GEAUGA COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Candidate:

This questionnaire seeks detailed information from candidates (contested and uncontested) for office, including incumbents seeking re-election. Only a copy of the completed questionnaire will be included in the correspondence to our members when they receive their bar poll ballot.

Responding to these questions will require significant time and effort on your part. We believe the information requested will help our members give the public thoughtful and accurate ratings of candidates. Your responses are an opportunity to demonstrate you are or would be the kind of candidate we all want for our clients and our community. We appreciate your time, and your true, honest, and candid answers. Do not, however, disclose information you are required to keep confidential, or that is subject to attorney-client privilege, attorney work product, or any other privileges or protections.

If a candidate chooses not to submit the questionnaire, the ballot will indicate the candidate refused to participate.

Please answer all applicable questions and sign the jurat and the waiver.

GENERAL

1. Name: Abbey King Mueller

2. a. City and county of residence: South Russell; Geauga County

   b. How long have you lived in Ohio? 1982—2001; and 2007—present

   c. How long have you lived in the jurisdiction in which you seek office? 14 years

3. Business address: Geauga County Probate/Juvenile Court, Courthouse Annex, 231 Main Street

   City: Chardon State: Ohio Zip: 44024

   Business Phone: 440-226-4446

4. Place and date of birth: Mayfield Heights, Ohio; May 1982

5. Court for which you are a candidate: Geauga County Probate/Juvenile Court

6. Commencement of term: February 9, 2027

UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE EDUCATION

7.

School Name:	Years: Attended:	Degree Received:	Honors (if any):
University of Montana	4	Bachelor of Arts (Social Work)	
University of Akron School of Law	4	Juris Doctor	

WORK HISTORY AND PROFESSIONAL ADMISSIONS:

8. State your legal work history since graduating law school in chronological order, listing each employer, the employer's address, your position, and the time period you were so employed. Also include the same information for any period of time during which you were self-employed. **In the alternative, you may attach a résumé if it contains all of the requested information**, or if you supplement any missing information in your response here.

Dates: Position: Employer Name and City, State:

May 2008—November 2011; Law Clerk; Geauga County Prosecutor; Chardon, Ohio

November 2011—January 2018; Assistant Prosecutor; Geauga County Prosecutor; Chardon, Ohio

January 2018—Present; Magistrate; Geauga County Probate/Juvenile Court; Chardon, Ohio

9. List the date(s) you were admitted to the bar of any state and your current status as a bar member. Identify any period during which you were not in good standing in each bar, and the reason. Please also list the date of your admission to all courts and administrative bodies having special requirements to which you have been admitted to practice, your current status and the dates and reason for any period during which you were not in good standing.

*Ohio Bar; admitted November 2011; current status is active/in good standing; have been active/in good standing since November 2011

*U.S. District Court – Northern District of Ohio; admitted 2012

10. (a) Are you currently serving as a judge or magistrate? Yes, I am serving as a magistrate

(b) Are you currently engaged in the practice of law? Yes; serving as a magistrate constitutes engaging in the practice of law.

(c) If you are NOT currently engaged in either the practice of law or serving as a judge or magistrate,

(1) Make sure to complete Question 23 for your most recent six years of legal practice.

(2) Describe how your current work is relevant to your performance in the judicial office you seek.

HONORS AND AWARDS:

11. List any fellowships, honorary degrees, academic or professional honors, honorary society memberships, military awards, and any other special recognition for outstanding service or achievement.

*Acceptance into and successful completion of the Montana State Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Program (undergraduate)

*National Council of Phi Alpha Honor Society (undergraduate)

*CALI Excellence for the Future Award (2011)

*Geauga CASA for Kids Professional Advocate of the Year (2026)

BAR ASSOCIATION AND OTHER MEMBERSHIPS

12. List all professional, business, fraternal, sororal, scholarly, civic, charitable, or other organizations to which you belong, or to which you have belonged, since graduation from law school. Please include bar associations, clubs, working groups, advisory or editorial boards, panels, committees, or conferences. Provide dates of membership or participation, and indicate any offices you held, and/or your noteworthy accomplishments in connection with the organization.

