

Judicial Performance Evaluation

New Mexico

Scope. A JPE program for District and Metropolitan Court judges was created by Supreme Court order in 1997, and it was extended to appellate judges in 1999. Judges are evaluated midterm and prior to standing for retention.

Commission. The Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission (JPEC) consists of seven attorneys and eight non-attorneys, who are appointed by the Supreme Court from nominations by the Governor, Chief Justice, Speaker of the House, Senate President Pro Tempore, House Minority Leader, Senate Minority Leader, and President of the State Bar.

Criteria. Judges are evaluated in four areas, including legal ability; fairness; communication skills; and preparation, attentiveness, temperament, and control over proceedings.

Data collection. For appellate judges, the JPEC surveys attorneys with whom judges have had direct interaction, current and former law clerks, court staff, trial court judges whose decisions have been appealed, and fellow judges. JPEC also conducts a review of appellate opinions. For trial judges, surveys are sent to attorneys, jurors, court staff, and resource personnel (including, but not limited to, law enforcement, social workers, psychologists, court interpreters, adult and juvenile probation officers, Citizen Review Board, and Court Appointed Special Advocates). Judges also complete a self-evaluation and are interviewed by the commission.

Dissemination. For judges standing for retention, a summary of each judge's overall performance and a retention recommendation are posted on the JPEC website and published in a "Report to Voters," which is released to the media and voters. Midterm evaluations are for self-improvement only and are confidential.

Website. <http://www.nmjpec.org/>