

# MONTANA SUPREME COURT

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Date: August 30, 2024

Subject: Call for Applications for Chief Water Court Judge

Contact: Beth McLaughlin, 406-841-2966

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The Judicial Branch will begin accepting applications today through September 30, 2024, for the Chief Water Court Judge. Current Chief Water Court Judge Russ McElyea, who has served the Water Court since 2012, is retiring at the end 2024. The position is appointed by the Chief Justice for the duration of the current term expiring on June 30, 2025.

Applicants must submit a cover letter and a resume by September 30, 2024, at 5 p.m. to [bmclaughlin@mt.gov](mailto:bmclaughlin@mt.gov). Applications must be submitted electronically. In order to be considered an applicant must be a citizen of the United States who has resided in the state two years immediately before taking office and admitted to the practice of law in Montana for at least five years prior to the date of appointment.

Public comment will begin October 1, 2024. Applicants must receive a minimum of three support letters in order to be forwarded for consideration.

The Water Court was created by the 1979 Montana Legislature. It has exclusive jurisdiction over the adjudication of all water-rights claims in Montana. More than 200,000 water rights claims will eventually be adjudicated through the Water Court.

The person appointed to the position is subject to Senate confirmation in 2025.

# Chief Water Court Judge Appointment Schedule

Notice from Chief Justice	August 29, 2024
Notice of vacancy; request for applications (cover letter and resume)	August 30, 2024
Application deadline	September 30, 2024
Public Comment Opens	October 1, 2024
Public Comment closes; applicants with a minimum of three support letters forwarded to Chief Justice	October 31, 2024
Appointment deadline	December 1, 2024

*\*Current incumbent's four-year term ends June 30, 2025*