenceburg, a town much like those in the 32nd, so I understand this region both professionally and personally. If chosen, I would bring empathy, fairness, and a deep understanding of how the law affects people’s daily lives. I also know no single perspective is enough. A judge must listen to every voice and weigh every interest. That’s the balance I hope to bring to the bench.

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)*

Without a doubt, emphatically—yes.

This isn’t a hard question for me. In fact, I believe it would be alarming if anyone seeking judicial office couldn’t answer it quickly and with conviction. The answer must be a resounding yes.

In my current position, I often encounter laws I disagree with, particularly as they impact my clients. But that disagreement cannot factor into how I represent them. I must be honest about what the law is—not what I wish it were.

I once represented a tenant in a case against his landlord. The landlord’s behavior during litigation was, in my view, morally reprehensible—but it was not illegal. I had to explain to my client that, while I shared his frustrations, the law didn’t support certain claims. We ultimately agreed to give up possession of the unit. It was the last outcome I wanted, but it was legally correct.

That experience reminded me of something essential: a judge’s role is not to legislate from the bench, but to apply the law as it stands. Even when the law feels unfair, personal feelings cannot overtake legal obligation. The law must have the final say.

That’s the discipline I already practice as an attorney, and it’s the approach I will carry to the bench. Judges must honor the law, even when it’s hard. Especially when it’s hard.

### **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.

Hon. Caleb Bayless  
Circuit Court Judge and Chancellor, 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District  
14 Public Square, Suite B  
Columbia, TN 38401  
[REDACTED]

Hon. William M. Harris  
Judge, General Sessions Court for Lawrence County  
240 W Gaines Street  
Lawrenceburg, TN 38464  
[REDACTED]

Stacie Odeneal  
Attorney, The Odeneal Firm  
411 W Gaines Street  
Lawrenceburg, TN 38464  
[REDACTED]

Queidalys Simmons  
[REDACTED]

Kim Brite  
(Current assistant principal, Summertown High School)  
(931) 964-3539 ext. 7004  
[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 [Court] 32<sup>nd</sup> 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: May 13, 20 25.

  
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.

Nicholas Tanner Beck  
Type or Print Name

[Signature]  
Signature

5-13-2025  
Date

036505  
BPR #

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