

Equal Justice Foundation

2020 Colorado Judicial Performance Evaluations

EJF Evaluations Based On Attorney Judgments

2020 Judicial Performance Commission Evaluation						2020 EJF Evaluation Based on Attorney Votes	
Judge	Finding	Attorney Votes		Prior Rating			
		Retain	Do Not Retain	Attorney % Retain			
Colorado Supreme Court							
					Prior 2010		2020
Melissa Hart	Meets Standards	90%	5%	Not on bench		Retain	
Carlos A Samour, Jr.	Meets Standards	69%	13%	67%	Do Not Retain	Do Not Retain	
Colorado Court of Appeals							
					Prior 2012		2020
Ted C. Tow III	Meets Standards	66%	31%	90%	Retain	Do Not Retain	
Craig R. Welling	Meets Standards	84%	16%	93%	Retain	Marginal	
First Judicial District Judges (Gilpin, Jefferson)							
District Judges					Prior 2014		2020
Randall C. Arp	Meets Standards	88%	9%	79%	Marginal	Retain	
Ann Gail Meinster	Meets Standards	88%	8%	80%	Marginal	Retain	
Lily Oeffler	Meets Standards	85%	11%	88%	Retain	Marginal	
Tamara Russell	Meets Standards	66%	24%	87%	Retain	Do Not Retain	
Christopher Zenisek	Meets Standards	74%	17%	84%	Marginal	Marginal	
No Gilpin County judge stood for retention in 2020.							
Jefferson County					Prior 2016		2020
Bradley Allen Burback	Meets Standards	88%	6%	80%	Marginal	Retain	
Verna Lee Carpenter	Meets Standards	64%	24%	70%	Do Not Retain	Do Not Retain	
K. J. Moore	Meets Standards	80%	10%	68%	Do Not Retain	Marginal	
Harold Sargent	Meets Standards	78%	11%	Not on bench		Marginal	
<p>Criteria: Retain >85% of attorneys, Marginal 71-85% of attorneys, Do Not Retain <=70% of attorneys. All judges first stand for retention two years after their appointment or promotion. Retention intervals: Supreme Court — 10 years; Court of Appeals — 8 years; District — 6 years; County — 4 years. Copies of this report are available at http://dvmen.org/PDF/2020_Judicial_Performance_Evaluations.pdf.</p>							

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Judge	Finding	Attorney Votes		Prior Rating		
		Retain	Do Not Retain	Attorney % Retain		
Second Judicial District Judges (Denver County)						
District Judges				Prior 2014		2020
Christopher J. Baumann	Meets Standards	87%	4%	Not on bench		Retain
Martin Foster Egelhoff	Meets Standards	87%	9%	70%	Do Not Retain	Retain
John Eric Eliff	Meets Standards	83%	17%	93%	Retain	Marginal
A. Bruce Jones	Meets Standards	77%	23%	90%	Retain	Marginal
Michael J. Vallejos	Meets Standards	84%	10%	81%	Marginal	Marginal
Probate Court						
Elizabeth D. Leith	Meets Standards	91%	2%	75%	Marginal	Retain
Denver County Judges				Prior 2016		2020
Beth Ann Faragher	Meets Standards	88%	13%	84%	Marginal	Retain
Isabel Pallares	Meets Standards	30%	50%	Not on bench		Do Not Retain
Nicole M. Rodarte	Meets Standards	74%	22%	90%	Retain	Marginal
Andre L. Rudolph	Meets Standards	63%	13%	Undetermined		Do Not Retain
Barry A Schwarz	Meets Standards	68%	23%	Not on bench		Do Not Retain
Frances E. Simonet	Meets Standards	92%	8%	Not on bench		Retain
Theresa Spahn	Meets Standards	67%	33%	100%	Retain	Do Not Retain
Third Judicial District Judges (Huerfano, Las Animas)						
No District or County Court Judges standing for retention in 2020.						
Fourth Judicial District Judges (El Paso, Teller)						
District Judges				Prior 2014		2020
William Bain	Meets Standards	100%	0%	89%	Retain	Retain
Jann Dubois	Meets Standards	91%	3%	90%	Retain	Retain
Thomas Kelly Kane	Meets Standards	89%	11%	90%	Retain	Retain
Michael Paul McHenry	Meets Standards	97%	3%	85%	Marginal	Retain
David Prince	Meets Standards	90%	7%	81%	Marginal	Retain
Erin L. Sokol	Meets Standards	95%	5%	Not on bench		Retain
Gregory R. Werner	Meets Standards	57%	38%	76%	Marginal	Do Not Retain
Criteria: Retain >85% of attorneys, Marginal 71-85% of attorneys, Do Not Retain <=70% of attorneys. All judges first stand for retention two years after their appointment or promotion. Retention intervals: Supreme Court — 10 years; Court of Appeals — 8 years; District — 6 years; County — 4 years. Copies of this report are available at http://dvmen.org/PDF/2020 Judicial Performance Evaluations.pdf.						

