

CHARLES HOUSTON BAR ASSOCIATION CANDIDACY EVALUATION PROCESS

The Charles Houston Bar Association (CHBA) serves the interests of African American judges, lawyers and law students throughout the Bay Area. One of the goals of CHBA is to increase the diversity of leadership in the legal community. CHBA endorses candidates who have demonstrated a commitment to equal treatment of all litigants, the fair administration of justice and the rule of law. CHBA focuses on supporting those candidates who have been involved in, supportive of, and responsive to the issues, needs and concerns of the African American community. To this end, CHBA's principal goal in endorsing candidates for selected positions, including judgeships, is to promote the selection of qualified African American candidates across the State of California.

To ensure confidentiality and consistency when evaluating applications, CHBA has created the following guidelines and requirements. The CHBA Judicial Chair will select a Judicial Evaluation Committee (hereinafter "JEC") which may include one or more of the following board members: Judicial Chair, General Counsel, Parliamentarian, or President and at least one member of the general CHBA membership. The CHBA Parliamentarian will select an Endorsements Evaluation Committee (hereinafter "EEC") which may include one or more of the following: Parliamentarian, General Counsel, Judicial Chair, or President and at least one member of the general CHBA membership.

Upon completion of the evaluation process, the JEC through the Judicial Chair and the EEC through the Parliamentarian will communicate to the candidate CHBA's decision to endorse, write a letter of support, or decline to support the candidate.

The following procedures and guidelines will be adhered to in making a determination to endorse and/or support a candidate.

I. GENERAL GUIDELINES AND PARAMETERS

A. Criteria for Judicial Endorsement

1. Qualifications: The CHBA through the JEC will consider the following factors in its evaluation:
 - a. Integrity, character and professional reputation;
 - b. Professional background including litigation, adjudicative, and administrative experience;
 - c. Scholarship and communication skills (oral and written);
 - d. Judicial temperament;

- e. Demonstrated commitment to the concept of equal opportunity and equal justice under the law;
- f. The extent to which a candidate has been involved in, supportive of and responsive to the needs and concerns of African Americans;
- g. Membership in CHBA, or other bar association or community service organization serving the needs of African Americans and the African American community; and
- h. Any additional information that is brought to the attention of the JEC during the evaluation process.

The order of the above factors does not indicate their priority. In weighing these factors, a decision will be made based on the totality of these factors.

- 2. Statutory Qualification: The CHBA will endorse only those candidates who demonstrate that they satisfy the statutory requirements for the position they seek.

B. Judiciary Committee Authority and Appointments

All requests for endorsements by candidates seeking endorsement of their candidacy for judgeships will first be reviewed by the JEC. The JEC will examine a candidate's qualifications, conduct necessary due diligence, and make recommendations to the CHBA Board concerning whether or not to endorse.

The JEC is to conduct its activities pursuant to this policy. The JEC will not endorse candidates – the Board of Directors must vote on all endorsements.

The Judicial Chair shall have authority to appoint members to the JEC. It is expected that the Judicial Chair will strive for geographic and political balance to the extent possible.

II. PROCEDURES FOR PERSONS SEEKING JUDICIAL ENDORSEMENTS

Persons seeking an endorsement must comply with the following procedures:

- A.** Inform the CHBA Judiciary Chair of his/her desire to obtain the CHBA's endorsement. A copy of these guidelines may be requested and will be provided.
- B.** The candidate shall additionally provide the following information to the CHBA Judiciary Chair with a copy to the CHBA President:

1. A letter formally requesting the CHBA endorsement and stating the title of the judicial position being sought and the court or administrative tribunal;
2. The statutory requirements for the judgeship being sought, the vacancy announcement reflecting the requirements of the judgeship, and/or other materials reflecting the responsibilities, authority and requirements of the position;
3. Date by which the endorsement for the appointment must be received in order to be considered;
4. Name, title and address of the person to whom the endorsement letter should be sent;
5. The candidate's resume, a list of five references, judicial application, and other materials relevant to the candidate's qualification; and
6. The completed CHBA Selection and Endorsement Questionnaire.

