



News Release

Colorado Judicial Branch

Monica M. Márquez, Chief Justice
Steven Vasconcellos, State Court Administrator

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Amy Woodward, Media Coordinator
720-550-1194
Amy.Woodward@judicial.state.co.us

7th Judicial District announces San Miguel County Court vacancy ***Commission sets date to select nominees***

The 7th Judicial District Nominating Commission will meet on Feb. 2, 2026, at the Montrose County Justice Center, 1200 North Grand Avenue, Montrose, CO 81401, to interview and select nominees for appointment by the governor to the office of county judge for the 7th Judicial District (San Miguel County). The vacancy was created by the resignation of the Honorable Sean K. Murphy, effective Jan. 9, 2026.

To be eligible, the applicant must be a qualified elector of San Miguel County at the time of investiture and have graduated high school or attained the equivalent of a high school education as indicated by the Department of Education, based upon the record made on the General Education Development test. The annual salary for this position is \$68,250.44, and it is a 35 percent part-time position. The initial term of office of a county judge is a provisional term of two years; thereafter, the incumbent county judge, if approved by the voters, has a term of four years.

Application forms are available from the office of the ex officio chair of the nominating commission, Justice Maria Berkenkotter, 2 E. 14th Ave., Denver, CO 80203, and the

office of the district administrator, Leslie German, at 970-369-3310. Applications are also available on the court's home page at coloradojudicial.gov/careers/judge-opportunities.

The completed application must be emailed to the address listed in the instructions below no later than Jan. 26, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. Late applications will not be considered. Any person wishing to suggest a candidate to fill the vacancy may do so by letter to be submitted to any member of the nominating commission, with a copy to the ex officio chair, no later than Jan. 19, at 4:00 p.m.

The members of the nominating commission for the 7th Judicial District are: Paul Major of Telluride; David Inouye of Hotchkiss; Sally Hays of Gunnison; and Dan Hotsenpiller, Kori Keil Zapletal; and Martha Whitmore, all of Montrose.

Editor's Note: Contact information for the nominating commission members:

- Dan Hotsenpiller, dkhotsenpiller@gmail.com
- Kori Keil Zapletal, kori.zapletal@coloradodefenders.us
- Martha Whitmore, marti@ouraylaw.com
- Paul Major, paul@ruralhomes.co
- David Inouye, dwinouye@gmail.com
- Sally Hays, sally.hays@gmail.com

**JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION
APPLICATION FOR COLORADO STATE COURT JUDGESHIP
PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

Instructions

1. The application form for a Colorado state court judgeship can be found on the Judicial Branch website at coloradojudicial.gov/careers/judge-opportunities complete and thorough in answering the questions. If an answer to any question requires more space than provided, attach a separate page for the question(s). Do not change the margins or font size on the application.
2. Your application materials should be prepared in the following manner:

The application and any attachments must be submitted as a single PDF file with reference letters attached last. The application should be in text searchable format.

You may submit letters of reference from not less than three and no more than five individuals who are able to comment upon your qualifications for a judicial position.

It is preferred that reference letters are included with your application submission. However, if they are submitted directly by the author, they must be submitted by email as described below in paragraph 3. All letters of reference are due by the filing deadline listed in paragraph 4.

3. Your application materials compiled as outlined above should be sent via email with **your name and 7th JD – San Miguel County in the subject line** with your materials attached as outlined above **no later than 4 p.m. on January 26th, 2026** to the following email address:

judicial.applicants@judicial.state.co.us

You should receive an automatic response to your email submission. If you do not, please call the supreme court at the telephone number listed below. Please add this email address to your contacts so that email does not get filtered into your spam.

4. Your application must be received no later than: **4 p.m. on January 26th, 2026.**
5. Call the Colorado Supreme Court Clerk's office with questions: 720-625-5150

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