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		Retain	Do Not Retain	Attorney % Retain		
El Paso County Judges (4th Judicial District, continued)				Prior 2016		2020
Laura Norris Findorff	Meets Standards	86%	14%	96%	Retain	Retain
Shannon Gerhart	Meets Standards	95%	5%	Not on bench		Retain
No Teller County judges standing for retention in 2020						
Fifth Judicial District Judges (Clear Creek, Eagle, Lake, Summit)						
District Judges				Prior 2014		2020
Russell Holton Granger	Meets Standards	86%	11%	80%	Marginal	Retain
Mark Duncan Thompson	Meets Standards	100%	0%	96%	Retain	Retain
Clear Creek County Judge				Prior 2016		2020
Cynthia J. Jones	Meets Standards	100%	0%	Not on bench		Retain
Eagle County Judge				Prior 2016		2020
Rachel Olgun-Fresquez	Meets Standards	85%	12%	94%	Retain	Marginal
Lake County Judge				Prior 2016		2020
Jonathan Shams	Meets Standards	100%	0%	85%	Marginal	Retain
Summit County Judge				Prior 2016		2020
Edward Jude Casias	Meets Standards	96%	4%	94%	Retain	Retain
Sixth Judicial District Judges (Archuleta, La Plata, San Juan)						
District Judges				Prior 2014		2020
Suzanne F. Carlson	Meets Standards	71%	21%	79%	Marginal	Low Marginal
Todd Parker Norvell	Meets Standards	87%	9%	Not on bench		Retain
Archuleta County Judge						
No Archuleta County Judge stood for retention in 2020.						
La Plata County						
No La Plata County Judge stood for retention in 2020.						
San Juan County				Prior 2016		2020
Anthony D. Edwards	Meets Standards	100%	0%	Undetermined		Retain
<p>Criteria: Retain >85% of attorneys, Marginal 71-85% of attorneys, Do Not Retain <=70% of attorneys. All judges first stand for retention two years after their appointment or promotion. Retention intervals: Supreme Court — 10 years; Court of Appeals — 8 years; District — 6 years; County — 4 years. Copies of this report are available at http://dymen.org/PDF/2020_Judicial_Performance_Evaluations.pdf.</p>						

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Judge	Finding	Attorney Votes		Prior Rating		
		Retain	Do Not Retain	Attorney % Retain		
Seventh Judicial District Judges (Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, San Miguel)						
District Judges				Prior 2014		2020
Mary E. Deganhart	Meets standards	93%	7%	86%	Retain	Retain
D. Cory Jackson	Meets standards	87%	0%	Not on bench		Retain
J. Steven Patrick	Meets standards	97%	0%	88%	Retain	Retain
Gunnison County Judge				Prior 2016		2020
Ashley M. Burgemeister	Meets standards	82%	18%	Not on bench		Marginal
Montrose County Judge				Prior 2016		2020
Kurt M. Beckenhauer	Meets standards	100%	0%			Retain
Ouray County Judge				Prior 2016		2020
Zachary D. Martin	Meets standards	100%	0%	Not on bench		Retain
No county court judges standing for retention in Delta, Hinsdale, or San Miguel counties						
Eighth Judicial District Judges (Jackson, Larimer)						
District Court Judges				Prior 2014		2020
Susan Blanco	Meets standards	88%	4%	Not on bench		Retain
Julie Kunce Field	Meets standards	94%	4%	79%	Marginal	Retain
Stephen John Jouard	Meets standards	98%	0%	Not on bench		Retain
Juan G. Villaseñor	Meets standards	68%	29%	Not on bench		Do Not Retain
Larimer County Judges				Prior 2016		2020
Mary Joan Berenatio	Meets standards	75%	9%	70%	Do Not Retain	Very Marginal
Kraig Ecton	Meets standards	86%	14%	62%	Do Not Retain	Retain
Joshua B. Lehman	Meets standards	94%	3%	96%	Retain	Retain
No Jackson County Judges standing for retention in 2020.						
Ninth Judicial District Judges (Garfield, Pitkin, Rio Blanco)						
District Judges				Prior 2014		2020
Denise K. Lynch	Meets standards	86%	8%	79%	Marginal	Retain
No county judges in the 9th Judicial District standing for retention in 2020.						
<p>Criteria: Retain >85% of attorneys, Marginal 71-85% of attorneys, Do Not Retain <=70% of attorneys. All judges first stand for retention two years after their appointment or promotion. Retention intervals: Supreme Court — 10 years; Court of Appeals — 8 years; District — 6 years; County — 4 years. Copies of this report are available at http://dymen.org/PDF/2020_Judicial_Performance_Evaluations.pdf.</p>						

