

King County Democrats

2020 Candidate Questionnaire: Judicial Level

Candidate Name	Andrea King Robertson	
Position Sought	King County Superior Court Judge – Position 13	
Home County and Legislative District	King County – 46 th LD	
Campaign Contact Information	Mailing address: Committee to Elect Andrea Robertson PO Box 27113 Seattle, WA 98165	Phone: 425-466-0619 Fax:
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Campaign manager or point of contact	Mary Ann Ottinger – 425-466-0619	
Consultant(s)	Mary Ann Ottinger – 425-466-0619	

Please answer the following questions.		Yes	No
1	Have you ever been a member of another political party?		X
2	Have you ever failed to pay any taxes or court ordered judgments?		X
3	Have you ever been found in violation of a Public Disclosure Commission, Federal Election Commission or Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission regulation?		X
4	Does your campaign have a code of conduct for staff and volunteers? If not, are you willing to implement one? Judicial candidates are governed by the Code of Judicial Conduct, specifically Canon 4, and staff and volunteers are required to abide by its requirements as well.	X	

Part I – Candidate Background (*maximum of 200 words per question please*)

Please briefly describe your education, employment, community and civic activity, union affiliation, and other relevant experience.

I attended public schools in Spokane, graduating in 1992, and then graduated from Eastern Washington University in 1995 -- *summa cum laude* -- with a degree in pre-law after three years.

I attended the University of Washington School of Law, and graduated in 1998, designated Order of the Barristers and a member of the Moot Court Honor Board, with awards for oral advocacy. I also participated in Street Law, teaching legal concepts and trial advocacy to students in underserved public high school

Rainier Beach High School. I was admitted to the Washington Bar at the age of 24.

What distinguishes me as I run for election to an open seat on the King County Superior Court bench is that I have spent my entire 22 year career in the courtroom. I am a trial lawyer. This is largely the reason I was recruited by a number of the judges on the Superior Court bench to run for this position. There is a great need for judges with extensive trial experience.

I have worked almost exclusively in criminal defense trial work for 21 years. I have appeared in courts in over 20 different counties in Washington to represent accused persons in criminal cases ranging from simple misdemeanors to complex violent felonies.

I have also taken part in two substantial class action lawsuits, one challenging the implementation of red light cameras throughout the area, and another challenging the Department of Licensing for assessing substantial fees in order for drivers to receive due process before the suspension of their licenses.

I have volunteered as a teacher and coach for high school students and practicing attorneys, in teaching trial advocacy techniques and public speaking. I am also a part time professor for University of Washington School of Law, where I teach Advanced Trial Advocacy.

I am married and practice law with my husband. We have two children and live in Seattle.

My complete resume is attached.

Describe your history of political involvement, if any, in the Democratic Party, particularly in Washington state politics. In what offices have you served or previously sought to be elected or appointed?

In 2016, I attended the Democratic Caucus in the 46th Legislative District where I supported Bernie Sanders. In 2008, it is my recollection that I attended the caucus in support of Barack Obama.

Describe the progress of your campaign and campaign goals. What is your plan to win? If you have received endorsements, please list them here.

I have aspired to become a judge for several years; however, I became involved in this particular race somewhat "late" because the seat opened up unexpectedly just two days before the close of filing week when a judge announced her last-minute decision not to file for re-election. I was contacted by members of the Superior Court bench and strongly encouraged to run for election because of their great need to have judges with extensive courtroom experience. There have been a significant number of experienced trial judges who have retired in recent years, and there is now a need for new judges with strong trial experience. Additionally, the COVID crisis and the subsequent closure of the courts is going to require the kind of experience I have to help the court bring things to a new state of normal without a substantial "learning curve." I have almost 22 years of experience in courtrooms across Washington, with most of my practice taking place in King County. I am passionate about access to a just and fair process in the court system, and want to take a greater role in finding that access, particularly during such a tumultuous time as this current health crisis.

As noted above, I have only been involved in this race for a few days as of this submission; however, I have already been endorsed by more than 20 judges and many attorneys who practice in the King County Superior Court and feel strongly about my credentials being the right fit for this judicial position at this time. Many endorsements are coming in every day. I have retained a campaign manager/consultant who specializes in judicial campaigns and has a long track record of success.

While my opponent in this race has a history of involvement with the Democratic Party and many political connections, I believe that my extensive litigation experience is a better fit for the judiciary – especially at this time -- and it is my hope that the voters will value that important experience more than political connections.

Part II – Ratings and Endorsements

Bar Association <i>ratings</i> received to date:	Because of the COVID crisis, most Bar groups have not been rating candidates for the judiciary recently.
<i>Endorsements</i> received to date:	See above discussion of my campaign to date.

From what other organizations are you planning to ask for an endorsement?

I intend to seek the endorsement of as many of the Democratic organizations as I am able, Labor, and the National Women’s Political Caucus of Washington.

Part III – Free Response Questions (*maximum of 200 words per question please*)

What law firms or public law offices (i.e. King County Prosecutor's Office) have you worked for? Have you served as a prosecutor or a public defender? Please include dates, and title for each position that you have held, as well as areas of law practiced.

I began my career as a trial lawyer at Snohomish County Public Defender in 1998, where I began my trial practice in district court. I also spent several months in an appellate rotation, handling appeals in the Snohomish Superior Court.

