



**THE KOREAN AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
(KABA) GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATIONS FOR ENDORSEMENTS OF  
CANDIDATES FOR JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS (2024)**

A. Non-Discrimination Policy

KABA does not discriminate based upon race, color, religious creed, ancestry, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, pregnancy, medical conditions, military or veteran status.

B. Applicability

These guidelines apply only to endorsements issued by KABA as an organization. Individuals such as KABA board members, Past Presidents, and members of KABA are not precluded from issuing their own personal endorsements, opinions, and preferences.

C. Initiation of Endorsement Process

Applicants for KABA's endorsement for judicial appointments must initiate the endorsement process by submitting an application to the KABA Judicial Endorsement Committee (Committee). The application shall include but is not limited to the following:

1. Completion of the KABA APPLICATION FOR JUDICIAL ENDORSEMENT FORM;

2. An attachment of a true and correct copy of their Personal Data Questionnaire (PDQ) submitted to the Governor of the State of California's office for judicial appointment or a federal agency of the United States of America;

3. An attachment of a letter which describes the applicant's participation with and contributions to KABA and/or the communities which KABA serves; and

4. An attachment of a list of the last five attorneys with whom the applicant has tried a case and at least one trial judge familiar with the applicant's trial experience including their contact information.

Once the application is completed, the application and attachments shall be submitted to the Committee via email to (email address to be provided).

Applicants shall allow the Board of Governors (Board) and Committee at least 60 days from the date the request for endorsement is completed and submitted in which to conclude their investigation and endorsement process. KABA reserves the right to unilaterally extend the time in which to complete its process of investigation and evaluation of the applicant's request for endorsement for any reason.

D. Evaluation Process for Endorsement

Upon receipt of a request for endorsement and supporting documentation, the Committee shall investigate and evaluate the applicant's qualifications. The Committee shall be comprised of not less than three members who are all KABA governors and/or members of the Board's choosing. The factors which will be considered include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. A member of the State Bar of California in good standing;
2. Professional experience;
3. Professional and personal reputation;
4. Integrity and character;
5. Bias, if any;
6. Prior judicial or quasi-judicial experience;
7. Industry and diligence;
8. Temperament, civility and professional collegiality;
9. Civic and community activities, including KABA membership and contributions;
10. Commitment to diversity, including but not limited to interests and concerns of the Asian Pacific American and other minority communities; and
11. Opinions and recommendations of trusted affiliate bar associations.

The Committee may confer with the references provided, members of the judiciary, lawyers, and/or others having knowledge of the applicant's aforementioned attributes. The Committee shall have the discretion to request additional information from the applicant relevant to the evaluation of the applicant. The manner in which information may be sought, collected and obtained includes, but is not limited to a written questionnaire, telephonic communications, in-person communications, and personal interview. The method of obtaining information shall be left to the discretion of the Committee. All information received and the

sources thereof, shall be treated as confidential, as further outlined in Section F below.

The Committee shall have discretion to reject evaluation requests in the event it is unable to corroborate information provided in the submission. The Committee shall select one of its members to act as a liaison on each endorsement request. The applicant has no input or involvement in selecting the liaison or other members of the Committee who will evaluate the applicant's request for endorsement based on the following process:

1. The Committee will conduct an initial review of the application materials.
2. The Committee may contact the applicant to arrange for an interview by at least one Committee member. The Committee may also contact and question references provided in the candidate's PDQ for additional information.
3. The Committee will request that the applicant provide a statement in person to the Board.
4. The Committee will decide as to whether it should recommend endorsement of the applicant to the Board. The Committee may also recommend abstaining from acting on the application for endorsement. The Committee will vote by majority rule of all Committee members as to whether the Committee will recommend endorsement to the Board. If the Committee vote is an equal split, the Committee shall provide such information relating to the split vote to the Board who will then decide on the endorsement application.
5. A letter will be submitted on behalf of the Committee to the Board stating the Committee's recommendation within 30 days of its vote.
6. If the Committee decides to recommend endorsement of the applicant, the Committee will issue one of four ratings in its letter to the Board as follows:

**Exceptionally Well Qualified:** Possessing qualities and attributes of remarkable or extraordinary superiority that enable them to perform the judicial function with distinction including a commitment to the principles of diversity and equality.

**Well Qualified:** Possessing qualities and attributes indicative of a superior fitness to perform the judicial function with a high degree of skill and effectiveness including a commitment to the principles of diversity and equality.

**Qualified:** Possessing qualities and attributes sufficient to perform the judicial function adequately and satisfactorily.

**Not Qualified:** Possessing less than the minimum qualities and attributes.

E. Procedures Pertaining to the Actions of the Board on the Recommendation of the Judicial Endorsement Committee

1. The Board will consider the Committee's letter of recommendation. The Committee Chairperson or designee will present the Committee's recommendation to the Board. Board members will vote on the Committee's recommendation pursuant to applicable KABA bylaws and/or any existing rules related to its voting procedures. In so voting, the Board shall affirm, reject, table and/or request additional information in response to the Committee's letter of recommendation. The Committee shall respond to any requests by the Board for additional information.
2. The Board, upon reaching a decision, reserves the right to inform or not inform the applicant of the decision whether to endorse or not endorse the applicant.
3. The Committee will send a letter of endorsement to the Office of the Governor of the State of California or the Office of the President of the United States of America and the appropriate committees of Congress if the Board votes to endorse the applicant.
4. The applicant agrees to inform the Committee of any changes to the application or developments in the applicant's practice or personal life that may have an impact, whether favorable or adverse, to their application for KABA's endorsement and/or judicial appointment. Failure to do so may result in the termination or withdrawal of KABA's endorsement and its evaluation of the application.

F. Confidentiality

The applicant agrees that the Committee and Board's process, investigation and decisions concerning and relating to the application for KABA's endorsement shall remain confidential and shall not be disclosed or discoverable to the applicant or any person, organization or entity representing or acting on behalf of the applicant. This agreement of confidentiality includes and extends to any and all communications, whether written, electronic or oral, concerning and relating to the application, investigation, evaluation and decisions regarding the applicant and her/his application. The Board reserves the right to inform or not inform the applicant of the decision whether to endorse or not endorse the applicant. Any disclosure of information pertaining to the endorsement process whether intended or accidental by any individual without the express written unanimous consent and authorization of the entire Board for such disclosure shall not be deemed a waiver of the terms of confidentiality as set forth herein. The applicant must agree to the terms as set forth in paragraph F of these Guidelines by signing the AGREEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY clause contained in the APPLICATION FOR JUDICIAL ENDORSEMENT FORM.