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Judge	Finding	Attorney Votes		Prior Rating		
		Retain	Do Not Retain	Attorney % Retain		
Tenth Judicial District Judges (Pueblo)						
District Judges				Prior 2014		2020
William D. Alexander	Meets Standards	81%	14%	84%	Marginal	Marginal
Allison P. Ernst	Meets Standards	80%	10%	Not on bench		Marginal
Pueblo County Judges				Prior 2016		2020
Roberto A. Silva	Meets Standards	100%	0%	Not on bench		Retain
Eleventh Judicial District Judges (Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, Park)						
No district judges standing for retention in the Eleventh Judicial District						
No county court judges standing for retention in Chaffee, Fremont, or Park counties						
Twelfth Judicial District Judges (Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, Saguache)						
District Judges				Prior 2014		2020
Michael A. Gonzales	Meets Standards	100%	0%	81%	Marginal	Retain
Amanda C. Hopkins	Meets Standards	89%	11%	Not on bench		Retain
Conejos County Judge				Prior 2016		2020
Kimberly D. Cortez	Meets Standards	100%	0%			Retain
Mineral County Judge				Prior 2016		2020
Ruth Acheson	Meets Standards	100%	0%	80%	Marginal	Retain
No Alamosa, Costilla, Rio Grande, or Saguache County Judges stood for retention in 2020.						
Thirteenth Judicial District Judges (Kit Carson, Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Yuma)						
District Judges				Prior 2014		2020
Kevin Lee Hoyer	Meets Standards	88%	6%	77%	Marginal	Retain
Logan County Judge				Prior 2016		2020
Ray Ann Brammer	Meets Standards	88%	12%			Retain
Phillips County Judge				Prior 2016		2020
Klmbra L. Killin	Meets Standards	75%	25%	Undetermined		Marginal
<p>Criteria: Retain >85% of attorneys, Marginal 71-85% of attorneys, Do Not Retain <=70% of attorneys. All judges first stand for retention two years after their appointment or promotion. Retention intervals: Supreme Court — 10 years; Court of Appeals — 8 years; District — 6 years; County — 4 years. Copies of this report are available at http://dymen.org/PDF/2020_Judicial_Performance_Evaluations.pdf.</p>						

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		Retain	Do Not Retain	Attorney % Retain		
Sedgwick County Judge (Thirteenth Judicial District cont.)					Prior 2016	2020
James Craig Dolezal	Does Not Meet Standards	67%	33%	Not on bench		Do Not Retain
Yuma County					Prior 2016	2020
Kristei Ray Jones	Meets Standards	67%	33%	Not on bench		Do Not Retain
No county court judges standing for retention in Kit Carson, Morgan, or Washington counties						
Fourteenth Judicial District Judges (Grand, Moffat, Routt)						
No District Court judges standing for retention						
No Grand, Moffat, or Routt county judges standing for retention						
Fifteenth Judicial District Judges (Baca, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Prowers)						
No District Court judges standing for retention						
No County Court judges standing for retention in Baca, Cheyenne, Kiowa, or Prowers counties						
Sixteenth Judicial District Judges (Bent, Crowley, Otero)						
No District Court Judges standing for retention in 2020.						
Bent County Judge					Prior 2016	2020
Samuel Scott Vigil	Meets Standards	100%	0%	71%	Do Not Retain	Retain
Crowley County Judge					Prior 2016	2020
Richard Medina	Meets Standards	No data		Not on bench		Undetermined
No county judges seeking retention in Otero County						
Seventeenth Judicial District Judges (Adams, Broomfield)						
District Judges					Prior 2014	2020
Tomee Crespin	Does Not Meet Standards	49%	33%	Not on bench		Do Not Retain
Caryn A. Datz	Meets Standards	85%	8%	Not on bench		High-end marginal
Sean Patrick Finn	Meets Standards	88%	8%	Not on bench		Retain
Robert W. Kiesnowski, Jr.	Meets Standards	83%	13%	84%	Marginal	Marginal
Priscilla Loew	Meets Standards	77%	14%	Not on bench		Marginal
Roberto Ramirez	Meets Standards	63%	19%	Not on bench		Do Not Retain
Mark Douglas Warner	Meets Standards	75%	19%	87%	Retain	Marginal
<p>Criteria: Retain >85% of attorneys, Marginal 71-85% of attorneys, Do Not Retain <=70% of attorneys. All judges first stand for retention two years after their appointment or promotion. Retention intervals: Supreme Court — 10 years; Court of Appeals — 8 years; District — 6 years; County — 4 years. Copies of this report are available at http://dymen.org/PDF/2020_Judicial_Performance_Evaluations.pdf.</p>						

