

**ALLEGHENY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AUTHORIZATION**

As a candidate or potential candidate for Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, the Pennsylvania Appellate Courts or the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania, I hereby acknowledge and authorize the procedures of the Allegheny County Bar Association Committee on the Judiciary, including the following:

1. If I become a candidate, the Allegheny County Bar Association Committee on the Judiciary will make available to the public the Questionnaire, Supplemental Questionnaire and my responses, except for the questions and responses which are acknowledged to be confidential, which information shall remain available only to the Committee.
2. My responses are provided without breaching client confidentiality as embodied in Rule 1.6 of the Rules of Professional Conduct.
3. If I become a candidate, the rating assigned to me by the Committee will be publicly announced. The Committee's rating of any person shall expire two (2) years from the date on which the person's evaluation was completed; provided, however, when the rating period expires during the year of a Municipal Election cycle, the rating shall expire on December 31, of that year.
4. Should I receive a *Not Recommended at this time* or *Unqualified* rating the Committee will endeavor to notify me prior to a public announcement. If I withdraw from the race, the rating will not be announced and the questionnaires will not be published.
5. I hereby authorize the Pennsylvania Judicial Conduct Board, the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Board of Law Examiners to transmit my entire file and record, including confidential information contained therein, to the Allegheny County Bar Association Committee on the Judiciary. I hereby specifically waive any confidentiality rights I may have in those records.
6. I hereby authorize the Judicial Conduct Board, the Disciplinary Board, and the Board of Law Examiners, or the equivalent, in any jurisdiction where I have practiced, been admitted to practice or have applied to either take a bar examination or for admission to the bar to transmit my entire file and record, including confidential information contained therein, to the Allegheny County Bar Association Committee on the Judiciary. I hereby specifically waive any confidentiality rights I may have in those records.
7. The Allegheny County Bar Association Committee on the Judiciary may change, during the course of my campaign for office, the original rating assigned to me for cause.

**Mikhail N. Pappas**

Type or print name



Signature

**3.23.21**

Date

**ALLEGHENY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE  
FOR APPLICANTS CURRENTLY ON THE BENCH**

**I am seeking a rating for the following court:**

- ☒ Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas
- ☐ Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court
- ☐ Pennsylvania Superior Court
- ☐ Pennsylvania Supreme Court
- ☐ United States District Court for Western District of Pennsylvania
- ☐ United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

**1. State your full name:** Mikhail Nikolaus Pappas

**Have you ever been known by any other name? If so, please list.**

No.

**2. Office address (include zip code):**

District Court 05-2-31  
5750 Baum Blvd.  
Pittsburgh PA, 15206.  
Tel: 412.404.5914

**Name of law firm, if associated:** Mikhail N. Pappas d/b/a Mikhail N. Pappas, Esq.

**3. Date and place of birth:**

**Date:** September 18, 1981

**Place:** Pittsburgh, PA

**4. Are you a naturalized citizen? If so, give date and place of naturalization:**

N/A

**5. Family status:**

- a) **Are you married? If so, state the date of marriage and your spouse's full name, including maiden name, if applicable:**

**Married:** Yes

**Date of Marriage:** December 31, 2011

**Current and Maiden Name of Spouse:** Dr. Paola Corti, PhD

- b) **Have you been divorced? If so, state the date, the number of the case and the court:**

No.

**6. Have you had any military service? If so,**

- a) **Give dates, branch of service, rank of rate, and present status:**

No.

- b) **Have you ever been rejected or released from any of the armed services for reasons other than honorable? If so, give details:**

No.

**7. List each college and law school you attended, including dates of attendance, and the degrees awarded and, if you left any institution without receiving a degree, the reason for leaving. List scholastic honors:**

Lehigh University

- Graduation Year: 2004
- Degree: B.A.
- Major: American Studies
- Minor: Economics

University of Pittsburgh School of Law

- Graduation Year: 2014
- Degree: J.D.
- Certificate: Comparative and International Law

**8. List all jurisdictions in which you have applied to take a bar examination, have applied for admission or have been admitted to practice. Include dates of admissions and if not admitted, give application dates and explain the outcome.**

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (admitted October 2014)

U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania (admitted 2015)

U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania (admitted 2015)

**9. Describe chronologically your law practice and experience after your graduation from law school and until you became a member of the judiciary, including:**

- a) **Whether you served as clerk to a judge and, if so, the name of the judge, the court, and the dates of the period you were a clerk:**

I have not served as a clerk to a judge since graduating from law school. During the summer after my 1L year I earned externship credits serving as a clerk to the Honorable

Joseph K. Williams (Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County – Criminal Division).

