

## **THURSTON COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES & CONTACTS:**



**JUDGE CAROL MURPHY**

Murphy was elected to the Thurston County Superior Court bench and began her first term in 2009. She is currently serving her fourth term as Superior Court Judge. Her experience on the bench includes two years as Criminal Presiding Judge, three years as Drug Court Presiding Judge, and four years as Presiding Judge for the Thurston County Superior Court. In her current trial judge rotation, Judge Murphy presides over civil and felony criminal trials and civil motions and administrative appeals.

Before her election, she practiced in Olympia with the Attorney General's Office for more than 17 years. Judge Murphy's legal career included many Superior Court and U.S. District Court trials and appeals at every level in state and federal courts. Judge Murphy is actively involved in her community, serving leadership roles in legal and service organizations, and presenting legal educational programs to various classes and groups. She currently serves on the statewide Civic Learning Council.

**Judicial Assistant: Kristine Maine – [Email](#)- 360-786-5557**



#### **JUDGE JAMES DIXON**

appointed to the Thurston County Superior Court bench by Governor Christine Gregoire in February 2012 upon the retirement of Judge Christine Pomeroy. At the time, Dixon was a senior and managing partner at Dixon Rodgers Kee Pearson in Olympia where he was a peer review rated "AV" by Martindale-Hubbell, indicating the highest level of professional excellence.

Judge Dixon earned bachelor's degrees in Philosophy (with honors) and Urban Affairs from the University of Puget Sound in 1980. He received a Master of Public Administration degree from Rice University in 1983. He also worked as a Special Agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a number of years before entering the University of Puget Sound School of Law, where he graduated in 1990.

Judge Dixon began his legal career in 1990 as an associate attorney with a family law firm and within a few years focused his practice on criminal defense. For more than 22 years he was a trial attorney representing clients in family law and criminal law matters including misdemeanor, juvenile offender and felony cases. He is a former President of the Thurston County Bar Association and has served on several committees and boards in the community including the South Puget Sound Community College Paralegal Advisory Committee and the Thurston County Volunteer Legal Clinic. Judge Dixon received the Daniel Bigelow Thurston County Bar Association Lawyer of the Year award in 2011 for his outstanding professional and community service.

**Judicial Assistant: Kristine Maine - [Email](#) - 360-786-5557**



**JUDGE ERIK D. PRICE**

Prior to his election in 2012, Judge Price was a lawyer in private practice with a 20-year career specializing in civil litigation and regulatory and administrative law. He is a graduate of the University of Washington School of Law. As an Olympia native, he is active in the community and enjoys outdoor activities.

**Judicial Assistant: Terrisa Burke** [Email](#) 360-709-3052



**JUDGE MARY SUE WILSON**

Wilson was appointed by Governor Jay Inslee to the Thurston County Superior Court and began serving as a Superior Court Judge in October 2014. Judge Wilson currently serves at Family and Juvenile Court where she presides over family law, juvenile and dependency bench trials and pre-trial hearings. Previously she served as a trial judge, presiding over civil and criminal jury trials and a variety of pre-trial criminal and civil calendars.

Prior to her appointment, Judge Wilson served the people of the State of Washington for over two decades as an assistant Attorney General. In this capacity she represented state agencies and state officials in state and federal trial and appeals courts on a range of statutory, constitutional, and environmental matters. She also served as chief counsel to three Washington State Department of Ecology directors and as a member of three Attorney's General leadership teams.

Judge Wilson graduated Summa Cum Laude from Gonzaga University School of Law in 1989. Following graduation, she served as a judicial clerk to former Washington State Supreme Court Justice Robert Brachtenbach.

A native Washingtonian, Judge Wilson has resided in Thurston County for over thirty years. She serves as a board member of Thurston County's Dispute Resolution Center and the Thurston County Volunteer Legal Services. She has served on local childcare and school boards, is active in leadership and youth ministry at her church, and previously served on the Washington Women Lawyers Capitol Chapter board.