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		Retain	Do Not Retain	Attorney % Retain			
Adams County Judges (Seventeenth Judicial District cont.)					Prior 2016		2020
Martin J. Flaum	Meets Standards	92%	4%	Not on bench		Retain	
Leroy. D. Kirby	Meets Standards	89%	11%	86%	Retain	Retain	
No Broomfield County judges standing for retention in 2020.							
Eighteenth Judicial District Judges (Arapahoe, Douglas, Elbert, Lincoln)							
District Court Judges					Prior 2014		2020
Michelle Ann Amico	Meets Standards	95%	0%	88%	Retain	Retain	
Andrew Baum	Meets Standards	62%	38%	Not on bench		Do Not Retain	
Cynthia Dianne Mares	Meets Standards	56%	35%	Not on bench		Do Not Retain	
John E. Scipione	Meets Standards	88%	13%	Not evaluated		Retain	
Theresa Michelle Slade	Meets Standards	89%	6%	70%	Do Not Retain	Retain	
Darren L. Vahle	Meets Standards	86%	10%	75%	Marginal	Retain	
Elizabeth Beebe Volz	Meets Standards	86%	10%	57%	Do Not Retain	Retain	
Arapahoe County Judges					Prior 2016		2020
Chantel E. Contiguglia	Meets Standards	86%	11%	Not on bench		Retain	
Anne M. Ollada	Meets Standards	77%	16%	56%	Do Not Retain	Marginal	
Joshua Jay Williford	Meets Standards	90%	10%	Not on bench		Retain	
No Douglas, Elbert, or Lincoln county judges standing for retention in 2020.							
Nineteenth Judicial District Judges (Weld)							
District Judges					Prior 2014		2020
Timothy G. Kerns	Meets Standards	95%	5%	78%	Marginal	Retain	
Marcelo Adrian Kopcow	Meets Standards	82%	13%	75%	Marginal	Marginal	
No Weld County Judges standing for retention in 2020.							
Twentieth Judicial District Judges (Boulder)							
District Judges					Prior 2014		2020
Ingrid Seftar Bakke	Meets Standards	97%	3%	89%	Retain	Retain	
Patrick D. Butler	Meets Standards	78%	11%	79%	Marginal	Marginal	
Judith L. LaBuda	Meets Standards	72%	25%	68%	Do Not Retain	Marginal	
Nancy W. Salomone	Meets Standards	88%	6%	Not on bench		Retain	
Criteria: Retain >85% of attorneys, Marginal 71-85% of attorneys, Do Not Retain <=70% of attorneys. All judges first stand for retention two years after their appointment or promotion. Retention intervals: Supreme Court — 10 years; Court of Appeals — 8 years; District — 6 years; County — 4 years. Copies of this report are available at http://dvmen.org/PDF/2020 Judicial Performance Evaluations.pdf.							

