



LAKE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION – LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – SEPTEMBER 28, 2020

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT – MATTHEW N. FECH, LCBA PRESIDENT,
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LAWYERS RATE JUDICIAL OFFICERS

The Lake County Bar Association conducts a survey of all Lake County lawyers at the mid-point of judges' terms to help the public make informed decisions at the polls when it comes time for voting. The results also are meant to help incumbent judges identify areas of strength and potential areas for improving judicial performance. The survey includes magistrates, referees and commissioners subject to the judges' direct supervision.

The survey is not a popularity contest. Rather, the Lake County Bar Association believes that attorneys as officers of the courts have an obligation to the sitting judges, lawyers seeking the bench, and the public to identify and rate judicial qualities. These objectives are consistent with an attorney's duty to promote fairness and access to justice, as well as evaluate the quality of our courts.

Surveys are available to all lawyers living and practicing in Lake County, not just those who are members of the Lake County Bar Association. The survey asked lawyers to anonymously rate the judicial officers on a scale of 1-10, in three areas: competence, temperament and character. An overall rating and a yes or no recommendation for retention of judges are also sought. Magistrates, referees and commissioners are not subject to retention votes. The five possible rating levels are: Exceptionally Well-Qualified (9-10), Well-Qualified (7-8), Qualified (5-6), Less than Qualified (3-4) and Not Qualified (1-2). Participants are asked to refrain from answering survey questions about judicial officers and candidates about which they have insufficient knowledge to give an informed opinion. Judge John M. Sedia, Magistrate Kathleen M. Belzeski and Magistrate Natalie Bokota received the highest overall scores as indicated by the Judicial Survey results.

A total of 275 attorneys participated in this survey. Attached are the detailed results of the judicial officers' ratings in each category.

End

Lake County Bar Association Survey of Judicial Candidates



September 23, 2020 General Election Survey-Retention

	Judge Diana Ross Boswell		Magistrate Kathleen A. Sullivan		Magistrate Natalie Bokota		Judge John M. Sedia		Judge Nicholas J. Schiralli	
	Score	Ranking	Score	Ranking	Score	Ranking	Score	Ranking	Score	Ranking
I.1: LEGAL ABILITY: Substantive law	6.4		8.3		8.4		8.9		7.1	
I.2: Procedure and Evidence	6.5		8.2		8.5		9.0		7.2	
I.3: Written Rulings Well-Reasoned	6.4		8.0		8.4		8.9		6.8	
I.4: Oral Rulings Well-Reasoned	6.4		8.0		8.3		8.9		6.9	
I.5: Knowledge of Current Legal Developments	6.2		8.1		8.4		9.0		6.8	
I.6: Overall Legal Ability	6.3		8.1		8.3	2	8.9	1	6.9	
I.7: DEMEANOR: Polite	8.3		7.0		8.7		9.3		8.1	
I.8: Listens Attentively	8.0		7.3		8.7		9.3		7.8	
I.9: Listens Patiently	7.9		7.1		8.7		9.3		7.9	
I.10: Displays Appropriate Civility	8.2		7.1		8.7		9.3		8.0	
I.11: Overall Demeanor	8.0		7.2		8.6	2	9.3	1	7.9	
I.12: COURT ADMIN: Punctual	6.9		8.2		8.5		9.0		6.8	
I.13: Research and Prep	6.5		8.1		8.5		9.0		7.0	
I.14: Manages Calendar Efficiently	6.8		8.2		8.5		8.9		6.8	
I.15: Exercises Reasonable Control	7.1		8.3		8.5		9.1		7.1	
I.16: Overall Court Administration	6.9		8.1		8.5	2	9.0	1	6.9	
I.17: IMPARTIALITY: Avoids Impropriety	7.5		7.6		8.5		9.2		7.8	
I.18: Without Bias	7.6		7.6		8.7		9.2		8.1	
I.19: Uninfluenced	7.3		7.4		8.5		9.0		7.4	
I.20: Rulings Based on Facts of Law	6.9		7.7		8.4		9.0		7.2	
I.21: Neutral Presence	7.3		7.6		8.6		9.1		7.7	
I.22: Refrains From Inappropriate Communications	7.8		7.6		8.5		9.2		7.9	
I.23: Overall Impartiality	7.3		7.5		8.5	2	9.1	1	7.6	
I.24: Overall Rating	6.8		7.4		8.3	2	9.0	1	7.1	
Yes-Should be Retained	60.40%		n/a		n/a		86.80%		64.50%	
No-Should Not be Retained	28.60%		n/a		n/a		5.40%		25.80%	
Retention Not Answered	11.00%		n/a		n/a		7.80%		9.70%	

