



# Supreme Court of Illinois

December 3, 2015

## **JUSTICE KILBRIDE SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON APPLICANTS FOR VACANCY IN THE FOURTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

Illinois Supreme Court Justice Thomas L. Kilbride is seeking public comment on three attorneys who have applied to fill a vacancy in the Fourteenth Judicial Circuit.

The vacancy was created by Circuit Judge F. Michael Meersman's retirement, which took effect at the close of business on November 30, 2015. Under the Illinois Constitution, judicial vacancies are filled by Supreme Court appointment. Justice Kilbride uses an extensive application, evaluation, and interview process to make recommendations to the full Court for judicial vacancies in the Third Judicial District.

The process will now proceed to background checks by law enforcement authorities and with the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission. Justice Kilbride will also use a poll of all attorneys residing in the Fourteenth Circuit conducted by the Illinois State Bar Association. The attorneys are surveyed on their opinions of the applicants' integrity, temperament, legal ability, management skills, and other professional qualifications.

Justice Kilbride will appoint a judicial screening committee made up of representatives from the community, including non-lawyers as well as members of the legal profession, to evaluate all of the information. The names of the committee members will be announced at a later date.

**The attorneys who have applied to fill the vacancy are Joseph F. Fackel of Rock Island, Clayton R. Lee of East Moline, and Kathleen E. Mesich of Coal Valley.**

Those wishing to send written comments about the applicants may address them to: Judge Appointment Comments, Fourteenth Judicial Circuit, Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, 3101 Old Jacksonville Road, Springfield, IL 62704. **Comments must arrive by 12 p.m. on December 18, 2015**, and include contact information such as name and address, and should be brief, preferably no more than 250 words.

Notice of the vacancy and the appointment process were posted at various courthouses within the Fourteenth Circuit, which includes Henry, Mercer, Rock Island, and Whiteside counties.

Among qualities an applicant must possess are a demonstrated reputation for integrity and good character; a demonstrated commitment to equal justice under the law; outstanding legal ability and competence; and the appropriate demeanor, character, and personality necessary for the judicial temperament required by a Circuit Court judge.

The person appointed to fill the vacancy will serve until December 5, 2016.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Bethany Krajelis, senior communications specialist to the Illinois Supreme Court, at 312.793.0870.**