*Member of:

Ohio State Bar Association – joined 2015 (?)

Geauga County Bar Association – joined 2018

Ohio Association of Magistrates – joined 2018

Ohio CASA – joined 2020

Ohio Chamber of Commerce – joined 2025

National Association of Social Workers – joined 2005 (?)

Geauga County GOP – joined 2020 (?)

Geauga County Women's Republican Club – joined 2024

Western Reserve Women Republican's Club – joined 2026

Friends of WomenSafe – joined 2025

100 Geauga Women Who Care – joined 2025

Ducks Unlimited – joined 2019

PUBLIC OFFICE

13. List chronologically any elected or appointed public offices you have held or sought, other than judicial offices, including the terms of service, and whether such positions were elected or appointed. If appointed, please include the name of the individual or entity that appointed you.

I have not previously held or sought an elected public office position.

LAW PRACTICE

Answer each part separately. FOR JUDGES WHO WILL, AS OF JANUARY 2022, HAVE *COMPLETED* AT LEAST ONE *FULL* TERM OF SERVICE, THIS QUESTION IS OPTIONAL.

14. For your current or most recent law practice, and every distinctive period of practice in the past, whether or not with a different office, describe:

(a) the general character of your law practice;

I served as an assistant prosecuting attorney from November 2011 until January 2018 when I was appointed as a magistrate. During my time as an assistant prosecutor, I handled a variety of matters including civil, criminal, and appellate; however, the core of my work was representing Geauga County Job & Family Services prosecuting child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases in Juvenile Court; and adult protective services cases in Probate Court.

Since January 2018, I have served as a magistrate for the Geauga County Probate/Juvenile Court. I handle a wide range of matters across both divisions, including unruly, delinquency, traffic, child custody, child support, and child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases in Juvenile Court; and estate administration, involuntary civil commitment, guardianship, adoption, and adult protective services cases in Probate Court.

(b) your typical clients and or matters, and the legal areas, if any, on which you have focused.

During my time as an assistant prosecutor, my primary client was Geauga County Job & Family Services. I prosecuted child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases in juvenile court; and adult protective service cases in probate court. I also handled some juvenile unruly and delinquency matters. On occasion, I represented the State of Ohio in a few criminal and appellate matters. I also represented various county agencies, including the Geauga County Auditor, Engineer, and Recorder, in various civil matters.

As a magistrate, I handle a wide range of matters across both divisions, including unruly, delinquency, traffic, child custody, child support, and child abuse, neglect, and

dependency cases in Juvenile Court; and estate administration, involuntary civil commitment, guardianship, adoption, and adult protective services cases in Probate Court.

(c) The percentage of your practice in litigation and whether you appear in court frequently, occasionally, or not at all.

During my time as an assistant prosecutor, the majority of my practice was in litigation. I appeared in court frequently.

(d) The percentage of your practice in: federal courts _0_%; state courts of record 100%; other courts _____%; and administrative agencies _____%. (as an assistant prosecutor)

(e) The percentage of your practice in: civil proceedings 98%; and criminal proceedings 2%. (as an assistant prosecutor)

15 Estimate the number of cases in courts of record, including cases before administrative-law judges, you have tried to verdict, judgment, or final decision (rather than settled), indicating whether you were sole counsel, chief counsel, or associate counsel, and

As an assistant prosecutor, I tried multiple matters in Juvenile and Probate Court over the course of 6+ years. I would estimate I tried 10 cases per year during this time. I would estimate that I was chief counsel on 50% of the trials; and associate counsel on 50% of the trials.

What percentage or numbers of these trials were: jury % and non-jury %.

As an assistant prosecutor, I did not handle any jury trials.

16 How many cases have you appeared as counsel of record in an Ohio County Court of Common Pleas?

As an assistant prosecutor, I handled multiple cases over the course of 6+ years in the Geauga County Court of Common Pleas. I would estimate I handled an average of 50 cases each year for 6+ years, which amounts to approximately 300 cases.