**b) Whether you practiced alone and, if so, the addresses and the dates:**

Mikhail N. Pappas, Esquire, Pittsburgh, PA  
*Owner*, October 2014 - Present  
P.O. Box 4951  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

**c) The dates, names and addresses of law firms or offices, companies or governmental agencies with which you have been connected and the nature of your connection with each:**

Pennsylvania League of Young Voters, Pittsburgh, PA (inactive)  
*Deputy Field Director, Field and Policy Director*, January 2006 – June 2008

Teens Against Senseless Violence, Pittsburgh PA (inactive)  
*Founding Board President, Mentor*, January 2007 – June 2010

Office of Pennsylvania State Senator Jim Ferlo (Retired), Pittsburgh, PA  
*Legislative Assistant, Policy Director*, July 2008 – May 2014

Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas – Criminal Division, Pittsburgh, PA  
*Law Clerk*, May – July 2012

Office of the Public Defender of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh, PA  
*Law Clerk*, July – September 2012

Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA  
*Law Clerk*, May – August 2013

Defenders' Fund, LLC dba Legal Means (inactive)  
*Owner, Managing Member*, May 2014 - Present  
P.O. Box 4951  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Shrager Defense Attorneys  
*Law Clerk*, January 2015 – April 2015  
427 Grant St., Ste. 617  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Gross & Patterson, LLC  
*Associate Attorney*, May 2015 – November 2017  
*Of Counsel*, December 2017 – December 2018  
707 Grant St., Ste. 707  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

**d) Any other relevant particulars:**

Before I became a magisterial district judge, I had a varied and multidisciplinary law practice that focused in the areas of innocence defense and civil rights. I practiced in Courts of Common Pleas throughout western Pennsylvania, mostly in Criminal and Civil Divisions and to some extent in Family and Orphans' Divisions. I personally prepared and argued appeals before the state Superior Court and the state Supreme Court. I represented plaintiffs in employment discrimination matters before local and state Human Relations Commissions, and before the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. I also represented debtors in Chapter 7 and Chapter 13 cases before the federal Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

Since becoming a district judge, I have been winding down my practice in order to give first priority to my judicial duties. Unlike many district judges who maintain their practices, I have chosen to not accept any new clients since becoming a judge. I decided to, for as long as I am a judge, dedicate all of my lived experience, professional experience, legal experience and passion for the law to promoting public confidence in the judiciary. By way of just a few examples:

- In May 2019, I provided studied Comment to Proposed Amendment of Pa.Rs.Crim.P. 542, 543, and 1003. My Comment expressed concern regarding the Criminal Procedural Rules Committee's proposal to replace the term "*prima facie*" with the term "probable cause" throughout these Rules. Enclosed as attachment "A" please find a copy of this Comment
- Also in 2019, by motion of Magisterial District Judge Richard King and by second of Magisterial District Judge David Barton, I was appointed by the unanimous vote of all members present of the Allegheny County chapter of the Special Court Judges Association of Pennsylvania, to serve as their liaison to the Criminal Litigation Section of the Allegheny County Bar Association. I sought this appointment to strengthen the relationship between the minor judiciary of Allegheny County and the ACBA
- In November 2020, as part of my involvement with the national initiative Cities and Counties for Fine and Fee Justice, I hosted a Fine and Fee Justice workshop where persons who had defaulted on summary court debt could attend their Payment Determination Hearings without fear or risk of arrest. Qualified participants were provided with the opportunity to sign up with community service and financial counseling providers that were present at the time. Pro bono counsel also participated

At my request President Judge Clark entered an Administrative Order in support of the Workshop. This Order authorized me to accept summary pleas and hold Payment Determination Hearings in Pittsburgh Municipal Court-cases from my district court office during the Workshop. This expanded the reach of the Workshop to include traffic and other summary matters from throughout the City of Pittsburgh. On the day of the workshop, over \$5,000.00 in summary court debt was converted into over 200 hours of community service. I am now working with court administration, my colleagues in the minor judiciary, community partners and the national Fine and Fee Justice Center to expand this workshop-concept, which could significantly contribute to the more equitable administration of justice in Allegheny County<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Juliette Rihl, Fine and Fee Workshop helps Pittsburghers Satisfy Court Debt Through Restorative Approach, {00072799.DOCX}4

