



ALBERTA COURT OF JUSTICE

Presentation by:

Chief Justice Jim Hunter

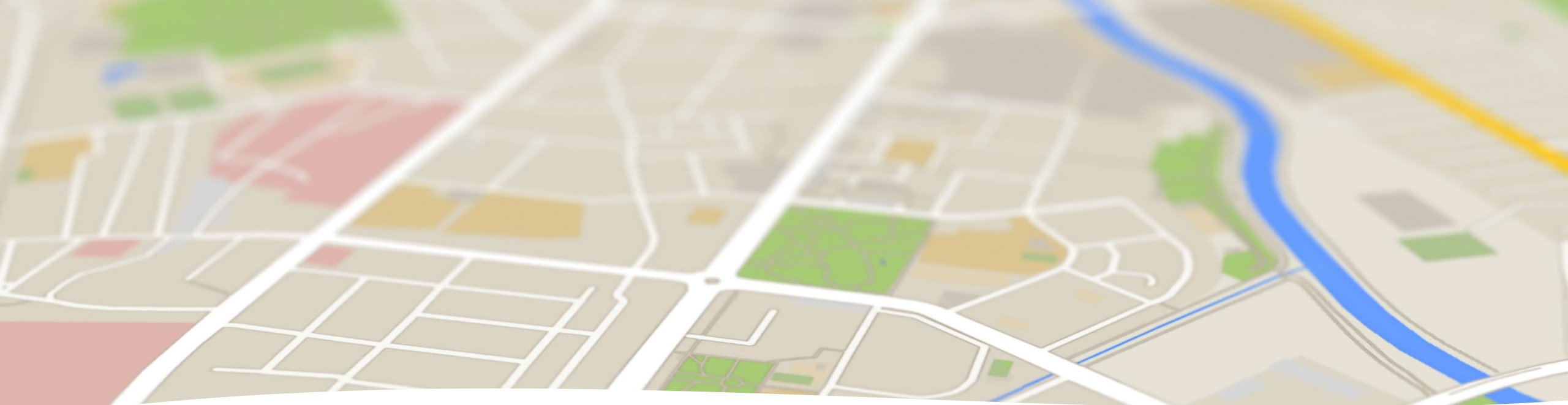
Deputy Chief Justice Joanne Durant



Welcome to the Court of Justice

- Formerly known as the Provincial Court of Alberta
 - Originally a frontline court limited in jurisdiction and presided over by magistrates
- Our Court sits in 72 locations across the province
 - South Region, Calgary and Regional, Central Region, Edmonton Region and North Region
 - Large urban centres, base courts and many regional locations
 - Chateh (NW), Fort Chipewyan (NE), Pincher Creek (SW) and Medicine Hat (SE)
- Our Court is comprised of more than 200 Judicial Officers – Justices and Justices of the Peace
- [Strategic Plan 2024-2027](#)





Jurisdiction

- All criminal matters in the province begin in our Court and over 95% conclude in our Court
- Civil matters up to a monetary limit of \$100,000
- All child protection matters, family and youth court, regulatory offences and Fatality Inquiries, provincial procedures and bylaw matters, and traffic court
- Unlike our colleagues in the Court of King's Bench, we have specialized divisions and specialized courts



Justices of the Peace

- Justices of the Peace play an essential role in the delivery of court services to Albertans
- They have significant judicial decision-making authority that impacts the liberty, security and privacy of Albertans

Justices of the Peace

- To be appointed, must have a minimum of 5 years as a practicing lawyer and be in good standing with the Law Society of Alberta
- Full-time, part-time appointments
 - 10-year tenure with annual extensions for maximum of 7 years as ad hoc*
- No obligation to take shifts if appointed part-time
 - Can carry on a law practice but not in the areas of criminal or family law
- 10 paid education days per year
- Shift differential (as set out in the Regulations)
- \$3,500 Professional Development Allowance per year, attendance at judicial education conferences, and access to judicial services, education planning and research assistance

Justices of the Peace

Types of Appointment

Full-Time

- Fixed salary of \$175,588 per regulations
- 30 days vacation
- 13.1% in lieu of pension
- Standard Blue Cross benefits
- Personal office
- May be assigned any shift except stat holidays

Part-Time

- Earns per shift rate of \$1,109 as calculated by the Justice of the Peace Compensation Commission
 - Per diem rate includes:
 - Compensation for benefits
 - 20% overhead supplement

