

Seventh Bar District Association
Questionnaire for Judicial Candidates in Local Contested Races

1. *What is your full name?* Joel Allen Novak

Does your campaign have a website or Facebook page? If so, please list it.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/950864419632508>

2. *List the colleges and law schools you have attended, including your dates of attendance and degrees awarded.* University of Minnesota, Morris – 1978-79; Campell University 1981-83; Fayetteville State University 1981-83; Drake University 1984-87 BA (majors in Political Science; Pre-Law; and Military Science); Drake Law School 1989-92 JD; The Judge Advocate General’s School, University of Virginia 2001-2002 LL.M. (with a specialty in Criminal Law).

3. *List where you have been employed since graduation from law school, including dates employed, your position and the nature of your employment responsibilities.* United States Army Judge Advocate General’s Corps 1993-2008 Positions: Legal Assistance Attorney 1993-94; Felony Prosecutor 1994-96; Felony Defense Counsel 1996-98; Government (Criminal) Appellate Counsel 1998-99; Commissioner, Court of Criminal Appeals 1999-2001; Graduate Course Student 2001-2002; Chief, Administrative and Civil Law 2002-2003; Chief, Criminal Law and Special Assistant United States Attorney 2003-2004; Deputy Senior Attorney, Chief, International and Operational Law, and, Military Magistrate 2004-2008; New London Law 2019-2024 Vice-president.

4. *Have you ever been convicted of a crime or publicly disciplined by a lawyer or judicial standards board? If so, feel free to provide an explanation.* No.

5. *What is/was the general nature of your practice? Indicate any areas of practice in which you concentrate or concentrated. (Response limited to 150 words.)* I have done more criminal law than any other type of law. I sat as a Commissioner on a three judge panel at the appellate level; I have prosecuted; been a defense counsel; argued appeals before four different appellate courts (1 Military; 3 Civilian); been a Chief of Criminal Law where I supervised 9 Prosecutors; and been a managing attorney (4 times) where I supervised international and operational law attorneys; prosecutors; criminal defense counsel; civil and administrative law attorneys; claims attorneys; and legal assistance attorneys. Well over half of my cases had constitutional issues. I have also done years of CHIPs work. I have also done civil and administrative work, and international work.

6. *What percentage of your practice is/was litigation?* 95%.

7. *Why do you want to be a district court judge? (Response limited to 150 words.)*

I believe in our system of law; however, I have seen it somewhat derailed. I want to read, hear, and consider every authority, piece of evidence, and argument presented by both sides of conflicts, and deliver just decisions.

8. *What qualities do you believe are most important in a district court judge? Explain how you have demonstrated that you possess those qualities. (Response limited to 250 words.)*

1. A trial judge has to be neutral and detached; 2. Understand both sides of the courtroom—the Prosecution and the Defense/Plaintiff and Defense; 3. A trial judge has to be dedicated to justice—if you cannot do the work in 40 hours, you work beyond—well beyond if necessary, to ensure you know the law and give the right judgement; and 4. A trial judge owes a duty to both sides, as well as the People, to deliver proper, fully considered, just decisions. As a young Legal Assistance Attorney I literally worked 96 hours a week to ensure I knew more about both the law and the facts of each case than my opponent, and the judge; as a Prosecutor, I charged every case worthy of prosecution, and tried one-third of those cases—the other two third, I only settled when the accused agreed to a sentence that would obtain justice for the People; as a Defense Counsel, I raised and argued every colorable issue, investigated every case, researched every issue, and fought for my clients; As a Chief of Criminal Law, I ensured that all cases worthy of prosecution were charged, that all procedural and ethics rules were complied with, and that the People of the United States were properly represented—and I continued to litigate to train my junior counsel; and as a Military Magistrate, I operated in a completely neutral, detached, and just manner.

9. *Why do you believe you are the best candidate for this district court judge seat? (Response limited to 250 words.)*

I know how to be neutral and detached. I would send my mom to prison if that was the right thing to do. I would acquit the devil himself if that was the right thing to do. I have seen too many judges not read motions, not look at the evidence, not consider cited authority, evidence, and argument. I have also seen misconduct go unprimanded, and sentences with no connection to justice. I know the law, and know where to find what I do not know. I am willing to take the time to do so—at the same time, accused citizens live under the cloud of accusation for much too long—justice delayed is justice denied. I will only be one judge, on one seat; but I want to ensure order, fairness, and justice for all that come before me.