- Over the past couple of years I have worked with community stakeholders and court administration to help expand the pool of available court approved alternative adjudication programs in the magisterial district that I represent and throughout Allegheny County. This program is pursuant to 42 Pa. C.S. § 1520. To date I have helped over ten organizations gain approval and one of them received a grant for \$150,000.00 as part of their involvement with the program
- Enclosed as attachment “B” please find a letter of support from Assistant Professor of Law Judith Teeter of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and attorney Selina Shultz of The Conflict Lab regarding our successful efforts to expand access to community mediation as an alternative to litigation for landlords and tenants
- In terms of criminal law:
  - I anticipated and ruled consistent with the recent and highly influential decision in *Commonwealth v. McClelland*, 233 A.3d 717 (Pa. 2020) (holding that due process forbids the Commonwealth from establishing a *prima facie* case based on hearsay evidence alone)
  - The insightful guidance that I provided based on my knowledge of the law was noted in the even more recent decision of *Commonwealth v. Davis*, 242 A.2d 923, 926-927 (Pa. Super 2020) (noting that after permitting the parties to place their respective positions on the record, I granted the Commonwealth’s request for a postponement and “advised the parties to bring the issue before the court of common pleas”)
  - For further illustration, enclosed as attachment “C” please find a letter of support from attorney Randall H. McKinney, Esquire
- Just last week (March 18, 2021), I was invited to provide Comment before the Pennsylvania House Democratic Policy Committee on the Elimination of Cash Bail in Pennsylvania. Enclosed as attachment “D” please find my full Comment before the Committee

**10. a) What was the general character of your practice, dividing it into periods with dates if its character changed over the years?**

As described above, my practice primarily focused in the areas of innocence defense and civil rights litigation (2014-2017). My practice areas expanded to civil litigation and debtor-side federal bankruptcy matters while I was an Associate Attorney and Of Counsel with Gross & Patterson, LLC (2015 – 2017). As described below, a portion of my practice was devoted to appellate advocacy as well.

**b) Describe your typical clients and mention the areas, if any, in which you concentrated your practice:**

My typical clients were defendants in criminal cases, persons of color and gender non-conforming persons who were victims of employment discrimination, and private individuals who were debtors in Chapter 7 and Chapter 13 bankruptcy matters. To a lesser extent I assisted small business owners with entity formation and contractual disputes.

**11. What judicial office do you now hold? State whether you have been appointed or elected and the dates thereto. Describe the jurisdiction of such court and any limitations thereon. Have you ever held any other judicial office? If so, please state the offices, courts and the periods of such service. Please describe the jurisdiction of each of such courts, with any limitations upon the jurisdiction of each court:**

I currently serve as the elected Magisterial District Judge of District Court 05-2-31. The territorial jurisdiction of this court includes Wards 8, 10, and 11 of the City of Pittsburgh, which is comprised of eight (8) neighborhoods including: Bloomfield, East Liberty, Friendship, Highland Park, Garfield, Morningside, Stanton Heights, and Upper Lawrenceville.

As a magisterial district judge in the City of Pittsburgh, I preside in District Courts 05-0-03 and 05-0-04 (Pittsburgh Municipal Court) several times a week. The territorial jurisdiction of these courts includes the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, respectively.

The subject matter jurisdiction of Magisterial District Judges is provided for by 42 Pa. C.S. § 1515 and by general rules such as Pa.R.Crim.P. 200, which authorizes magisterial district judges to issue search warrants for a person or place that is located anywhere in the judicial district (i.e. Allegheny County).