9 or 10 = Exceptionally Well Qualified
 7 or 8 = Well Qualified
 5 or 6 = Qualified
 3 or 4 = Less than Qualified
 1 or 2 = Not Qualified

Lake County Bar Association Survey of Judicial Candidates

September 23, 2020 General Election Survey-Retention

	Magistrate Catheron A. Paras		Judge Sheila M. Moss		Magistrate Kathleen M. Belzeski		Judge Julie N. Cantrell		Magistrate R. Jeffrey Boling		Commissioner Robert McMahon	
	Score	Ranking	Score	Ranking	Score	Ranking	Score	Ranking	Score	Ranking	Score	Ranking
1.1: LEGAL ABILITY: Substantive law	5.7		7.8		8.3		7.9		8.1		5.6	
1.2: Procedure and Evidence	5.8		7.8		8.4		7.9		8.1		5.7	
1.3: Written Rulings Well-Reasoned	5.7		7.7		8.2		7.7		8.0		5.7	
1.4: Oral Rulings Well-Reasoned	5.7		7.8		8.3		7.8		8.1		5.7	
1.5: Knowledge of Current Legal Developments	5.6		7.8		8.2		7.8		8.1		5.8	
1.6: Overall Legal Ability	5.7		7.8		8.3	2	7.8		8.1		5.7	
1.7: DEMEANOR: Polite	6.6		7.8		8.7		7.1		8.5		7.3	
1.8: Listens Attentively	6.5		7.8		8.6		7.2		8.4		7.2	
1.9: Listens Patiently	6.6		7.6		8.6		7.1		8.4		7.1	
1.10: Displays Appropriate Civility	6.5		7.8		8.7		7.1		8.5		7.3	
1.11: Overall Demeanor	6.3		7.8		8.6	2	7.2		8.4		7.1	
1.12: COURT ADMIN: Punctual	6.0		7.4		8.4		7.7		8.4		7.1	
1.13: Research and Prep	5.9		7.6		8.4		7.7		8.3		6.5	
1.14: Manages Calendar Efficiently	6.0		7.6		8.4		7.7		8.4		6.9	
1.15: Exercises Reasonable Control	6.2		7.7		8.5		7.8		8.5		6.9	
1.16: Overall Court Administration	6.0		7.6		8.4	2	7.6		8.4		6.7	
1.17: IMPARTIALITY: Avoids Impropriety	6.2		7.9		8.5		7.2		8.5		6.2	
1.18: Without Bias	6.5		8.0		8.7		7.5		8.5		7.3	
1.19: Uninfluenced	6.1		7.6		8.4		6.8		8.4		6.1	
1.20: Rulings Based on Facts of Law	6.1		7.8		8.4		7.3		8.4		6.0	
1.21: Neutral Presence	6.3		7.8		8.5		7.2		8.5		6.6	
1.22: Refrains From Inappropriate Communications	6.5		8.0		8.7		7.5		8.6		7.2	
1.23: Overall Impartiality	6.2		7.8		8.5	2	7.2		8.5	2	6.2	
1.24: Overall Rating	5.8		7.7		8.3	2	7.3		8.2		5.8	
Yes-Should be Retained	n/a		70.30%		n/a		68.10%		n/a		n/a	
No-Should Not be Retained	n/a		18.90%		n/a		18.40%		n/a		n/a	
Retention Not Answered	n/a		10.80%		n/a		13.50%		n/a		n/a	

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