17 Roughly how many physical appearances have you made in the Geauga County Court of Common Pleas?

As an assistant prosecutor, I made hundreds of court appearances in the Geauga County Court of Common Pleas.

18 Describe your practice, if any, before state and federal intermediate courts of appeals, the Ohio Supreme Court or the U.S. Supreme Court.

As an assistant prosecutor, I handled several appellate matters in the 11th District Court of Appeals, including civil and criminal.

OTHER LAW RELATED ACTIVITIES

19 Pro Bono Work. The Statements on Professionalism adopted by the Supreme Court of Ohio, and the Court's September 20, 2007 Statement Regarding Provision of Pro Bono Legal Services by Ohio Lawyers encourage Ohio lawyers to help provide the pro bono representation that is necessary to make our system of justice available to all. Describe what you have done to fulfill these responsibilities, including the types of matters handled, when you did this work and an estimate of the time you devote to pro bono work each year.

I prepare estate planning documents, mainly Healthcare Powers of Attorney, Living Wills, Durable General Powers of Attorney, and TOD deeds. I also review contracts on occasion, primarily rental agreements and leases. I advise people about legal procedure in child custody, guardianship, civil commitment, and estate administration matters. I estimate that I devote around 25 hours each year to pro bono work.

20 Teaching. Describe your teaching experience, if any, including school or sponsoring institution, the years you taught the course, and the subject matter. If you have a syllabus for any such course, please attach it.

I do not have formal experience teaching at a school/learning institution.

21 Other. Please describe any other significant professional activity you wish to call to our attention. This may include service on Ohio Supreme Court Boards, Commissions, or Task Forces; your involvement in any professional or community organizations; and the like.

I am a member of the Ohio Supreme Court Judicial College Faculty. I have taught several CLEs to Judges, Magistrates, and attorneys since 2018 on various juvenile law topics. I completed the Ohio Supreme Court Fundamentals of Faculty Development in 2024.

I served as a mentor for new magistrates at the request of the Ohio Supreme Court.

I am a trained mediator. I completed general mediation training and specialized domestic relations/divorce mediation training through the University of Akron Center for Family Studies.

PAST CONDUCT

22 Have you ever been disciplined for a breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct by any court, or by the disciplinary authority for any profession in which you also hold a license? NO

If so, please give the particulars including the year, complainant, nature of complaint, findings, and sanction, and provide a copy of relevant opinions and orders.

N/A

GOALS AND OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

23 Why do you aspire to be a judge?

In simple terms, I aspire to be a judge so I can help people, and serve the greater community. My entire career has been based on public service. More specifically, I am running to be the next Probate/Juvenile Court Judge because the children and families of Geauga County deserve a judge who is ready to serve from day one. The cases that come through the Probate/Juvenile Court are not routine. They involve emergencies, crises, and life-altering decisions that demand a jurist with substantial experience, sound judgment, and a proven commitment to this work. I understand this Court from the inside out. I know this Court's strengths, and its shortcomings. I know what works, and what needs to change. I would be honored for the opportunity to lead this Court forward in a positive direction by demonstrating my commitment to serving the children and families of Geauga County.

24 What changes, if any, would you make if elected to the Bench? If you are an incumbent seeking re-election, what specifically would you change as a judge during your next term of office if elected once again to the Bench? Incumbents should specify any tools or techniques that he or she has used to improve the efficiency of the docket and trial calendar.

I will move the Court forward in a positive direction by providing strong, collaborative and transparent leadership. The Court functions best when it works with county offices and community partners. I will actively build partnerships with county offices and community agencies so that families in need receive coordinated and meaningful support.

I will provide full fiscal transparency and accountability to the tax payers. I believe the Court's finances should not be a source of public concern — they should be an open book because the public deserves to know how their tax dollars are being spent.

I will expand and enhance service provision to children and families involved in the court system. Specifically, I will implement e-filing for both the Probate and Juvenile Divisions to

improve access and efficiency. I will increase the Court's capacity to provide mediation services and expand the Court's supervised visitation program.