**Judicial Assistant: Doug Bales - [Email](#) - 360-786-5577**



**JUDGE JOHN C. SKINDER**

Skinder was elected to the Thurston County Superior Court in 2016; he began his first term in 2017 and started his second term this year. Judge Skinder currently serves as the Chief Criminal Judge. He also presides over Thurston County's Drug Court.

Previously, he served as a trial judge; in which he presided over criminal and civil jury trials, bench trials, and motion and hearing calendars. He also heard appeals from administrative agencies.

Before his election to the bench, Judge Skinder served the people of the State of Washington as a deputy prosecuting attorney in Thurston County (2000-2016) and as a deputy prosecuting attorney in Lewis County (1997-2000). He is a former President of the Thurston County Bar Association.

Judge Skinder graduated *cum laude* from Seattle University School of Law in 1996 and graduated from the College of William & Mary in 1992.

Judge Skinder and his wife Angela are actively involved in the community.

**Judicial Assistant: Ashleigh Clark - [Email](#) - 360-786-5563**



JUDGE SHARONDA D. AMAMILO

Judge Sharonda D. Amamilo was elected to the Thurston County Superior Court Bench in 2020 and began her historic first term in 2021. Sharonda is the first person of color to serve as a Judge in Thurston County. Sharonda is committed to protecting the constitutional rights of all citizens, bringing diversity of experience and background to objectively deliver compassionate justice to litigants appearing before the court; many with traumatic backgrounds. Prior to joining the bench, she served with the Thurston County Public Defense office for 12 years co-leading systemic change as a member of the management team from 2014 until her departure in 2019. In her current assignment, she presides over criminal and civil jury trials, bench trials, and motion and hearing calendars. She also hears appeals from administrative agencies. Judge Amamilo's family moved from the small rural agricultural community of Evergreen, NC to Fayetteville, NC when she was 12 years old. She is currently a Chief Warrant Officer Four (CW4) with the U.S. Army Reserves and has called Washington State home since being stationed here from Germany, at the end of her active military service, in 1992. Sharonda and her husband Reuben have 7 adult children.

She received her Bachelor's degree in Adult Education from Southern Illinois University-McChord, AFB ('95); her Masters of Business Administration degree from Saint Martin's College ('97) in Lacey, WA and her Juris Doctor from Seattle University School of Law ('03). Judge Amamilo's Personality Profile is an Advocate – Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling, and Judging (INFJ).

Her Top 5 Strengths are: Relator, Learner, Connectedness, Strategic, and Achiever. Judge Amamilo sees herself as a "Servant-Leader-Problem-Solver!"

**Judicial Assistant: Doug Bales - [Email](#) - 360-786-5577**



## **FAMILY & JUVENILE COURT**



**JUDGE CHRISTINE SCHALLER**

Judge Christine Schaller was elected to the Thurston County Superior Court in 2012 and began her service in January 2013. From July 2015 through July 2017, she served as the Chief Judge at Family and Juvenile Court (FJC). Judge served as Presiding Judge for the Court in 2018 and 2019. Her current rotation is hearing criminal matters and as the Drug Court Judge.

Immediately prior to her election, Judge Schaller served for almost eight years as a FJC Court Commissioner for Thurston County Superior Court. While Court Commissioner, she presided over all types of cases heard at FJC. In 2009, then Commissioner Schaller was named “Jurist of the Year” by the Washington State Bar Association, Family Law Section.

At the start of her legal career in the fall of 1996, Judge Schaller was an associate attorney at the Olympia law firm Foster, Foster and Schaller. Her practice areas focused on family and juvenile law, criminal defense and estate planning and probate. She was a partner with the firm from June 2000 until she was appointed as Court Commissioner in February 2005.

**Judicial Assistant: Yvonne Pier 360-709-3247 [Email](#)**



**JUDGE CHRIS LANESE**

Judge Chris Lanese was elected to the Thurston County Superior Court in 2016. Starting in January 2021, Judge Lanese began serving a two year rotation as a Family and Juvenile Court Judge. Previously, he served as a trial judge; in which he presided over criminal and civil jury trials, bench trials, and motion and hearing calendars. He also heard appeals from administrative agencies.

