

FROM THE OFFICE OF
**GOVERNOR
RON DESANTIS**

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Governor Ron DeSantis Makes 50 Judicial Nominating Commission Appointments

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announces the following appointments and reappointments to Florida's Judicial Nominating Commissions.

Florida Supreme Court Judicial Nominating Commission

Fred Karlinsky, of Weston, is a Shareholder at Greenberg Traurig, LLP. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Miami and his law degree from Florida State University. Karlinsky is reappointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Heather Stearns, of Tallahassee, is the President of Liberty Dental Plan of Florida, Inc. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Miami and her law degree from Florida State University. Stearns is reappointed for a term ending July 1, 2024.

Third District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission

John Meagher, of Coral Gables, is a Managing Partner at Shutts & Bowen, LLP. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of South Florida and his law degree from Georgetown University. Meagher is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Fourth District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission

Jason Hilborn, of Fort Lauderdale, is an Associate at Boies Schiller Flexner, LLP. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and his law degree from Harvard University. Hilborn is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Gregor Schwinghammer, Jr., of West Palm Beach, is a Shareholder at Gunster Yoakley & Stewart, P.A. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia and his law degree from the University of Miami. Schwinghammer is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Casey Walker, of Vero Beach, is a Member at Murphy & Walker, P.L. He received his bachelor's degree from Harvard University and his law degree from the University of Florida. Walker is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

First Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Aaron McCurdy, of Pensacola, is an Attorney at Lloyd, Gray, Whitehead & Monroe, P.C. He received his bachelor's degree from Florida Gulf Coast University and his law degree from Liberty University. McCurdy is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2023.

Second Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

David Axelman, of Tallahassee, is General Counsel of the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation. He received his bachelor's degree from Florida International University and his law degree from the University of Miami. Axelman is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Third Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Billy Washington, of Pinetta, is the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller for Madison County. He received a bachelor's degree from Florida State University. Washington is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

James Willingham, Jr., of Jasper, is the Owner of James Estes Willingham, Jr. Attorney and Counselor at Law. He received his bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Florida. Willingham is reappointed for a term ending July 1, 2024.

Fourth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Courtney Grimm, of Green Cove Springs, is the County Attorney serving the Clay County Board of County Commissioners. She received her bachelor's degree from Sweet Briar College and her law degree from the University of Florida. Grimm is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Patrick Krechowski, of Atlantic Beach, is a Partner at Balch & Bingham, LLP. He received his bachelor's degree from Florida State University and his law degree from Nova Southeastern University. Krechowski is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2023.

Lanny Russell, of Jacksonville, is a Shareholder at Smith Hulsey & Busey. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of South Florida and his law degree from the University of Florida. Russell is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Fifth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Nicole Blumenauer, of Minneola, is the Managing Partner at Blumenauer & Blumenauer, P.A. She received her bachelor's degree from Iowa State University and her law degree from Drake University. Blumenauer is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Robert "Bo" Briggs, of Ocala, is a Partner at The Briggs Law Firm. He received his bachelor's degree from Florida State University and his law degree from Stetson University. Briggs is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2023.

David Ellspermann, of Ocala, is the former Clerk of Court and Comptroller for Marion County. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Georgia and his master's degree from Rollins College. Ellspermann is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2024.

David Jordan, of Mount Dora, is the Lake County Tax Collector. He received his bachelor's degree from Warner University. Jordan is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Richard Mutarelli, Jr., of Ocala, is a Partner at McGraw, Rauba & Mutarelli, P.A. He received his bachelor's degree from Concordia University – Wisconsin and his law degree from Florida Coastal. Mutarelli is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Sixth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Petra Justice, of Land O' Lakes, is a Partner at Banker Lopez Gassler, P.A. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and her law degree from Stetson University. Justice is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Thomas Minkoff, of Pasco County, is a former Sixth Judicial Circuit Court Judge. He received his bachelor's degree from Rutgers University and his law degree from St. Mary's University. Minkoff is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Lindsay Moore, of Trinity, is a Bureau Chief and General Counsel at the Pasco Sheriff's Office. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and her law degree from Florida Coastal. Moore is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Seventh Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Andrew Morgan, of St. Augustine, is an Equity Partner at Canan Law. He received his bachelor's degree from Eckerd College, his master's degree from Winthrop University, and his law degree from Florida Coastal. Morgan is reappointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Eighth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Candice Brower, of Newberry, is the Criminal Conflict and Civil Regional Counsel for the First District Court of Appeal. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and her law degree from Nova Southeastern University. Brower is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Norm Fugate, of Williston, is the President of Norm D. Fugate, P.A. He received his bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Florida. Fugate is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Ninth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Eric Jontz, of Winter Park, is an Associate at Fishback Dominick, LLP. He received his bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College, his master's degree from Rollins College, and his law degree from Emory University. Jontz is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