25 Please identify the greatest issue(s) the judiciary, or the court on which you wish to serve, faces today.

I believe the greatest issue facing the Geauga County Probate/Juvenile Court is lack of available and accessible mental health services and psychiatric care for people – especially juveniles. The waitlists for initial assessments are long. The waitlists for services after completion of the initial assessments can be even longer. There are not enough therapists/counselors available to serve the needs that exist in our county. Juveniles often present to the Court with acute psychiatric issues that must be addressed immediately; but the reality is these issues are not adequately addressed. Having access to and receiving the necessary mental health care is something that undoubtedly helps maintain stability in a family, and maintain a juvenile in his/her home thereby avoiding placement in a residential treatment center.

26 Please explain how your background demonstrates the level of community engagement and understanding appropriate to the judicial office you are seeking.

My background demonstrates how I have devoted my entire career to public service – and more specifically – helping children and families involved in the court system. I have been serving Geauga County since 2008 when I started as a Law Clerk for the Geauga County Prosecutor's Office. For the past 8 years, I have served as a Magistrate at the very Court I am seeking to lead. I have presided over hundreds of cases, and conducted thousands of hearings involving child custody, juvenile delinquency, guardianship, estate proceedings, and more.

27 Please state any other information you regard as relevant to your candidacy.

FOR TRIAL COURT CANDIDATES

28. Would you conduct telephonic or video court appearance (e.g. pre-trials, case management conferences, etc.) for criminal and civil matters?

I already do conduct telephonic and electronic/video appearances. I plan to continue doing so in appropriate situations.

29. Both a criminal trial and civil trial are scheduled on the same date. All parties are ready to proceed. What factors will you consider when determining which matter will go forward and why?

In the Probate/Juvenile Court, the criminal matters that come before the Court are few and far between, and usually center around a parent failing to send their child to school or contributing the delinquency of a minor. That being said, if there are 2 trials scheduled on the same date and all parties are ready to proceed, regardless of whether the matter was criminal or civil, I would evaluate which case should take priority based on which case presents the most emergent issue while taking into consideration any mandatory statutory timelines. I would first ask if one of the cases presents an emergency? If so, of what nature? Is there a child welfare issue that must be addressed immediately? Is there an involuntary civil commitment case that must addressed immediately to protect the welfare of a person? Is there a guardianship matter that must be addressed immediately due to risk of harm to a ward and/or the ward's assets? Is there a pending estate administration matter that must be addressed immediately to protect a decedent's assets? Based on the answers to those questions, I would determine which trial should take precedence.

30. How do you or will you manage your docket to ensure dispositive motions are heard in a timely manner so parties do not incur the time and expense of preparing for a trial that ultimately may not proceed? Would you be amenable to an automatic continuance of a trial date when a dispositive motion has not been ruled upon by a certain number of days in advance of trial?

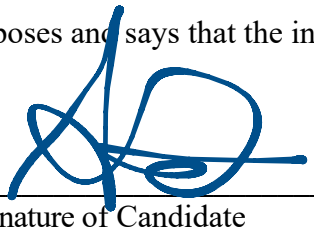
Part of my current procedure for managing the docket involves reviewing filings as soon as possible after they are filed. If the issue presented is not an emergency, I allow time for other parties to respond. I determine if it's appropriate to rule on a motion without a hearing. If a hearing is warranted or required, the matter is set for hearing within a reasonable period of time taking into account the nature of the issue presented, and the time needed for parties to prepare for the hearing. I also adhere to the Ohio Supreme Court guidelines for case disposition as closely as possible to ensure timely resolution of matters.

Yes, I would be amenable to the possibility of such a rule for an automatic continuance. I think it would be prudent to allow the parties to waive the requirement for the continuance if they wish to do so. I also think the length of the continuance should be limited to a reasonable timeframe.

31. Is there any additional information not previously addressed in the questionnaire that you would like to include?

JURAT

Abbey King Mueller, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that the information in the above questionnaire is true.



_____
Signature of Candidate

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence this ____ day of _____, 20___.

_____
Notary Public

My commission expires:_____