In 2000, I joined a private criminal defense practice in Seattle, focusing on criminal cases throughout the Puget Sound area. Starting in 2002, I had the privilege of training under the highly respected trial attorneys at Fox Bowman Duarte, including Bill Bowman, who now sits at the Court of Appeals and for eight years was the top rated judge on the King County Superior Court bench. I handled cases at all levels, from municipal court trials up through argument before the State Supreme Court. In 2006, I began working with Steve Rosen until he was elected as a full time judge in 2010. He now sits on the King County Superior Court bench.

Since 2010, I have practiced with my husband Ryan Robertson, where I have handled criminal trial work, and limited ancillary civil matters including both petitioning and defending various protection orders.

What *pro bono* work have you done in the last five years? What accomplishments are you most proud to have made as a member of the legal profession?

I have been a member of multiple committees to advance access to opportunities for underserved populations (KCBA Young Lawyers), and equal access to opportunities for female attorneys (Washington Women Lawyers).

Since I began my career as a public defender I have been fortunate enough to handle reduced and no cost matters on behalf of accused persons and victims of violence who would not otherwise have access to a lawyer. Many people fall into the gap of not qualifying for a Public Defender but yet not realistically being able to afford high quality representation. It is important to me to provide as much legal help as I can to people in this gap.

My most memorable pro bono cases were in assisting marginalized individuals who were defending against a system which adds challenges due to bias and financial limitations. Persons of color and those are suffering from mental health challenges are often judged harshly and have less experience, poise, and confidence to receive true access to justice. These cases have ranged from allegations of assault to allegations of theft or resistance to law enforcement arrest.

Have you served as a judge or justice? What did you learn from that experience, and what do you believe are the most important qualifications for judges or justices?

I have not yet had the opportunity to serve this role. The most important qualifications for any judge or justice are legal competence and courtroom experience, tenacity, empathy, a strong work ethic, a steady and professional temperament, an ability to adapt to rapidly changing situations, and a strong passion for providing a forum for all to find access to justice.

How would you advocate for more equity in our State's justice system?

It is absolutely critical that each judge treat all parties fairly, and remain cognizant of the implicit bias and prejudices that work against marginalized individuals (as victims, criminal defendants, pro se litigants, and injured persons). All parties deserve their day in court, but that day presents unequal challenges to some, and a judge needs to be mindful of how those challenges can equate to an unequal application of justice.

Judges must also educate jurors about the power of their role, and the importance of providing fairness to all.

Greater access to therapeutic alternatives to traditional criminal proceedings provides true life-changing opportunities for individuals trapped in cycles related to addiction, poverty, and mental illness. Judges should advocate for the implementation of these alternatives among their colleagues and with policy-makers.

I see the judge's role to be the eyes and ears of the entire judicial system – watching for those inequities and finding means to bring them to light and preserve an equal access to justice in both criminal and civil matters.

What ideas do you have to make our judicial system more open, transparent, and responsive?

Both the criminal and civil process involve many unnecessary in-person appearances, which create financial hardships for economically challenged litigants and the new health crisis has only underscored the possibilities that the system can be subject to reinvention and streamlining, via video and telephonic appearances, agreed orders and more collaboration between the parties. If elected, I intend to participate fully in helping the courts implement new ways of managing cases in both the criminal and civil arena.

There must be a greater flexibility of judges to schedule and consider short-set and ex parte motions or send agreements by email in order to permit a more efficient process of litigation. To the degree that the current inefficiencies curtail responsiveness, they should be continually improved by using more creative and technologically advanced methods of communication.

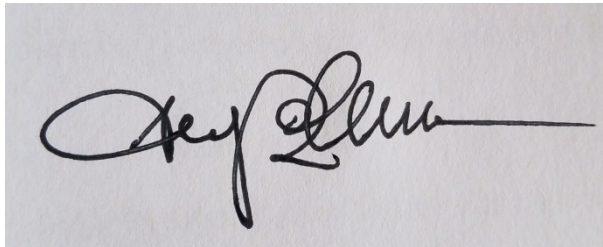
There is a strong line of state case law which emphasizes the need for open and transparent trial proceedings and motions, and it is the role of the judge to make sure that the court can accommodate access by the public. The new remote processes the Court has been forced to implement during the COVID crisis will provide greater possibilities for the public transparency of court proceedings.

How do you balance the judicial principle of *stare decisis*, or adherence to precedent, with a rapidly changing society and transformations in our society's understanding of justice?

The judges I have most admired in the past 21+ years take a deep dive into the precedent on a given issue, but are willing to reexamine how current societal transformations and values provide a basis to apply the law very carefully. That is not to say that a judge is permitted to pick an end result and then find a “means” to achieve that result, but the application of the facts to the standing precedent sometimes points out glaring issues of the antiquated premise of past case law. As an example, with a case I handled before King County Superior Court Judge Mary Yu (now Justice Yu), she agreed with me to dismiss a criminal prosecution for a serious Class B felony at trial, when I argued that potentially exculpatory video footage had been lost. Case law required there to be bad faith before such a dismissal, but the modern preservation of video evidence in digital form made it inexcusable for multiple police officers to fail to retain video footage, and she found that the compilation of multiple parties showing negligence and lack of care combined to constitute “bad faith” in the view of modern digital evidence.

I affirm that all the information provided in response to this questionnaire is true, complete and correct, to the best of my ability, and that no relevant matter has been omitted.

Signature



Date: May 16, 2020

Printed Name

Andrea King Robertson