

## Oregon State Bar Judicial Voters Guide 2024

1) Full name:

**Wes Williams**

2) Campaign web site (if applicable):

**Weswilliamsforjudge.org**

3) List college and law school attended, including dates of attendance, degrees.

**I attended Southern Oregon State College from 1979 to 1981**

**I attended Portland State University from 1982 to 1984. I earned a B.S. in Social Science and an Oregon Teaching Certificate.**

**I attended the University of Oregon, School of Law from 1993 to 1996 and earned a Doctor of Jurisprudence.**

4) List employment since graduation from law school, including years employed, your position and the nature of the practice or activity.

**From 1996 to 2019, I owned and operated my own law firm, Law Office of Wes Williams.**

5) List state and federal bars, courts and administrative bodies to which you are presently admitted and the date of admission. If desired, list previous admissions.

**I have been a member of the Oregon State Bar since 1996. I have been an Oregon Circuit Court Judge since 2019.**

**When I was a lawyer, I was also licensed to practice in Federal Court.**

6) If desired, list publications and/or articles you have authored.

**N/A**

7) List community, teaching (Continuing Legal Education or otherwise) or civic activities.

**I am a sponsor of the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show. I volunteer for the Lions Club, including being a co-chair of its Coats for Kids program and the City of La Grande's urban forestry program. I have also volunteered at the La Grande farmers market and Oregon Rural Action, and sponsored youth soccer for over a decade.**

8) Prior to your becoming a judge, what was the general character of your legal practice? Where appropriate indicate any legal areas in which you concentrated.

**I had a general law practice which focused on property law, criminal defense and civil litigation.**

9) List your judicial experience, including as a pro tem, and/or service on an administrative tribunal, or justice, municipal, tax, circuit, or appellate court.

**I have been a Circuit Court Judge since January 2019.**

10) Describe the general character of your judicial work over the past five years. Indicate the nature of the cases over which you preside, any specialty courts or court programs, and any legal areas in which you concentrate.

**I handle variety of civil and criminal cases, but primarily civil matters.**

11) Describe any judicial experience in appellate courts not included above.

**N/A**

12) Describe any experience serving as an arbitrator or mediator.

**Prior to being elected as a Circuit Court Judge, I regularly served as an arbitrator in civil litigation cases. I also serve as a settlement judge.**

13) List any bar association memberships. Where appropriate, list officer positions, committee assignments or other notable work.

**N/A**

14) Describe any bar association or judicial department committees, task forces, or special projects in which you have been involved.

**I am one of the judicial members on the council on court procedures.**

15) Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a violation of any federal, state, county or municipal law, regulation or ordinance? If so, please give details. Do not include parking offenses or traffic violations for which a fine of less than \$500 was imposed.

**None**

16) Have you ever been the subject of a formal disciplinary proceeding as an attorney or judge? If so, please give the particulars and the result. *Include formal proceedings only.*

**None**

17) What attracted you to a judicial career?

**In my 22 years as a trial lawyer, I had the honor of appearing before some patient and learned judges. These judges believed strongly, as I do, in due process of law. I was encouraged to run for election by two retired judges, with whom I also practices law, Judge Jeffery Wallace and Judge Milo Pope. All who appear before the court deserve to be treated equally before the law and with respect. I believed that Union County needed such a judge.**

18) Briefly describe your philosophy of the judicial role, the qualities that are most important for the role, and the greatest challenges to the role.

**As I have often said the most important quality of a judge is patience and respect. We often call this a judicial temperament and it is essential in the court room. Many who appear in court are often suffering trauma and are scared and confused. Appearing in court can be a traumatic event for many people. A judge must appreciate this and be what we now call "trauma informed." This means having the ability to listen patiently and explain the court procedures and the court's decisions in such a way as to not contribute to an already traumatic event.**

19) Briefly describe a case, or a legal issue on which you worked, of which you are particularly proud, or which is reflective of your legal ability, work ethic, judicial philosophy, or temperament.

**I recently was called on to determine whether Oregon's pre-condemnation statute was constitutional. The narrow issue centered on when just compensation should be due the land owner for certain pre-condemnation activities. As you might expect, this required researching the legislative history of Oregon's pre-condemnation statute; reading the state and federal case law on the question; and finally analyzing the statute in light of the Oregon Constitution and then the Federal Constitution. I then wrote an opinion on my findings. The case is now on appeal.**

20) Briefly describe an issue, related to Oregon's justice system, that is of particular interest or concern to you, or that you have interest in working toward improving.

**We must make it easier for our citizens to afford legal counsel in civil actions as well as criminal actions. People of modest means are at a serious disadvantage when they find themselves in a legal dispute. We need to invest in legal aid, so that people of modest means may have legal counsel when faced with foreclosure, litigating insurance disputes, and the many other legal troubles that come their way.**

21) Briefly describe a legal figure (personal, fictional or historical), whom you admire and why.

**Atticus Finch of "To Kill a Mockingbird" is my fictional legal hero. He had the courage to stand for justice and represent the underdog knowing it would hurt his legal career and even bring harm to his family. My real life legal hero is Milo Pope. Milo was a Circuit Court Judge of Baker County when I first met him. I tried many cases before Judge Pope. He was always fair and honest. When he left the bench, we tried many cases together "striking a blow for justice," as he would say.**

22) State any other information that you regard as pertinent to your candidacy.

**I care.**