Per Diem Calculation Formula

- Full-Time Salary
- + 13.1% (*in lieu of pension*)
- + \$5,000 (*benefits*)
- + 20% (*office and overhead*)

Justices of the Peace Shifts and Scheduling

- 24/7/365 coverage, including the “midnight shift”
- Full-time Justices of the Peace are exempt from statutory holidays
- Shift Work outside of standard business hours:
 - Full-Time: At least 25%
 - Part-Time: At least 50%
- Flexibility to suit your lifestyle



Justices of the Peace Hearing Office

- Located in Calgary and Edmonton
- Services are available 24/7, 365 days a year
- Work includes:
 - All first appearance bail hearings (virtual)
 - *Criminal Code* urgent and non-urgent applications, including Search Warrants, Feeney Warrants, Blood Warrants and Production Orders
 - Urgent applications regarding child protection and apprehension, *Missing Persons Act* applications
 - Arrest Warrants and summonses for new criminal matters



Justices of the Peace Hearing Office

- Serves more than 150 law enforcement agencies, children's services, and social services agencies
- Handles an average of 130,000 service requests per year
- Also preside over Provincial Offences Procedures (Traffic Court) in 31 locations around the province
- Criminal applications court in Calgary (peace bonds)
- Civil Pre-Trial Conferences in Grande Prairie and Red Deer





Justices

- Criminal
 - Criminal Rules of Court
 - Bail Hearings, Docket, Pre-Trial Conferences, Case Management, Preliminary Hearings, Applications, Trials, Sentencings
- Civil
 - Pre Trial-Conferences, Case Management, Binding Judicial Dispute Resolution Hearings, Applications and Trials up to \$100,000 limit
- Family & Youth
 - Child Protection, Pre-Trial Conferences, Judicial Dispute Resolution Hearings, Applications, Docket, Bail Hearings, Trials

Specialized, Therapeutic & Indigenous Courts

- Drug Treatment Courts
 - Established in 2005
 - Located in Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Grande Prairie and Fort McMurray
- Mental Health Court
 - Established in April 2018
 - Located in Edmonton
 - Planning stages – Grande Prairie, Red Deer, Stony Plain
 - A nurse from Forensic Assessment and Community Services attends court – direct access to health information

Specialized, Therapeutic & Indigenous Courts

- Domestic Conflict Courts
 - First opened in Calgary in May 2000
 - Now also located in Lethbridge, Edmonton and Grande Prairie
 - Specially trained prosecutors, duty counsel, police officers and case workers
 - Address matters related to domestic violence as quickly as possible to preserve the family integrity if it is safe and possible to do so



Indigenous Courts

- Calgary Indigenous Court
 - Opened September 2019
- Edmonton Indigenous Court
 - Opened February 2022
- Lethbridge Indigenous Court
 - Planning Stage
- Also have several Indigenous courts on First Nation land
 - Siksika Indigenous Court, Tsuut'ina Peacemaking Court, Alexis and Chateh

Indigenous Courts

- St. Paul Healing to Wellness Court
 - Opened June 2023
- There are plans to expand to Cold Lake and Bonnyville



Indigenous Justice Strategy

- The [Indigenous Justice Strategy](#) (IJS) sets out the Court's responses to the calls to action and recommendations of numerous commissions and inquiries in the past, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, as well as the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry
- It is updated annually to demonstrate the Court's ongoing commitment to working towards providing a culturally relevant and holistic system of justice for the indigenous peoples and communities we serve
 - Indigenous Shadowing Program
 - Restorative Justice Program with the Court of King's Bench
 - All Criminal matters eligible for referral