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		Retain	Do Not Retain	Attorney % Retain			
Boulder County Judge (Twentieth Judicial District cont.)					Prior 2016		2020
Jonathon P. Martin	Meets Standards	81%	16%	Not on bench		Marginal	
Twenty-First Judicial District Judges (Mesa)							
District Court Judge					Prior 2014		2020
Brian J. Flynn	Meets Standards	67%	21%	73%	Do Not Retain	Do Not Retain	
Gretchen B. Larson	Meets Standards	91%	6%	84%	Marginal	Retain	
Mesa County Judge					Prior 2016		2020
Michael J. Grattan III	Meets Standards	82%	4%	Not on bench		Marginal	
Craig Peter Henderson	Meets Standards	81%	4%	72%	Do Not Retain	Marginal	
Twenty-Second Judicial District Judges (Dolores, Montezuma)							
No district court judges standing for retention in 2020							
No county court judges standing for retention in Dolores or Montezuma counties in 2020.							
<p>Criteria: Retain >85% of attorneys, Marginal 71-85% of attorneys, Do Not Retain <=70% of attorneys. All judges first stand for retention two years after their appointment or promotion. Retention intervals: Supreme Court — 10 years; Court of Appeals — 8 years; District — 6 years; County — 4 years. Copies of this report are available at http://dymen.org/PDF/2020_Judicial_Performance_Evaluations.pdf.</p>							

Notes

The table above is intended as brief reference to help voters decide how to vote on state judges in their judicial district who are standing for retention in November 2020.

The official [judicial performance commission evaluations](#) for state judges dates back to 1990. They have been posting percentages of attorney votes for and against a judge since 2000, and the EJF has been producing a biennial review based on the state evaluations since 2012 using the attorney votes.

Note that magistrates serve at the pleasure of the chief judge of the judicial district and are not considered state judges and; thus, are not evaluated here.

Our objective with these reports is to support the many outstanding judges who serve Colorado citizens while helping voters decide to eliminate those who are unfit for the position they hold. The basic assumption we've made is that the prosecutors, defense, and civil litigation attorneys know the judges in their judicial district best. They are the ones who deal with the judges on a daily basis and have the education and experience to judge the judges. As a result, the [Equal Justice Foundation](#) evaluation is based entirely on how these attorneys voted on a particular judge; a simple and easily understood metric that is reasonably consistent across the state. In essence, attorneys are a jury of the judge's peers.

The commissions collect more data than just attorney votes but seldom rule against judges. In 2020, of 102 judges standing for retention, the political appointees of the various commissions only ruled that two of the state's judges did not meet acceptable performance standards.

However, as a general rule, in any large organization it is reasonable to expect that roughly 10% of the individuals in the organization will be incompetent, drunkards, mentally or physically unfit, crooks, or

otherwise unsuitable. Using attorney ratings we suggest there are a total of 15 judges who should not be retained. But, by the same metrics, attorneys rank 15 judges as outstanding.

Of course, sex always rears its lovely head, but copulating with the prosecutor in the judge's chambers, or trying to make a date from the bench with the cutie standing before the bar does exceed the limits of propriety. On the EJF web site in the [Colorado Judges — Citizen's Review](#) chapter we have documented all of those behaviors, and more, by one or more judges. Further, politics, religion, and ideology have no place in a fair and impartial courtroom and a judge's ruling must not be based on emotions and feelings.

If you would like to go sit in a judge's courtroom and form your own opinion we have [courtwatcher forms](#) available that should be of some assistance to you in that endeavor. We link appropriately completed courtwatcher forms to the judge's name on our [web site](#).

Additional copies of this report are available [on the web](#) at [http://dvmen.org/PDF/2020 Judicial Performance Evaluations.pdf](http://dvmen.org/PDF/2020%20Judicial%20Performance%20Evaluations.pdf).

However, the final decision is in the hands of the voters and we hope this document is a useful tool for helping them decide which jurists they want to keep on the bench and, more particularly, helping to remove those who have not met the high standards so essential for justice.

Support for the Equal Justice Foundation

We would be amiss if we did not conclude with a plea for support for our work. The [Equal Justice Foundation](#) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) public charity and contributions are tax deductible. It should be obvious that there are many costs to doing research like this on a continuing basis. However, **the Foundation has no paid employees** so all of your support goes into helping with the research and dissemination of same. We note with pride that during 2019 the research and stories on our web sites was accessed by an average 2,000 unique visitors a day by people in every state and at least 180 other countries. Our work is also commonly reposted on other sites all around the world as well.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would donate whatever you can [online](#) or by sending a check to the address below. If interested in helping with our work, or joining the Foundation, that can be done [online](#) as well, or by printing and filling out the form [available here](#) and mailing it to the address below together with a check or money order for your dues. Dues are just \$25/year, which are not onerous, and there is strength in numbers.