**12. For the last five years or portions thereof during which you have held judicial office, indicate,**

**a) The nature of typical matters which came before you:**

*See below at part b in parentheses*

**b) The percentage of your time devoted to:**

Civil: 30% (debt collection, landlord-tenant, contract and tort claims)

Criminal: 50% (preliminary arraignments, bail hearings, preliminary hearings, review of arrest warrant applications, review of search warrant applications)

Other: 20% (Emergency PFA, summary truancy, summary municipal code)

**c) The percentage of your time devoted to:**

Jury: N/A

Non-jury: 45% (civil and summary trials)

Appellate argument: N/A

Other: 55% (preliminary hearings and various *ex parte* proceedings including preliminary arraignment and bail hearings, review of Petitions for Emergency PFA, review of arrest warrant applications, review of search warrant applications)

**d) Five of the more significant opinions you have rendered and citations thereto if the cases were reported:**

N/A

**13.If a substantial portion of your practice had been before administrative boards, commissions or agencies during the five years before you became a member of the judiciary, identify the boards, commissions or agencies before which you practiced and estimate percentages of practice time devoted thereto:**

Pittsburgh Human Relations Commission  
Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission  
Unemployment Compensation Board of Review  
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

My practice before these boards, agencies and commissions was related to my plaintiffs-side employment discrimination litigation practice. About 25% of my practice time was devoted thereto.

**14.If a substantial portion of your practice had been before Appellate courts during the five years before you became a member of the judiciary, identify the Appellate Courts before which you have practiced and estimate percentages of practice time devoted thereto:**

Superior Court of Pennsylvania  
Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

For the most part, my appellate practice was incidental to my litigation practice. At the same time, as an Associate Attorney for Gross & Patterson, LLC, a portion of my practice was devoted to assisting one of the partners with court appointed criminal appeals. In sum, an estimated 10% of my practice was devoted to practicing before appellate courts.



**15. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? If so, give details, including the office involved, whether elected or appointed, and the length of your services, giving dates:**

No.

**16. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? If so, give details, including dates:**

No.

**17. Have you ever been engaged in any occupation, business or profession other than the practice of law or the holding of judicial or other public office? If so, give details, including dates:**

When I graduated from Lehigh University in 2004, I became a community organizer with the intention of later applying to law school. Because of my profound respect for the legal profession, I prioritized gaining professional and life experience before furthering my formal education in the law. I believe that, as this application will demonstrate, this decision significantly enhanced my capacity to serve and establish top standing in our profession.

- From 2004-2005, I worked for the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). I canvassed well over 10,000 low- and moderate-income households: to organize a union of home childcare providers in south Chicago, to organize community unions in Newark and New Orleans; and to educate, register and organize voters in Pittsburgh
- From 2006-2008, I was the Deputy Field and Policy Director and then Field Director for the Pennsylvania League of Young Voters. I helped the organization develop a policy platform and organized voter registration campaigns in low-income communities and county jails throughout Pennsylvania
- From 2008-2014, before and during law school, I worked for Pennsylvania State Senator Jim Ferlo as a Legislative Assistant and then as Policy Director. I was a policy liaison to his office in Harrisburg and I managed community projects throughout the Pittsburgh area. I assisted with policy research, stakeholder outreach and legislative drafting. I helped manage community initiatives such as the successful effort to prevent the closure of West Penn Hospital in Bloomfield. I also helped fundraise for large-scale projects including the Energy Innovation Center (EIC) in the Hill District, and smaller-scale projects including the Environment and Energy Community Outreach Center (EECO Center) in Larimer.

More information about my personal and professional background can be found at [www.mik.pappas.com/about-mik/](http://www.mik.pappas.com/about-mik/).

**18. Are you now an officer or director or otherwise engaged in the management of any business enterprise? If so, give details, including the name of your enterprise, the nature of the business, the title or other description of your position, the nature of your duties and the term of your service.**

Defenders' Fund, LLC dba Legal Means (inactive)  
*Owner, Managing Member*, May 2014 - Present  
P.O. Box 4951

Pittsburgh, PA 15206

The year that I graduated from law school I applied for and was awarded a \$10,000.00 grant from Idea Foundry (IF) in Pittsburgh, PA. This grant was through IF's Social Enterprise Accelerator program InterSector. It supported the early stage development of a social purpose technology company that would focus on improving access to justice for indigent defendants. Defenders' Fund, LLC dba Legal Means is the entity that was formed as part of that process. It has been inactive for about four (4) years.

**19. Have you ever been convicted of violating any federal law or regulation, state law or regulation, or county or municipal law, regulation or ordinance? If so, give details. Do not include summary traffic offenses:**

Yes, in 2004 and 2005 I pled guilty non-traffic summary offenses. In both cases I was charged with possessing marijuana. The possession charges were withdrawn in exchange for summary disorderly conduct-pleas. These matters have been expunged.