Prior to his election, Judge Lanese served the people of the State of Washington as a Managing Assistant Attorney General, representing clients in complex lawsuits ranging from jury trials in Superior Court to appeals before the Washington Supreme Court. Before joining the Attorney General's Office, Judge Lanese worked in private practice, representing clients in intellectual property and business litigation. He has served on the Attorney General Office's Ethics, Opinions, and Electronic Discovery Committees and the Washington State Bar Association's Committee on Professional Ethics, Pro Bono and Legal Aid Committee, and Amicus Committee.

Judge Lanese is active in his community and has served on the boards of the Family Support Center of South Sound, South Sound YMCA, Eastside Cooperative Preschool, Lincoln Elementary School Community Council, Thurston County Bar Association, and Government Lawyers Bar Association. Prior to his election, he engaged in extensive pro bono work representing clients in family law and civil rights matters.

Judge Lanese graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School and summa cum laude from Dartmouth College.



Judge Lanese and his wife live in Olympia with their four children.

**Judicial Assistant: Sandy Smith 360-709-3202 [Email](#)**

### **SUPERIOR COURT FULL-TIME COURT COMMISSIONERS**



**COMMISSIONER INDU THOMAS**

Commissioner Thomas was appointed in 2007. She presides over pretrial family law matters; parenting plan and child support modifications; domestic violence, unlawful harassment, stalking, vulnerable adult and sexual assault protection orders; juvenile offender matters; youth at risk and truancy cases and involuntary treatment cases on a rotational basis.

Prior to her appointment, Commissioner Thomas served as non-partisan staff counsel to the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee. Her areas of responsibility included mental health, substance abuse, juvenile justice, public assistance and child welfare. Commissioner Thomas served more than 8 years of her career in the courtroom as a litigator. Between 1999 and 2006 Commissioner Thomas served as an Assistant Attorney General with the Washington State Attorney General's Office and represented the Department of Social and Health Services. Prior to relocating to Thurston County, she served as a public defender with Society of Counsel Representing Accused Persons in King County. Commissioner Thomas completed her undergraduate work in 1991 at Case Western Reserve University. She taught school for a few years in Houston, Texas before heading back to Ohio to complete her education. She graduated from Cleveland-Marshall School of Law in 1996.

Commissioner Thomas has lived and worked in Thurston County since 1999. She is actively involved in the community having served on several community boards and through many leadership, music and education ministries at her church. During her time as a Commissioner she has served on three Superior Court Judges Association Committees: Ethics, Therapeutic Courts and Education. She is currently a member of the Hon. Robert J. Bryan Inn of Court; serving as a co-chair of the Superior Court Judges Education Committee and as one of the Deans of the State Judicial College.

**Judicial Assistant contact information- 360-709-3247**



**Commissioner Nathan L. Kortokrax**

**(360)628-8878, age 41**

**4401 Governor Lane, SE, Olympia, WA 98501**

**2950 Poppy Lane, SW, Olympia, WA 98512**

Nathan Kortokrax was appointed as a Court Commissioner to Thurston County Superior Court in May 2017. He currently presides over domestic violence hearings, family law settlement conferences, and dependency settlement conferences at Thurston County Family & Juvenile Court. He also hears criminal matters at Superior Court.

Commissioner Kortokrax is a graduate of the Ohio Northern University Pettit College of Law. Upon moving to Washington in 2006, he practiced law at a small firm in Clark County. He moved to Thurston County in 2008 and worked for local firms where his practice focused primarily on dependency, family law, and Guardian Ad Litem work. Beginning in 2012, he started serving as a pro tem judicial officer for Thurston County. Immediately prior to being appointed to the Thurston County bench, he served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Torts division of the Washington State Attorney General's Office.

**Judicial Assistant Contact Information- 360-709-3202**



**Commissioner Rebekah Zinn**

Commissioner for the Thurston County Superior Court in 2019. Before her appointment, she was a staff attorney for the court for nearly a decade, where she primarily supported the trial judges with civil litigation, including complex litigation and cases of significant public importance. For eight years, she also served as a part-time court commissioner.