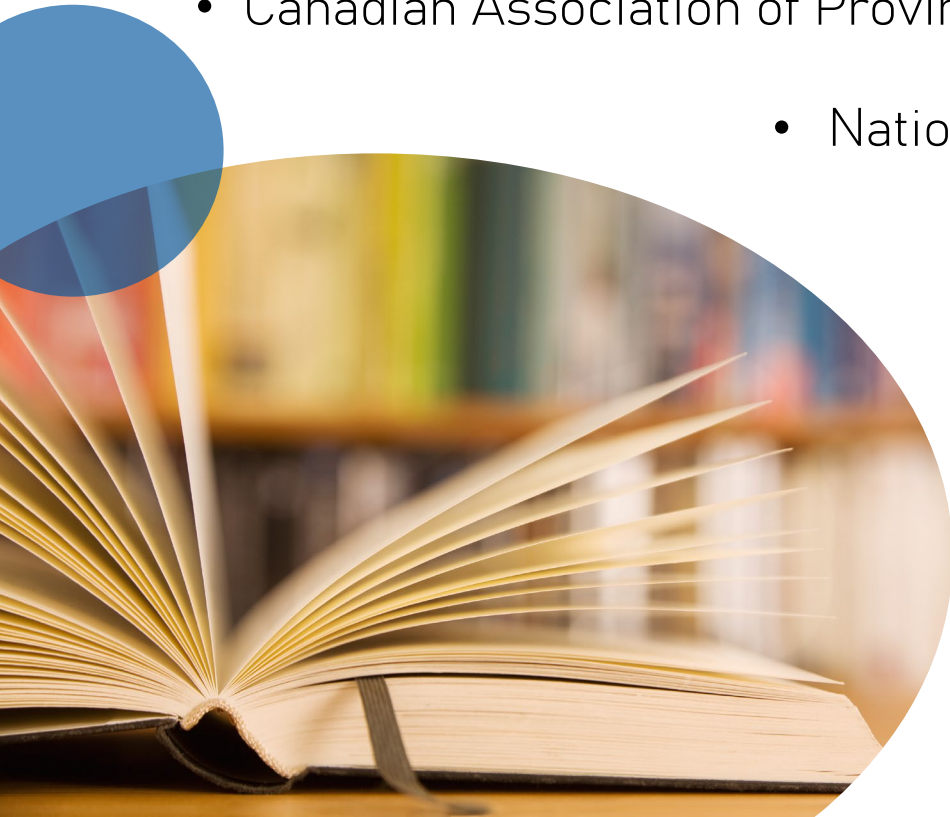
Judicial Education

- Begins immediately upon appointment
- Both a junior and senior mentor are assigned to assist the new Justice
- Manager of Education meets with new appointments to create a 5-year education plan
 - All full-time Judicial Officers receive a minimum of 10 days of education each year
 - Education programs offered through the Office of the Chief:
 - Judging in Your First Three Years (JYFTY)
 - New Justices and Justices of the Peace Boot Camp (twice a year)
 - In-House Judgment Writing Program
 - CAPCJ New Judges Education Program (Bromont)
 - NJI Newly Appointed Provincial and Territorial Judges' Skills Seminar (Niagara-on-the-Lake)



Judicial Education

- Alberta Provincial Justices' Association (APJA) and the Society of Justices of the Peace in Alberta (SJPA) host conferences in May and October
- Betty Ford Program on addiction and mental health
- Canadian Association of Provincial Court Judges Annual Conference
 - National Judicial Institute (NJI) programs
 - Guaranteed 175 seats for provincially appointed justices
 - Popular programs include:
 - Criminal, Family and Indigenous Law Seminars
 - Oral Judgments
 - Judging in the Digital Age
 - Hearing and Deciding Charter Issues,
 - Evidence Workshop



Ethical
Principles
for Judges

Principes de
déontologie
judiciaire



Ethical Principles for Judges

- Guided by the [Canadian Judicial Council's Ethical Principles for Judges](#)
 - It expresses a vision of what it means to be a judge
- Judicial Independence
- Integrity and Respect
- Diligence and Competence
- Equality
- Impartiality

Application Process

- Must be a lawyer in good standing with the Law Society of Alberta for a minimum of 10 years
- Application can be found on the Court of Justice [website](#)
 - Applicant can indicate where they are prepared to sit on the application
- First interview will be with Judicial Council
- If 'Recommended' or 'Highly Recommended', applicant will receive invitation to a second interview with the Alberta Court Nominating Committee
- If 'Recommended' or 'Highly Recommended', applicant is eligible for appointment
- Names are submitted by the Chief Justice when vacancies arise, but appointment is made by the Minister of Justice



Compensation

- Determined by the Judicial Compensation Commission held every 4 years
 - Current salary is \$348,102.00
 - Pension info
 - Benefits info
 - Support from legal counsel for the Court located across the province as well as articling students
- LTDI Program
- Part-Time Service
 - Available at 55 years of age after 10 years of service

QUESTIONS?