**20. Are you under any ongoing federal, state or local investigation or indictment for possible violation of a criminal statute? If so, give particulars:**

No.

**21. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure been instituted against you by federal, state or local authorities? If so, give particulars:**

No.

**22. Prior to taking the bench, were you ever sued by a client? If so, give particulars:**

No.

**22. Have you ever been a party or otherwise involved in any other legal proceedings? If so, give the particulars. Do not list proceedings in which you were merely a guardian ad litem or stakeholder. Include all legal proceedings in which you were a party in interest, a material witness, were named as co-conspirator or a co-respondent and any grand jury investigation in which you figured as a subject or in which you appeared as a witness:**

In 2016 and 2017, a home improvement contractor filed civil complaints against my wife and I in magisterial district court. Both cases involved the same contractual dispute. These matters were withdrawn and dismissed, respectively. The contractor also attempted to place a mechanic's lien on our home but this claim was withdrawn as well.

In 2009, a landlord-tenant complaint was filed against me in magisterial district court. The plaintiff was awarded a judgment for possession. I did not attend the hearing because I did not become aware of the matter until around 2015.

Also in 2009, I voluntarily testified in U.S. District Court on behalf of plaintiffs who were represented by the ACLU of PA. This was a civil action for deprivation of rights against the City of Pittsburgh. It involved the denial of permits to protest the G-20 summit. I testified in my capacity as staff to Senator Ferlo and based on the knowledge that I acquired while helping the plaintiffs to obtain permits through the Senator's office.

In 2005, a credit card company filed a debt collection matter against me in the Court of Common Pleas. I believe the case was withdrawn before a hearing because I paid the amount in question soon after it was filed. I did not become aware of the matter until around 2015.

**23. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct or has any complaint against you been filed with the Court of Judicial Discipline? If so, give the particulars:**

No.

**24. Currently or within the past five (5) years have you suffered from any medical or other condition which could affect or impair your judgment, reliability, or ability to perform the essential functions of the judicial position you are seeking? If so, describe.**

No.

**25. Do any circumstances exist that would affect your ability to perform the function of the position you seek or fulfill the term of office? If so, please explain:**

No.

**26. Furnish one (1) example of a legal article, law review article, briefs, or other legal writing which reflects your personal work. If a brief is submitted, indicate the degree to which it represents your personal work:**

Enclosed are four (4) examples of writings that reflect my personal work. They relate to matters from three Divisions of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County and thereby demonstrate my breadth and depth of understanding of legal issues. In addition, each involves both novel and complex legal questions. *See* attachments “E-H”.

- Attachment “E” is a Brief for Appellant that I personally prepared in a matter that was appealed from the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County – Criminal Division
  - Attachment “F” is a Harvard Law Review Case Note that provides commentary on the decision of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in this case
- Attachment “G” is a Brief for Appellant that I personally prepared in a matter that was appealed from the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County – Orphans’ Division
- Attachment “H” is a brief in support of Plaintiffs’ Amended Responses in Opposition to Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings and Motion for Summary Judgment. This relates to a matter in the Court of Common Pleas – Civil Division

**27. List all bar associations and professional societies of which you are a member and give the titles and dates of any offices which you have held in such groups. List chairmanships of any committees in bar associations and professional societies and memberships on any committees which you believe to be of particular significance (e.g., judicial selection committee, disciplinary committee, grievance committee).**

- Appointed by President Judge Kim Berkeley Clark to the Racial Equity Working Group of the Fifth Judicial District (2020 – Present)
- Member of the Special Court Judges Association of Pennsylvania (SCJAP) (2018 – Present)
  - Appointed by Magisterial District Judge Richard King, Allegheny County Chapter President, to the statewide Rules Committee (2018 – Present)
  - Unanimously appointed by the Allegheny County Chapter as Liaison to the ACBA Criminal Litigation Section (2019 – Present)
- Member of the Allegheny County Bar Association (2013 – Present)
  - Criminal Litigation Section (2013 – Present)
  - Appointed by ACBA President Elizabeth Hughes to the ad hoc Committee to Examine Police Use of Force and Court Rules for Bail, Probation and Incarceration (2020 – Present)
    - Co-Chair of the Administration of Law Sub-Committee
- Member of the American Bar Association (ABA) (2015 – Present)
  - Criminal Justice Section, Pretrial Justice Committee

**28. List your experiences in teaching and lecturing, including law school, continuing legal education, both for the legal community and the judiciary, and to non-legal audiences.**

As a community organizer, I regularly trained and provided civic education to volunteers and members of the communities in which I worked. For example, when I conducted voter registration drives in the Philadelphia and Allegheny County Jails I would begin my presentations by engaging audience members on the importance of the right to vote, and addressing misconceptions regarding the right to vote of incarcerated persons in Pennsylvania.