Previously, Commissioner Zinn was a staff attorney for Division Two of the Washington State Court of Appeals and clerked for the Honorable Christine Quinn-Brintnall. Commissioner Zinn graduated magna cum laude from Seattle University Law School in 2006. She received a B.A. with an English and Philosophy double major, cum laude, from Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Commissioner Zinn has devoted her legal career to increasing meaningful access to courts through plain talk and through equitable and accessible court procedures. She is honored to serve as the Chair of the Washington State Pattern Forms Committee. She is also a graduate of Leadership Thurston County.

In her free time, she enjoys volunteer farming, spoiling her terrier, and practicing martial arts. Originally from New Mexico, she has called Olympia home since 2001.

**Judicial Assistant Contact Information- 360-709-3247**

### **Official Court Reporters**

For information regarding the Official Court Reporters and how to order transcripts please click on this [page](#).

## 2019 JUDICIAL EVALUATION SURVEY RESULTS

A total of 392 surveys were emailed out to TCBA members and a total of 80 surveys were completed, representing 20.4 percent of the TCBA membership. Responses were tabulated and an average rating for all respondents was calculated. Only ratings between 1 and 5 were included; "Don't Know" and items not rated were excluded when calculating the averages. The averaged results in each category are listed below. The comments are available to TCBA members upon request. Please email Heather at [tcba.info@gmail.com](mailto:tcba.info@gmail.com).

### **Superior Court Judge Anne Hirsch**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.02
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.09
Treats Participants Fairly	3.95
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	3.85
Would Vote to Re-elect	84.8%

### **Superior Court Judge Carol Murphy**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	3.83
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.22
Treats Participants Fairly	3.41
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	3.63
Would Vote to Re-elect	66.1%

### **Superior Court Judge Mary Sue Wilson**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.15
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.30
Treats Participants Fairly	4.24
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	4.02
Would Vote to Re-elect	95.7%

### **Superior Court Judge James Dixon**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.49
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.55
Treats Participants Fairly	4.42
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	4.47
Would Vote to Re-elect	95%

**Superior Court Judge Christine Schaller**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.65
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.68
Treats Participants Fairly	4.04
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	4.46
Would Vote to Re-elect	95.5%

**Superior Court Judge Erik D. Price**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.19
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.43
Treats Participants Fairly	4.07
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	4.15
Would Vote to Re-elect	92.2%

**Superior Court Judge John Skinder**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.15
Prepared for Court Proceedings	3.39
Treats Participants Fairly	4.03
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	3.37
Would Vote to Re-elect	78.4%

**Superior Court Judge Chris Lanese**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.58
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.70
Treats Participants Fairly	4.67
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	4.60
Would Vote to Re-elect	96.3%

**District Court Judge Brett Buckley**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.44
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.31

Treats Participants Fairly	4.52
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	4.04
Would Vote to Re-elect	93.6%

**District Court Judge Samuel G. Meyer**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.15
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.14
Treats Participants Fairly	4.02
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	4.19
Would Vote to Re-elect	95.3%

**District Court Judge Kalo Wilcox**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	3.69
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.07
Treats Participants Fairly	4.33
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	3.68
Would Vote to Re-elect	80.9%

**Commissioner Jonathon Lack**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.09
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.15
Treats Participants Fairly	4.40
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	4.09
Support Continuing as Commissioner	91.7%

**Commissioner Paul Wohl**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.31
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.49
Treats Participants Fairly	4.43
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	4.43
Support Continuing as Commissioner	94.6%



**Commissioner Nathan Kortokrax**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	3.89
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.11
Treats Participants Fairly	3.81
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	4.02
Support Continuing as Commissioner	88.6%

**Commissoner Indu Thomas**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	3.64
Prepared for Court Proceedings	3.87
Treats Participants Fairly	3.17
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	3.54
Support Continuing as Commissioner	70.5%

**Commissioner Rebekah zinn**

Knowledge of the Law and Court Rules	4.13
Prepared for Court Proceedings	4.18
Treats Participants Fairly	3.82
Makes Efficient Use of Court Time	3.77
Support Continuing as Commissioner	71.1%