III. DUE DILIGENCE ON JUDICIAL CANDIDATES

After receipt of the information specified in Section II above, CHBA's JEC will conduct a due diligence investigation upon the candidate. A due diligence investigation may include: (i) a review of the candidate's professional background; (ii) a review of the candidate's significant legal cases (if applicable); (iii) contacting those who know the candidate, including former employers, co-counsel, and opposing counsel; (iv) a review of the candidate's writings; (v) a media and internet search of the candidate; (vi) an interview with the candidate; and (vii) a request for input from East Bay Diversity Bar Coalition and the Minority Bar Coalition. After conducting said investigation, the JEC will formulate a recommendation that will then be submitted to the CHBA Board.

In the absence of an expedited proceeding, the CHBA JEC shall distribute a report concerning its due diligence, the candidates' resume, and a recommendation to the CHBA Board in advance of the next Board meeting. The matter shall be placed on the next regularly scheduled CHBA Board meeting and, the decision of whether to endorse a candidate will be made during that meeting.

IV. PROCEDURE FOR PERSONS SEEKING ENDORSEMENTS, OTHER THAN JUDICIAL

A. Requesting Endorsement: Persons seeking an endorsement for state or local positions, other than Judicial, are required to comply with the following procedures:

1. Inform the CHBA Parliamentarian of his/her desire to obtain the CHBA's endorsement. A copy of these Policies and Procedures may be requested and will be provided.
2. The candidate shall also provide the following information to the CHBA Parliamentarian and President:
 - a. The title of the position being sought;
 - b. The state or local requirements for the position being sought and/or the vacancy announcement reflecting the requirements of the position;
 - c. Date by which the endorsement for the position must be received in order to be considered;
 - d. Name, title and address of the person to whom the endorsement letter should be sent;
 - e. The candidate's resume, list of references, position application, and other materials relevant to the candidate's qualifications; and
 - f. The completed CHBA Selection and Endorsement Questionnaire.

B. Due Diligence: After receipt of the information specified in Section V.A.2., the CHBA Parliamentarian will conduct a due diligence investigation, which at a minimum includes an internet search.

C. Criteria for Endorsements and/or Letters of Support:

1. Qualifications: The CHBA will consider the following factors in its evaluation:
 - Membership in CHBA, CABL, and/or NBA
 - Membership in a specialty bar association
 - The extent to which the candidate has been involved in, supportive or and response to the needs, concerns and issues facing the African American community
 - The integrity, character and reputation of the candidate
 - The depth of the candidates professional experience and its relevance to the position sought
 - The candidates communication skills (oral and written)
 - Demonstrated commitment o the concept of improve access to justice; promoting equal protection under the law; increasing diversity; and bringing services to the community
 - Any additional information that is brought to the attention of the EEC during the evaluation process

The order of the above factors does not indicate their priority. In weighing these factors, a decision will be made based on the totality of the qualification factors.

2. Statutory Criteria: The CHBA will endorse only those candidates who demonstrate that they satisfy the statutory requirements for the position they seek

D. Endorsements Committee Authority and Appointments

The EEC is to conduct its activities pursuant to this policy. The Committee will not endorse candidates – the Board of Directors must vote on all endorsements.

The Association's Parliamentarian has the authority to appoint members to the EEC. It is expected that the Parliamentarian will strive for geographic and political balance to the extent possible.

Charles Houston Bar Association Selection and Endorsement Questionnaire

Contact Information:

Name:

Email:

Deadline for response:

1. Have you previously been/are you are member of the Charles Houston Bar Association?
2. How have you been active in this organization?
3. How many events/functions have you attended of the Charles Houston Bar Association in the last year?
4. Have you supported a member of this organization in the past? In what manner?
5. Have you supported a goal of this organization in the past? In what manner?
6. What current goals of this organization do you support? How?
7. Why are you seeking this endorsement?
8. How will this position affect the Charles Houston Bar Association?
9. Who else has endorsed your candidacy
10. What other endorsements are you presently seeking or plan to seek?