

WOMEN LAWYERS OF VENTURA COUNTY

Women Lawyers of Ventura County serves as one of Ventura County's premier professional organizations for lawyers and business partners interested in advancing the interests of women and girls at the local, state, and national level. WLVC focuses on education, community-building, advocacy, and policy change. Included in these goals is the diversification of the legal field to include women, people of color, members of the LGBTQ+ community. It is the goal and purpose of Women Lawyers of Ventura County to support and encourage qualified candidates seeking positions of influence in local, state, and national races. In the pursuit of increasing the representation of women in judicial positions and positions of leadership, WLVC herein establishes the guidelines for endorsements for political, judicial, and other candidates into office, judicial appointments, and elections.

A. Purpose of Endorsements and Endorsement Committee

Women Lawyers of Ventura County may consider requests for endorsement for judicial position as well as non-partisan County, State or national positions related to the legal community, such as district attorney, city attorney, County board of supervisors, and state and national representatives.

The purpose of providing endorsements is to ensure women's issues, specifically those related to the practice of law, legal profession, and advancement of women in leadership are represented in our community. WLVC's endorsement of an individual indicates that the individual is suitable for the office/position sought and supports WLVC's values and mission.

B. The Evaluation Process

The Committee shall select one of its members to act as point person on each request for endorsement received by the Committee or initiated by the Committee. The candidate has no input or involvement in selecting the point person or other members of the committee who will evaluate the candidate's request for endorsement.

1. The point person will conduct an initial review of the requests or candidates to be evaluated, provide the candidate with the application for endorsement in substantially the same form as included herein, and recommend a process to all other members of the Committee.
2. The point person will contact the candidate to arrange for an interview by phone, via Zoom or in person by at least one member of the Committee.

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With the candidate's permission, the point person may publish the interview via social media or other live stream or on demand viewing. The Committee may also contact references provided in the candidate's request or other material available for the candidate for additional information.

3. The Committee may reach out to competing candidates for the position to invite them to participate and submit an application for endorsement at the discretion of the Committee.
4. The point person will make a recommendation to other members of the Committee as to whether the Committee should recommend endorsement of the candidate to the Board. Committee members will vote by majority rule of all Committee members voting as to whether the Committee will recommend endorsement to the Board.
5. The Committee may render a blanket endorsement of a candidate or may issue an evaluation based on ratings as follows:
 - a. Exceptionally Well Qualified: Possessing qualities and attributes considered to be of remarkable or extraordinary superiority so that, without real doubt, such person is deemed to be fitted to perform functions of the position.
 - b. Well Qualified: Possessing qualities and attributes considered to be worthy of special note as indicative of a superior fitness to perform the functions of the position with a high degree of skill and effectiveness.
 - c. Qualified: Possessing qualities and attributes considered to equip a person to perform the function of judicial officer adequately and satisfactorily.
 - d. Not Qualified: Possessing less than the minimum qualities and attributes considered necessary to perform the function of judicial officer adequately and satisfactorily.
6. The Board will consider the Committee's recommendation at its next Board meeting or Special Meeting. The Board members will vote by majority rule of those present at the meeting as to whether WLVC should affirm, reject, or request additional information for the endorsement. The point person will handle any requests by the Board for additional information.
7. Upon approval by the Board, the point person on the Committee will draft a letter of support for the candidate. The letter of endorsement will be mailed or emailed directly to the agency or organization reviewing the candidate application or to the candidate directly. A copy of said letter will be retained by WLVC and a copy shall be provided to the candidate.
8. If the Board declines endorsement of a candidate, the point person on the Committee may draft a letter informing the candidate of that fact.

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9. The Committee and the Board will make every effort to complete this process within the timeframes set forth by the position's application and evaluation guidelines.

C. The Criteria

When reviewing a candidate's request for endorsement or evaluating a candidate sua sponte, the Committee and the Board will consider the following factors:

1. Whether the candidate has demonstrated a commitment to increasing awareness of issues specific to women, increasing diversity in the legal profession and positions of leadership, to any other minority group, or to a disenfranchised group such as those suffering from mental health issues.
2. Whether the candidate prioritizes the hiring and promoting of qualified women in the organization which they are seeking a leadership position.
3. Integrity/character.
4. General reputation in the legal community, especially with other local minority bar associations and community organizations.
5. Commitment to diversity, inclusivity, and equal justice.
6. The extent to which the candidate is committed to transparency within their department.
7. Other qualifications, skills and factors as determined by the Committee at the time of the evaluation and depending on the position at issue.

D. The Application

See Attached

ENDORSEMENT APPLICATION

Name:

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First

Last

Email:

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Phone:

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Cover Letter: Please attach a cover letter which explains the following: (a) position for which you are applying or running as a candidate; (b) due date for any endorsements (must be at least 45 days from date of submission of application); (c) name, title, address of person whom endorsement letter should be sent (and whether candidate wants a blind copy); (d) candidate's reasons for seeking WLVC endorsement; (e) candidates involvement with WLVC, women's issues, and other diverse groups; (f) specific actions candidate will take to further advance and promote diversity and promotion of women in the agency or organization to which the candidate seeks appointment or election, the implementation of policies that benefit women and other marginalized groups, if applicable and (g) candidates qualifications for position sought.

Resume: Please attach a current resume or Curriculum Vitae.

Personal Data Questionnaire (PDQ) submitted to the Governor's office (for judicial applicants only).

Professional References: Please provide the following information for two professional references:

Name	Phone number	Email Address	Relationship to Candidate

If there is any additional information the candidate seeks to have the WLVC Endorsement Committee consider, please attach it to this application or email it to the Women Lawyers Email address: womenlawyersvc@gmail.com.