J. Timothy Schulte, of Winter Park, is a Shareholder and President of Zimmerman Kiser & Sutcliffe, P.A. He received his bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Florida. Shulte is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Tenth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Julie Ball, of Lakeland, is a Partner at Hardin & Ball, P.A. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Florida and her law degree from Florida State University. Ball is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Walt Engle, of Lakeland, is a Senior Attorney at Publix Super Markets, Inc. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and his law degree from Mercer University. Engle is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Nicholas Zbrzezny, of Bartow, is a Managing Member at Southern Atlantic Law Group, PLLC. He received his bachelor's degree from Pennsylvania State University and his law degree from Florida Coastal. Zbrzezny is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Eleventh Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Scott Dimond, of Miami, is a Shareholder at Dimond Kaplan & Rothstein, P.A. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia and his law degree from Columbia University. Dimond is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Robert Fernandez, of Miami, is a Principal Shareholder at Robert H. Fernandez, LLC. He received his bachelor's degree from Columbia University and his law degree from New York University. Fernandez is reappointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Kansas Gooden, of Pinecrest, is a Shareholder at Boyd & Jenerette P.A. She received her bachelor's degree from James Madison University and her law degree from St. Thomas University. Gooden is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Twelfth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Patrick Neal, of Bradenton, is the Chairman of Neal Communities Executive Committee. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania. Neal is reappointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Matthew Hall, of Tampa, is a Shareholder at Hill Ward Henderson, P.A. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts and his law degree from the University of Florida. Hall is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Chad Mizelle, of Tampa, is the Chief Legal Officer at Affinity Partners. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and his law degree from Cornell University. Mizelle is reappointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Diego Pestana, of Tampa, is an Attorney at The Suarez Law Firm. He received his bachelor's degree from Saint Leo University and his law degree from Stetson University. Pestana is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2023.

Fourteenth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Adam Hood, of Lynn Haven, is the President of Adam L. Hood, P.A. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Florida, his master's degree from Western New England University, and his law degree from Florida Coastal. Hood is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

John Maceluch, Jr., of Panama City, is a Partner at Sunshine Legacy Law, PLLC. He received his bachelor's degree from Florida State University and his law degree from Loyola University. Maceluch is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Allen Register, of Chipley, is a former Fourteenth Judicial Circuit Court Judge. He received his bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Florida. Register is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Fifteenth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Eric Levine, of Boca Raton, is a Partner at Atlas Solomon, PLLC. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Cornell University, and his law degree from Harvard University. Levine is appointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Robert Rosenberg, of Highland Beach, is a former Seventeenth Judicial Circuit Court Judge. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and his law degree from the University of Wisconsin. Rosenberg is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

James Sallah, of Boca Raton, is a Partner at Sallah Astarita & Cox, LLC. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Ohio University, and his law degree from the University of Miami. Sallah is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2024.

William Shepherd, of Palm Beach Gardens, is a Partner at Holland & Knight, LLP. He received his bachelor's and law degrees from Georgetown University. Shepherd is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Seventeenth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

William McCormick, of Fort Lauderdale, is a Managing Shareholder at The McCormick Law Firm, PLLC. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and his law degree from St. Thomas University. McCormick is reappointed for a term ending July 1, 2026.

John Richards, of Fort Lauderdale, is a Partner at Boyd Richards Parker and Colonnelli. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and his law degree from Stetson University. Richards is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Alice Sum, of Pembroke Pines, is an Attorney at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. She received her bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Florida. Sum is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Eighteenth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

John Knutton, of Longwood, is the General Counsel to the Seminole County Clerk of Court and Comptroller. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Toronto and his law degree from Barry University. Knutton is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

R. Scott Robinson, of Melbourne, is a Shareholder at Eisenmenger, Robinson, Blau & Peters, P.A. He received his bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Florida.

Robinson is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Nineteenth Judicial Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission

Elizabeth Hunter, of Palm City, is the Owner of Hunter Law and Mediations, PLLC. She received her bachelor's degree from Rollins College and her law degree from Barry University. Hunter is appointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

Robert Schwerer, of Fort Pierce, is a Managing Shareholder at Hayskar Walker Schwerer Dundas & McCain, P.A. He received his bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Florida. Schwerer is reappointed from a list of nominees recommended by the Florida Bar for a term ending July 1, 2026.

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