



## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

### News for Immediate Release

Sept. 15, 2016

**EDITORS' NOTE:** Audio and video clips of Justice Wecht are available for download on the Judiciary's [media resources webpage](#).

### Supreme Court encourages people to apply for appointments

**HARRISBURG** — As part of its desire for wider public participation in the judicial system, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court is undertaking a new initiative making it easier for people to express interest in being appointed by the Supreme Court to advisory panels, commissions, and independent agencies with the judiciary.

“Justice David N. Wecht has led the present initiative with the intention of broadening participation in the Supreme Court’s board and committee structure,” said Chief Justice Thomas G. Saylor. “He will also be supervising the implementation, with the support of the full court.”

Legal training, experience and expertise are necessary for many assignments, but there are appointments for nonattorneys as well.

“The court appreciates the time and effort the board and committee members dedicate to their roles,” said Justice Wecht. “With this outreach we hope to encourage more people to apply for these important positions.”

“Providing easier access to apply for these positions and announcing them to a broader audience will ensure that the court will have a more diverse pool of applicants. A broader array of candidates, and consequently panel members, will serve the court and the Commonwealth as they bring new perspectives to the important work the panels do.”

The Unified Judicial System website at [www.pacourts.us](http://www.pacourts.us) will serve as the central resource for the new initiative. As vacancies arise, they will be featured on the home page, usually beginning the first week of the month. Clicking on the announcement will lead readers to a list of vacancies with links to information about the missions of the respective entity, including terms of service, as well as an application and directions for submission. Applicants will have one month to apply.

The first vacancies will be posted on Oct. 3.

In addition to postings on the website, the judiciary’s twitter feed @PaCourts will tweet openings. Bar associations and law schools across the state will be notified as well so they may include information on their websites and in correspondence with members.

Although the number varies, there are usually approximately 20 vacancies each year. Volunteers are not paid for serving, and the time commitment varies depending on the entity.

More than 180 volunteers sit on Supreme Court panels and have a wide range of responsibilities and functions. Some make recommendations to the court for amendments, revisions or simplification of court procedural rules. Others regulate the practice of law, oversee continuing legal education for lawyers and administer funds to assist individuals unable to pay for legal service.

Some of the groups include:

- Criminal Procedural Rules Committee
- Committee on Rules of Evidence
- Board of Law Examiners
- Continuing Legal Education Board
- Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court
- Interest on Lawyers Trust Account Board

This initiative extends to those who wish to serve on the Judicial Conduct Board of Pennsylvania and the Court of Judicial Discipline, both of which are entities within the Pennsylvania Judiciary but that act independently of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court appoints half of the members to each of these independent entities.

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