



Supreme Court of California
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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Supreme Court Appoints Four Members to the Applicant Evaluation and Nomination Committee for State Bar Court Judges

Names Justice Sandra Margulies as new chair

San Francisco—The California Supreme Court today announced the appointment of four members to the court’s Applicant Evaluation and Nomination Committee, which solicits and evaluates applicants for appointment to the State Bar Court. Three appointments are for new members, including Justice Sandra L. Margulies, Acting Presiding Justice, First District Court of Appeal, Division One, as chair of the committee, and one is a reappointment to an extended term.

Justice Margulies replaces Judge John Munter, Superior Court of San Francisco County, as chair. Judge Winifred Smith, Superior Court of Alameda County, replaces Justice Maria Rivera, First District Court of Appeal, Division Four. Ms. Nancy Fineman, Attorney, is reappointed to a term ending September 14, 2014, and Mr. Hernán Vera, Attorney, is appointed to a term ending September 20, 2016, both dates reflecting the end of their terms on the Bar’s Board of Trustees. They will join the other current members of the committee, Mr. Kenneth Babcock, Attorney, Ms. Alice Salvo, Attorney, and Mr. Victor Revenko, Public Member.

“I am grateful to all of the committee members, especially Judge Munter, who has served as chair, and Justice Rivera who has been a member for many years,” said Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye “The committee plays an important role in enhancing the public’s trust and confidence in our justice system by objectively vetting candidates for appointment to the State Bar Court by this court, as well as the Governor, the Senate Committee on Rules, and the Speaker of the Assembly. The State Bar Court is an important mechanism for protection of the public.”

The committee was established by the Supreme Court to ensure that individuals selected to serve on the State Bar Court have been evaluated objectively. The State Bar Court is the forum in which complaints of attorney misconduct and discipline are heard and discipline is recommended to the Supreme Court as appropriate.

The committee considers whether appointees possess not only the statutorily enumerated qualifications, but also any qualifications that may be required by the Supreme Court to assist in the exercise of its ultimate authority over the discipline and admission of attorneys (See *Obrien v. Jones* (2000) 23 Cal.4th 40; *In re Attorney Discipline* (1998) 19 Cal.4th 582; Cal. Const., art VI, sec. 9).

The seven member committee is appointed by the court and consists of four members of the State Bar in good standing, two retired or active judicial officers, and one public member who has never been a member of the State Bar or admitted to practice before any court in the United States. Two of the attorney members must be present members of the Board of Governors of the State Bar (but may not be serving on the Board's Discipline Committee). The rule requires that two current members of the Bar Board of Governors (now Trustees) be members of the committee. (Cal. Rule of Court, rule 9.11(a)(2).

The Board of Trustees of the State Bar, in consultation with the Supreme Court if necessary, must provide facilities and support staff needed by the committee to carry out its obligations under Rule [9.11](#).

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The Supreme Court of California is the state's highest court and its decisions are binding on all other California state courts. The court's primary role is to decide matters of statewide importance and to maintain uniformity in the law throughout California by reviewing matters from the six districts of the California Courts of Appeal and the fifty-eight county superior courts (the trial courts). Among its other duties, the court also decides all capital appeals and related matters and reviews both attorney and judicial disciplinary matters.