Between 2007 and 2010, I mentored a group of at-risk teens from the part of East Liberty where I grew up. I personally engaged them in regular volunteer activities to introduce them to the importance of civic participation; I worked with community stakeholders to provide them with artistic and environmental literacy training; and I worked with community stakeholders to help them obtain summer employment.

In 2014, I took a legal practicum course in peer mediation as described in attachment “B”. Through this course, I taught a group of about fifteen (15) high school students about the sources of conflict, how mediation is a tool for conflict solving, and how they could be effective peer mediators in their school.

I frequently present to the community regarding the role and importance of the judiciary, opportunities for collaboration between system and community stakeholders, and legal issues of particular public interest with which I frequently interact as a magisterial district judge such as so-called “cash bail” and procedures in landlord-tenant matters. For example:

- In 2019, several magisterial district judges in Allegheny County collaborated with Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts (PMC) to host community education seminars about procedures before magisterial district judges in landlord-tenant matters. Rather than host a seminar, I took a more interactive and participatory approach by hosting a “Landlord-Tenant Town Hall and Speak Out,” where I moderated two panels comprised of a dozen stakeholder-representatives from the Office of the Attorney General of Pennsylvania – Consumer Protection Division, the Department of Human Services of Allegheny County, the Housing Opportunity Fund of the City of Pittsburgh, the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh, UNITE Pittsburgh and more.<sup>2</sup> There were an estimated 150 attendees, which accounted for nearly 2/3 of the attendees of all of the seminars combined. A video highlight reel of this event is available at <https://mikpappas.com/press/>
- As described above, just last week (March 18, 2021), I was invited to provide Comment before the Pennsylvania House Democratic Policy Committee on the Elimination of Cash Bail in Pennsylvania. *See* attachment “D”

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<sup>2</sup> *See* Amanda Waltz, Questions About Eviction? Landlord-Tenant Town Hall Provides Legal Advice, PITTSBURGH CITY PAPER (March 6, 2019), <https://www.pghcitypaper.com/pittsburgh/questions-about-eviction-landlord-tenant-town-hall-provides-legal-advice/Content?oid=13960195>.

**29. List all organizations other than bar associations, professional associations or societies of which you are or have been a member, including civic, charitable, religious, educational, social and fraternal organizations:**

- Board of directors of the nationally renowned Pittsburgh-based 501(c)(3) organization One Hood Media, which recently was awarded the 2021 Spirit Award by the Homer S. Brown Division of the ACBA
- Appointed by Director Pamela Harbin to the Pittsburgh Public Schools' Re-Imagine School Safety Task Force
- Member of the Allegheny County Cohort of Cities and Counties for Fine and Fee Justice, a national initiative of the Fine and Fee Justice Center
- Highland Park Community Development Corporation, Board Member (2013-2017)
- Alpha Chi Rho Fraternity, Phi Mu Chapter, *Philanthropy Chair* (2000-2003)

**30. List any honors, prizes, awards or other forms of recognition which you have received (including any indication of academic distinction in college or law school) other than those mentioned in answers to the foregoing questions.**

2019 “Salute to Legal Excellence” Awardee

**31. State any other information which may reflect positively or adversely on you or which you believe should be disclosed in connection with consideration of you for an election/retention to a Court of Pennsylvania.**

I understand that under the Guidelines, Rules and Procedures of the ACBA Judiciary Committee, Appendix A part 2(b), “A judicial candidate should have at least ten (10) years experience in the practice of the law, although in exceptional cases the quality of legal experience or other experience may be considered in lieu of the desired minimum period of practice.” I respectfully submit that my application before you demonstrates that my lived, professional, and legal experience satisfies the Guidelines’ exception for legal or other experience in lieu of the desired minimum period of practice.

