

**TENTH CIRCUIT JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION  
POLK COUNTY COURT JUDGE VACANCY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 25, 2020

CONTACT: **Lydia S. Zbrzezny, Chair**  
Tenth Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission  
(863) 656-6672

BARTOW – The Tenth Circuit Judicial Nominating Commission has been asked to provide Governor Ron DeSantis with nominees for the vacancy on the Polk County Court created by the elevation of **Judge Jennifer Swenson** to the Tenth Circuit Court.

The Commission requests that interested candidates submit an application for consideration. Applicants must meet the qualifications for county court judges described in Article V, Section 8 of the Florida Constitution.

Applicants must submit two (2) copies of their application by **5:00 pm on Friday, October 9, 2020**, as follows:

(1): The original unredacted application shall be emailed in .pdf format to: [lydia@southernatlanticlaw.com](mailto:lydia@southernatlanticlaw.com).

(2): A redacted .pdf of the application shall be emailed to [lydia@southernatlanticlaw.com](mailto:lydia@southernatlanticlaw.com). Personal information not subject to public disclosure—such as the social security number—shall be redacted as permitted by Section 119.071 of the Florida Statutes.

**Untimely applications will not be considered.** The filename for .pdf applications should be as follows “20.10.09 FIRSTNAME LASTNAME County Application (redacted /unredacted).”

Applications may be downloaded from the Florida Bar’s website at [www.flabar.org](http://www.flabar.org) and the Office of the Governor at [www.flgov.com](http://www.flgov.com).

**NOTE TO APPLICANTS:** To assist the Judicial Nominating Commission in its review of applications, all questions must be fully and completely answered. Applications must include current contact information, including e-mail addresses, for judges, co-counsel, opposing counsel, and references to facilitate the background investigation that will be conducted by the members of the Commission.

**TENTH CIRCUIT JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION MEMBERS**

<p>Lydia S. Zbrzezny (<i>Chair</i>)          Southern Atlantic Law Group, PLLC          99 Sixth Street SW          Winter Haven, FL 33880          Tel.: 863-656-6672  <a href="mailto:lydia@southernatlanticlaw.com">lydia@southernatlanticlaw.com</a></p>	<p>Krista Mahalak (<i>Vice-Chair</i>)          Peterson &amp; Myers, P.A.          242 West Central Avenue          Winter Haven, FL 33880          Tel.: 863-294-3360  <a href="mailto:kmahalak@petersonmyers.com">kmahalak@petersonmyers.com</a></p>
<p>Patrice F. Behnstedt          Office of the Public Defender          Polk County Courthouse 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor          P.O. Box 9000          Bartow, FL 33831-9000          Tel.: 863-534-4200  <a href="mailto:pbehnstedt@pd10.org">pbehnstedt@pd10.org</a></p>	<p>Benjamin W. Hardin, Jr.          Hardin &amp; Ball, P.A.          P.O. Box 3604          Lakeland, FL 33802-3604          Tel.: 863-688-5200  <a href="mailto:bwhardin@hardinpalaw.com">bwhardin@hardinpalaw.com</a></p>
<p>Frederick J. Murphy, Jr.          Boswell &amp; Dunlap, LLP          245 S. Central Avenue          Bartow, FL 33830          Tel.: 863-533-7117  <a href="mailto:fjm@bosdun.com">fjm@bosdun.com</a></p>	<p>Edward Blake Paul          Peterson &amp; Myers, P.A.          P.O. Box 24628          Lakeland, FL 33802-4628          Tel.: 863-683-6511  <a href="mailto:bpaul@petersonmyers.com">bpaul@petersonmyers.com</a></p>
<p>Robert S. Swaine          Swaine &amp; Harris, P.A.          425 S. Commerce Avenue          Sebring, FL 33870          Tel.: 863-385-1549  <a href="mailto:bob@heartlandlaw.com">bob@heartlandlaw.com</a></p>	<p>Richard E. Straughn          Straughn &amp; Turner, P.A.          255 Magnolia Avenue SW          Winter Haven, FL 33880          Tel: 863-293-1184  <a href="mailto:Rstraughn@straughnturner.com">Rstraughn@straughnturner.com</a></p>
<p>Nicholas T. Zbrzezny          Southern Atlantic Law Group, PLLC          99 Sixth Street SW          Winter Haven, FL 33880          Tel.: 863-656-6672  <a href="mailto:nick@southernatlanticlaw.com">nick@southernatlanticlaw.com</a></p>	