

# JUDICIAL CANDIDATES RATING COALITION

## REQUEST FOR BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FROM JUDICIAL CANDIDATES

This form seeks information about you that will be posted on the Judge4Yourself.com website with its ratings. Please complete and return this form and a black and white photograph of yourself before your scheduled interview. Each candidate is responsible to provide accurate information, to review the information when posted and to advise the JCRC of any correction required to that candidate's posted information.

**Name:** Mark R. Majer

**Current City of Residence:** Gates Mills.    **Date and Place of Birth:** 8/7/65; East Cleveland, OH.

**Undergraduate School and Degree (Year of Graduation):** Bowling Green State University;

Bachelor of Science-Business Administration, 1988.

**Law School (Year of Graduation):** Ohio Northern University Claude Pettit College of Law; Juris Doctor, 1991.

**Other Graduate School, if any, and Degree (Year of Graduation):** None

**Year Admitted to Practice in Ohio:** 1992    **Number of Years Engaged in Practice of Law in**

**Ohio (excluding Judicial Service):** 21 years excluding full-time judicial service.

**Other Court(s) to Which You Are Admitted & Year(s):** None

**Number of Years Engaged in Practice of Law in any State (excluding Judicial Service):** 21 years excluding full-time judicial service.

**Briefly Describe your areas of practice:**

I began the practice of law as a solo practitioner focused on criminal law, juvenile law, and personal injury law from 1992-1993. From 1993 to 1999 I practiced criminal law as a Cuyahoga County Assistant County Prosecutor, as well as civil law in my part-time practice. From 1999 to 2005, I presided over delinquency and custody matters as a full time Magistrate for Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile Division. From 2005-2015 I practiced in the areas of

delinquency and custody while serving as Chief Staff Attorney for Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court, while also presiding as a part-time Magistrate. From 2016-2020 I advised on adult criminal law (serious youthful offender cases), delinquency cases, custody matters, and counseled on employment, labor, and general civil law while serving as Legal Counsel for Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court. During this time I also also presided as a part-time Magistrate. From 2020 to 2021 I was a full-time Magistrate focused on delinquency and custody matters. Effective January 3, 2022, I have been a Judge on the Court of Common Pleas, General Division where I am presiding over a civil and criminal trial docket, as well as reviewing magistrate decisions involving foreclosure and civil protection orders.

**Summarize your experience, if any, before the court to which you seek election:** I practiced before the Court for almost eight years as a solo practitioner and Assistant County Prosecutor. I currently serve as a Judge on the Court.

**Service as judge in state or federal court of record (identify position, court and years of service):** Judge, Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas, General Division, appointed to term effective January 3, 2022.

**Current Position and Employer (number of years in position):** Judge, Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas, General Division, less than one year of service.

**Previous Employment and Dates:**

Mark Majer- Attorney at law- 1992-1993.

Cuyahoga County Assistant County Prosecutor- 1993-1999.

Magistrate-Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court 1999-2005.

Chief Staff Attorney and part-time Magistrate, Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court 2005-2015.

Legal Counsel and part-time Magistrate, Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court 2015-2020.

Magistrate-Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court 2020-2021.

Judge, Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas, General Division, appointed to term effective January 3, 2022.

**List no more than five of your significant community or charitable activities:**

In my almost 29 years of public service, 21 of which as a full or part-time Magistrate, I have engaged in numerous activities to improve our community.

As a Judge I am working to stamp out implicit bias in the legal system. Currently, I am a participant in the Ohio Sentencing Commission in cooperation with the University of Cincinnati to provide uniformity and equity in Ohio sentencing. As practitioners we have all seen or been made aware of disparate sentencing. The Committee I am a part of is designed to create a uniform sentencing entry, compile statistics, and leverage those items to raise awareness and prevent future disparate sentences. Also, as a current member of the Diversity Committee at the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas, we recognize the insidious nature of implicit bias and are planning a summit/retreat to address and prevent implicit bias. Disparate sentences call into question the very foundation of our legal system and cannot be allowed to continue.

Additionally, as a Judge I have taken action to improve access to legal services. Access to effective legal services, regardless of economic status, is very important to me. When I became a Judge, I implemented a standard pro se journal entry in both civil and foreclosure cases. A primary responsibility of a judge is to ensure fairness in legal proceedings. This can be particularly challenging in cases involving pro se litigants. Often, they are unable to acquire legal assistance simply because they do not know where to look. Given that, I created a standing court order in all cases in which proper service was achieved, but the respondent failed to file an answer. The standing order sent to the party advises them of resources available to assist them in the legal process. The order highlights and provides contact information for the Court's Pro se Center, the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association, as well as the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland. Armed with this information the pro se litigant may be able to receive a referral to a competent practitioner, or free legal services.

As the Chief Staff Attorney at Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court, I wrote a proposal for grant funding and received \$180,000.00 from the Cleveland Foundation and the McCarthy Foundation to test children in the Cuyahoga County Detention Center for undiagnosed learning disabilities. My thinking being, if we can detect the learning disability and address it, we can reduce the criminogenic behavior and improve their outcomes. My research found that 86% of the children had an undetected learning disability. Armed with this data we then advocated to the Cleveland Public Schools to address the children's educational needs.

I have also led the charge to reduce crime in our community. I am a former member of the United States Attorney Anti-Gang Initiative, and member of the Prevention Committee. Most notably, I was responsible for the creation of the Juvenile Re-Entry Court at Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court. This court seeks to successfully integrate young offenders back into the community following incarceration at the Ohio Department of Youth Services. At the time of its creation, it was only the second of such court in the State of Ohio. Additionally, along with then First Assistant in the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office, Mr. Duane Deskins, we formed a committee to reform the inequitable juvenile diversion opportunities offered to children residing in the City of Cleveland. Prior to our involvement, suburban children being considered for diversion opportunities were reviewed by Juvenile Court personnel who possessed a background in social services. However, children from the City of Cleveland had their opportunity to participate in diversion reviewed by the County Prosecutor's Office which is statutorily defined as a law enforcement agency. Noting this inequity, we put in place a uniform review process that ensured only the merits of the applicants would be considered, not the zip code from which they came. Thus, we created a much more fair and equitable treatment for the children residing in the City of Cleveland.

I am also dedicated to improving the overall practice of law. I am a former member of the Supreme Court of Ohio Privacy Committee. The Supreme Court of Ohio tasked our group with creating Rules of Superintendence governing the release of information from Ohio's Courts. The Committee worked to create the rules for approximately 1.5 years, and once the Supreme Court approved the rules, they were promulgated as the now existing Rules of Superintendence, Rules 44-48.

My entire background of almost 29 years of public service demonstrates a level of caring, community engagement, and an understanding of the issues confronting both a judicial officer, as well as the entire judicial system. My 21 years combined as a full or part-time jurist demonstrates my commitment to judicial equality and competence on the bench. My time in public service has been an honor, and I will continue to provide for the fair and impartial administration of justice, while simultaneously working to improve our judicial system.