The writing samples that I provided show the depth of my practice and my ability to skillfully engage with novel and complex legal questions. My advocacy in two of the underlying matters produced substantive Pennsylvania precedents that touch upon fundamental civil rights. I have continued to demonstrate this level of legal excellence as a magisterial district judge, foreseeing and ruling consistent with significant matters such as *Commonwealth v. McClelland*, and providing studied comment to statewide bodies such as the Criminal Rules Committee of the Supreme Court and the Pennsylvania House Democratic Policy Committee.

In addition, the totality of my application demonstrates long-standing experience with and deep personal commitment to citizenship, community, the law and the legal profession. I consciously chose to become a community organizer before entering the legal profession, largely because of my profound respect for the legal profession. I understood the importance of gaining lived and professional experience before furthering my formal legal education. By taking this approach I was provided with a broad and unique foundation of experience to draw upon in my work to improve public confidence in the judiciary and the administration of justice. It has only enhanced my ability to establish top standing in our profession.

This is further evidence by my position and the way in which I carry out my judicial duties. I would respectfully submit that the attached letters of support describe my reputation as a judge as consistent with the qualities that your Committee seeks in a candidate of the highest quality. I would further suggest that this is also demonstrated by the confidence that my colleagues in the minor judiciary of Allegheny County, the judicial leadership of Allegheny County, and the leadership of the ACBA have placed in me.



The Allegheny County chapter of the SCJAP set a new precedent by appointing me as their liaison to the ACBA Criminal Litigation Section. President Judge Clark has seen fit to seek my input regarding community engagement, to appoint me to the Racial Equity Working Group of the Fifth Judicial District, and to support my novel and restorative approach to addressing court debt. ACBA President Elizabeth Hughes appointed me to not only serve on the ad hoc Committee to Examine Police Use of Force and Court Rules for Bail, Probation and Incarceration, but also to Co-Chair its Administration of Law Sub-Committee.

Your committee highly recommends judicial candidates who will enhance “the competence, dignity and public perception of the bench.” In sum, I would humbly submit that in 2021 this requires candidates who are closely connected to, well known by, and highly respected in the community at-large but especially in marginalized communities that are within the jurisdiction of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County. I have deep roots in these communities from a lifetime of living in them, and decades of organizing and working in them.

In light of all of the foregoing, I respectfully submit to you that pursuant to the Committee’s Guidelines, the quality of my legal experience and other experiences may be considered not only in lieu of the desired minimum period of practice, but also as the equivalent of that which, in part, merits your Committee’s highest recommendation.

**32. Why do you wish to become a Justice or Judge? What special strengths do you feel you possess that would particularly well qualify you for the position of Justice or Judge?**

I became a judge because I am deeply passionate about the law, I have profound respect for the legal profession, and I truly love and want to improve our community. While I know that I will never be able to give back all that our community has given to me, I believe that I can be of great service to our community and our profession by serving as a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas.

I am uniquely qualified to do this not only because of the broad range of talents, experiences and accomplishments that I have described throughout this application, but also because I personally have experienced the hardships of parental incarceration, recovering from the trauma of domestic abuse, and the losing loved ones to gun violence and addiction.

This has helped me to develop a unique appreciation for our courts as institutions with the power to make positive change in our lives and communities. I am devoted to promoting confidence in our courts because I believe that this is essential to the wellness and health of our community.

**33. Did you sign the ACBA Judicial Campaign Advertising Guidelines Pledge?  
(Please return signed pledge with completed questionnaire.)**

Yes, it is enclosed.

## **CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

The undersigned certifies that all of the statements made in this questionnaire are true, complete and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief and are made in good faith.

Mikhail N. Pappas

\_\_\_\_\_  
Type or print name

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MNP' with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

March 25, 2021

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## ALLEGHENY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

### JUDICIAL CANDIDATE PLEDGE

I, Mikhail N. Pappas, a candidate for judicial office, have familiarized myself with the Code of Judicial Conduct and the Code of Civility, as promulgated by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. I have directed special attention to Canon 4 of the Code of Judicial Conduct, including Rules 4.1, 4.2 and 4.4. I agree to conduct my judicial campaign consistent therewith and further consistent with *Republican Party of Minnesota v. White*, 536 U.S. (2002). I further pledge that all campaign advertising will be done fairly, accurately, truthfully, and will maintain the dignity appropriate to the judicial office which I am seeking.

Amended 11/18/2014



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Signature of Candidate

3.25.21

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Date